

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

Apropos of my dream Notes I have been looking up some authorities. I find I was right in my recollection of Serjeant's Cox's views. Macnish, in his *Philosophy of Sleep*, favours the idea that dreams are invariably the resuscitation of thoughts which have formerly occupied the mind in some shape or other. That they certainly are not, though sometimes the dream action does unquestionably take colour from waking experience. Macnish has no difficulty in showing this in a case which is analysed with a care that inclines me to lay it before such of my readers as may not have access to the work.

"I lately dreamed that I walked upon the banks of the Great Canal in the neighbourhood of Glasgow. On the side opposite to that on which I was, and within a few feet of the water, stood the splendid portico of the Royal Exchange. A gentleman, whom I knew, was standing upon one of the steps, and we spoke to each other. I then lifted a large stone, and poised it in my hand, when he said that he was certain I could not throw it to a certain spot which he pointed out. I made the attempt, and fell short of the mark. At this moment, a well-known friend came up, whom I knew to excel at putting the stone; but, strange to say, he had lost both his legs, and walked upon wooden substitutes. This struck me as exceedingly curious; for my impression was that he had only lost one leg, and had but a single wooden one. At my desire he took up the stone, and, without difficulty, threw it beyond the point indicated by the gentleman upon the opposite side of the canal. The absurdity of this dream is extremely glaring; and yet, on strictly analysing it, I find it to be wholly composed of ideas, which passed through my mind on the previous day, assuming a new and ridiculous arrangement. I can compare it to nothing but to cross readings in the newspapers, or to that well-known amusement which consists in putting a number of sentences, each written on a separate piece of paper, into a hat, shaking the whole, then taking them out one by one as they come, and seeing what kind of medley the heterogeneous compound will make when thus fortuitously put together. For instance, I had, on the above day, taken a walk to the canal along with a friend. On returning from it, I pointed out to him a spot where a new road was forming, and where, a few days before, one of the workmen had been overwhelmed by a quantity of rubbish falling upon him, which fairly chopped off one of his legs, and so much damaged the other that it was feared amputation would be necessary. Near this very spot there is a park, in which, about a month previously, I practised throwing the stone. On passing the Exchange on my way home, I expressed regret at the lowness of its situation, and remarked what a fine effect the portico would have were it placed upon more elevated ground. Such were the previous circumstances, and let us see how they bear upon the dream. In the first place, the canal appeared before me. 2. Its situation is an elevated one. 3. The portico of the Exchange, occurring to my mind as being

placed too low, became associated with the elevation of the canal, and I placed it close by on a similar altitude. 4. The gentleman I had been walking with was the same whom, in the dream, I saw standing upon the steps of the portico. 5. Having related to him the story of the man who lost one limb, and had a chance of losing another, this idea brings before me a friend with a brace of wooden legs, who, moreover, appears in connection with putting the stone, as I know him to excel at that exercise. There is only one other element in the dream which the preceding events will not account for, and that is, the surprise at the individual referred to having more than one wooden leg. But why should he have even one, seeing that in reality he is limbed like other people? This also, I can account for. Some years ago, he slightly injured his knee while leaping a ditch, and I remember jocularly advising him to get it cut off. I am particular in illustrating this point with regard to dreams, for I hold that if it were possible to analyse them all, they would invariably be found to stand in the same relation to the waking state as the above specimen."

But Macnish's so-called explanations are terribly far-fetched. He has no place in his philosophy for any recognition of spirit. For instance, he lays sacrilegious hands on Cæsar's ghost which appeared to Brutus and declared that it would meet him at Philippi. It was "a dream, or a spectral illusion: probably the latter." Then come the speculations. Probably Brutus had in his mind an idea that the battle would be fought at Philippi: probably it was a good military position; probably his mind was full of Cæsar; and so on, and so on. These "explanations" explain nothing. Certainly they vanish in the light of any serious contemplation of the general treatment of the supernatural in the Shakespearian dramas. Compare, for example, the studies of the occult in *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *Julius Cæsar*. In that way alone can we get any real conception of the writer's ideas on the subject.

I remember reading, but cannot here (at the present time of writing) find a record of a dream attributed to, and I believe recorded by, Lord Bacon. He had dreamt that he saw his father's house covered with black plaster; and his father actually died on the night of his dream. I wonder to what waking-thoughts resuscitated or re-arranged Macnish would refer that dream. This is the method that I suggest. Probably Lord Bacon was aware of his father's dangerous state. Probably he fell asleep thinking of him. Probably he had had his house plastered recently. Probably the two facts had become associated in the dream-state, and the plaster was seen as black, the mourning colour. Coincidence accounts for the rest. I find this really very simple and easy; and I think I could account for most things on this hypothetical system of probable assumption. Only I must have a free hand with my "probably," and must not be pressed as to whether the assumptions are true. They are useful to me in proving my case: and that ought to be enough. Too much should not be expected from a man who has a theory to bolster up.

Dr. Rohner relates an interesting experience in the *Harbinger of Light*. He is writing on the anniversary of

the occurrence, March 17th, 1869. He had taken his children to some sports, leaving his wife, who was in weak health, at home. The sports had passed off very pleasantly and about half-past four he set out on the drive home. His little child of four fell out of the carriage, and the wheel passed over the head, fracturing the skull. A branch of the left temporal artery bled freely, and Dr. Rohner bound up the head with his handkerchief, adjusting a knot in it so as to compress the bleeding artery. The remainder of the narrative I give in the writer's own words:—

"I must mention here, that whilst I was stooping over the child lying on the road, it occurred to me that if my wife heard of this terrible and perhaps fatal accident, the shock of the sad news would prove too much for her in her then feeble state of health. But fortunately something happened which averted this unpleasantness, and a special messenger was sent to her, who borrowing the magic garment of my astral body, appeared before my wife, representing me bodily with a sad countenance, covered with dust, bleeding from my left temple, and, strange to say, with the picture of the injured child entirely left out in this magical panorama. When I came afterwards into my wife's bedroom, during the time Dr. H. was dressing the wounds of the patient, to see how she was getting on, she told me that some time after four o'clock she woke up suddenly as if from an unpleasant dream, raised herself up on her right elbow, and looked in the direction of the bedroom door, which stood wide open at the time, and saw me standing there bodily, as she thought, with the above detailed appearance of my features and their sad expression. She also added that she could see quite plainly a streak of blood going from my left temple right down my white coat, and to the end of my trousers. Her nurse, Mrs. Hourigan, sat at the foot of her bed at the time of this vision, and my wife, thinking that the nurse must have seen what she saw herself, exclaimed: 'Look at the doctor; I wonder what has happened to him!' But the nurse having seen nothing tried to quiet my wife by telling her that she was only dreaming, and that there was no doctor standing in the doorway.

"This unwelcome news was thus gently broached to my sick wife, and any further unpleasant catastrophe averted by this providential mediation."

The editor of the *Golden Gate* is now on a visit to California with the psychographic medium, Fred. Evans. The usual conjurer has appeared at Los Angeles, with the usual trumpery "explanation of the trick"—slates with false bottoms: slates chemically prepared: and so forth. It would be useless to note this were it not that a Mr. George Wilson has ventured to challenge Mr. Evans to "write one word on either of two slates" which Mr. Wilson will buy. He stakes 1,000dol. on the result. As Mr. Evans gets psychographic phenomena readily in public, and in the presence of any number of spectators, there ought not to be much difficulty in spoiling the Egyptians so far as that.

The May number of the *White Cross Library* comes with "some laws of health and beauty," not less worthy of attention than previous numbers have been. Reverting to the maxim that pervades all these publications, "Thoughts are things," the writer shows how the thought, which is and makes the man, moulds also that external physical presentation of him with which we are familiar. We cannot know a man by the eye, but we can see what he looks like, and that will give us a clue to his character. "If the habitual expression of a face be a scowl, it is because the thoughts behind that face are mostly scowls." There is much truth in what Mr. Mulford has here written.

Wit and Wisdom (3, St. Bride-street, E.C.) is inviting discussions on "Supernatural Phenomena, and Unexplained Mental and Nerve Forces and Operations," a sufficiently large order. The editorial invitation to contributors is wide enough to cover the whole ground occupied by the Psychical Society, the Spiritualist Alliance, the Theo-

sophical Society, and all kindred bodies. The editor little knows what an avenue for nonsense he has laid open. The fact is that the discussion of these subjects, if it is to be profitable, involves knowledge, and to invite any "who may have attended the séances of Spiritualists or Mesmerists" to state "what they saw, what they thought about it, and whether they can explain how it was done," is to invite a mass of nonsense, profitless, stale, and chiefly silly. The editor himself, if I may judge by his own confessions, is in a delightfully mixed state. We learn from him that he considers "mesmerism and hypnotism to be two descriptions of animal magnetism, and therefore kindred forces." And we do not learn from him anything above the level of that utterance. Better leave discussion on these occult matters to those who know something, if it be only a little, about them. But then it will sell the paper: for, whether people will or will not confess it, the interest in what is called "this uncanny but extremely fascinating subject" is enough to push the sale of the paper, whatever be the nonsense written upon it.

Organisation is in the air still. The American Spiritual Alliance is showing signs of activity: and the *Banner of Light* (May 7th) gives prominence to the scheme of confederation propounded by the London Spiritualist Alliance. I have pleasure in reproducing the Editorial opinion, which is sound and good. Depend upon it the time needs such a concerted scheme. If we do not secure it, so much the worse for Spiritualism. The *Banner* says:—

"Now that the American Spiritual Alliance (whose headquarters are in New York City) is about to commence active operations for the promotion of the cause in this country, we submit, would it not be well for it to take some similar course to that suggested to the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance, and act in concert with it? Plan third, it will be observed, suggests that the Societies of Spiritualists and Spiritists throughout the world shall unite on a basis of equality and form an 'International Confederation,' thus consolidating the movement on a secure basis. We are in favour of this movement, and the sooner action is taken in this country in regard to it the better it will be for the cause everywhere. Besides, and more important than all, the time has come to raise funds to oppose, by law if necessary, all attempts of bigots to crush our legitimate mediums, as is being done even now. We therefore earnestly hope that the American Alliance will take immediate action in so important a matter, which concerns Spiritualists everywhere."

Social Drift, on the same question, has the following kindly remarks:—

"We deeply regret that we have no organisation here through which affiliation may be had with the London Spiritualist Alliance. Boast as much as we may of 'our' Rochester knockings, and 'our' gift to the world of modern knowledge of immortality, it still remains, we think, that our trans-atlantic brethren have done, and are still doing more for the intelligent, rational advancement of psychic knowledge than we have done or are now doing in this country, and we know of no organisation over there that is doing more to sustain and elevate the character of the work, and to verify, classify, and rationally explain psychic phenomena, than is the London Spiritualist Alliance. Societies in the country, wishing to affiliate with the Alliance, can obtain all necessary information by addressing Morell Theobald, Esq., Hon. Sec. Spiritualist Alliance, 62, Granville Park, Blackheath, London, England."

And in another part of the same magazine, treating of recent "exposures," the Editor takes ground which is identical with that held by this journal. The following is to be commended to careful attention:—

"For ourselves, we are strongly of the opinion that the Ross and Wells manifestations, and other of like character are purely fraudulent or are too little understood to warrant anyone in expressing a decided opinion with regard to them. We certainly take little stock in 'careful investigators' who find three or four

accomplices in a cabinet they had lately investigated, without being able to determine how they could possibly have been introduced after their 'careful' investigation. The fact seems to be that while we are repeating old and rapidly multiplying new phases of psychic phenomena, we are doing very little to advance psychic knowledge; too little in fact to pay for sifting and resifting the vast amount of rubbish that is being foisted upon the world as spirit teachings, but much of which is gudgeon bait, pure and simple.

"We see little hope of bettering this state of things in any other way than for those who really desire to advance psychic knowledge to cut loose from credulous, emotional, religious, heterogeneous, unorganised Spiritualism and thoroughly organising as psychics, for the sole purpose of studying, advancing, and rationally applying psychic knowledge. In our opinion unless something of this kind is done to concentrate the better elements and to provide legitimate ways and means for prosecuting the work, the whole movement, good, bad, and indifferent, at least in this country—save home circles—will soon be under legal restriction and police surveillance, and not without cause. And, what reason have we to complain of legal interference in view of the fact that very few, if any, mediums have appeared before the public, who have not been, at some time, denounced as frauds by avowed Spiritualistic organs? There is no more reason to anticipate bad results from an organised effort to study psychism, pure and simple, than in organising governments for the benefit of society and the advancement of civilisation. The danger in both cases we think lies in disorganisation and irresponsibility. Shall, or rather will, those interested in the study and advancement of psychic knowledge organise expressly for that work?"

To those who feel interest in psychological analysis may be recommended *La Marchesa and Other Stories*, by Paul Heyse (Elliot Stock). The last of the three stories is characterised by extreme delicacy coupled with great power. Another book to read is *An Evil Spirit*, by R. Price (Fisher Unwin). The story is an emphatic plea against the too common abuse of opiates: and a much needed warning against the physical, intellectual, and moral results that proceed from their excessive use. I need hardly recommend Mr. Besant's *The World Went Very Well Then*. The story has throughout it traces of a knowledge of the occult, which I have before noted as so remarkable in our modern literature.

Mr. Savage thus gracefully expresses the yearnings and perplexities which precede conviction in many earnest souls.

THE EBBING SEA.

By REV. MINOT J. SAVAGE.

There is a sea whose mystic tide
Beats ever round our earthly shore:
Perchance it somewhere comes to flood,
But here it ebbs for evermore.

Who steps into its darkling waves
Is swept out by the undertow;
While, hidden by the o'erhanging mist,
Whereto they drift none ever know.

A boat comes; and, from out the air,
A call that but the summoned hears;
Some loved one then, with wondering eyes
And pale face, goes, despite our tears.

Is there a land beyond the sea?
Sometimes there looms a vision fair,
And the mists lift; but is it real,
Or a mirage built on the air?

Sometimes a wind from off the sea
Wafts landward faint, sweet odours strange:
Are they delusive? or are there
Rare flowers beyond all death and change?

I stoop down listening on the shore:
Is it a whisper that I hear?
Or does my longing fancy feign
These voices that enchant mine ear?

Oh, that some friend from o'er this sea
Might come back, with the word of trust,
And make me know that love still lives—
That soul is soul, though dust be dust!

Is not this a pretty fancy?

"Among the superstitions of the Seneca Indians is one of singular beauty. When a maiden dies, they imprison a young bird until it first begins to try its power of song, and then, loading it with caresses, they loose it over her grave, in the belief that it will not fold its wings nor close its eyes until it has flown to the spirit-land and delivered its precious burden of affection to the loved and lost."

With thanks to *Light on the Way*, I extract the following, which is entirely significant by reason of its tone, as also from the character of the journal in which it appeared, the *Boston Herald*. It is from the well-known "Wheel Chair Spinnings," the "Notes by the Way" (if I may be pardoned) of that paper:—

"If death is the cheerful thing that Mr. Beecher used to declare it to be, and whose utterances in that regard were emphasised by his friends with flowers and lights, and the studied absence of mourning at his funeral, we may be permitted to hope that he will come back in some way and tell us all about it. If any personality is strong enough to break through the ceremonies of the grave and make itself manifest to lingerers on earth, his would seem to be. Why may we not regard the practical annihilation of space as to motion and sound through electricity as the prophecy of that supreme achievement, already earnestly declared by millions, which shall bring us *en rapport* with the unseen land of souls? If the communication stoutly claimed by people of intelligence as already an accomplished fact is exasperatingly unreliable and hampered by conditions equally exasperating and trying to human faith, so was that by the first transatlantic cable while 'De Sauty or De Santy' was struggling with the unforeseen difficulties of that prodigious experiment, which finally 'put a girdle round about the earth.' Was not Jacob's ladder something more than a dream? 'Whether I was sleeping or waking,' writes the brilliant 'Saturday Night Talker' of the *Lewiston Journal*, 'whether I was in the body or out, whether there was a temporary flight of the spirit I know not; but I do know that one night, sitting in my chair and looking at the coruscations of the aurora, I saw a ladder raised from earth to sky, and shared sweet ministries and communion with a sainted mother, who went out into the great light many years ago. I never shall forget that vision—it gave me faith in the empyrean. I never had enjoyed before, and the next day I turned me to Jacob's vision at Bethel and said: These rapt experiences are not confined to age or condition, but are the fruit of sorrow and hope looking toward the real magnetic zenith, where the sun shines with an extra-solar light. Many experiences one may have in sorrow and enjoy, but that night among the stars was my Bethel. We can no longer ignore our alliance with these celestial things.'"

I have received Mr. Morell Theobald's volume, *Spirit Workers in the Home Circle*. The book, a handsome demy 8vo. of more than 300 pages, is published by Fisher Unwin,* and is a model of excellence in printing, paper, and binding. As to the contents, twenty years of psychical experience in the home circle cannot fail to be full of interest and instruction. I cannot venture to give any adequate account of the work till the exigencies of a very busy life allow me to study it with the attention that it unquestionably deserves. Pending the time when I recur to it, the thanks of the London Spiritualist Alliance, of "LIGHT," and of myself also, are due to Mr. Theobald for including in a book sure to be widely circulated information respecting our several works, purposes, and the like, together with advice as to investigation.

MISS LOTTIE FOWLER.—A correspondent writes: "You will regret to learn that Miss Lottie Fowler is in sore straits from lack of support, caused in a great measure by the unsuitable lodgings in which she is now located. I would suggest that her friends should raise a few pounds to pay off back rent, and to enable her to remove to more suitable apartments. Perhaps some of your readers will without further appeal send their contributions, addressed to the Editors of 'LIGHT,' 16, Craven-street, Charing Cross, if you will kindly undertake to see their donations properly applied. Miss Fowler is worthy of this support."—[We shall be happy to take charge of any contributions that may be sent us for the purposes mentioned by our correspondent.—EDS. OF "LIGHT."]

* Price 10s. 6d.

SPIRITUAL OLD AGE.

A beautiful old age is the usual and well-merited reward of a good life. In our lives, generally speaking, we exhibit the stage of our progression towards spirituality. The soul proclaims, in outward daily acts, its union with the spirit, its *atma*, or over-soul. As this is a condition involving the gradual throwing off of the lower nature, it necessarily takes time to grow into that state of complete union with the spirit which is the crowning perfection of the divine-spiritual man.

In viewing the lives of our fellow-beings, we can only judge from external actions of the growth of their souls towards spirituality. But in judging from externals of the spiritual condition to which our fellow-beings have arrived, we may often make mistakes. The effects of former evil actions, or erroneous modes of life, or even some inherited physical taint, frequently exhibit themselves in extraordinary aberrations, wherein the life seems pursuing a darkened course which confuses observation, and predisposes us to judge the worst. Psychical conditions, during the uncertainties of spiritual evolution, are too subtle and abstruse for ordinary human judgment, which should be suspended on the side of mercy and leniency rather than lean towards condemnation.

As to our own condition, we, who stand in the secret chamber of introspection and would take measure of ourselves, had better humbly hope the best and strive still more valiantly upwards; for until victory be declared we cannot truly decide as to our progress and condition. When victory is assured, there is no longer room for doubt or inquiry, nor need for introspection. All is sure and certain, for the soul is in light and *is* light. The self seems entirely merged in this light, and all care, anxiety, and sadness over evil and imperfection are burned away, leaving not even an ash behind. We have the happiness to sun ourselves sometimes in this light radiated by souls which have gone in advance of us; but of radiating it ourselves, according to what we have obtained of it, we are as unconscious as the lamp which illuminates our study. We are that light; it is ourself, our spontaneous life, in which we are happy: we know no more, but that is sufficient. It is the calm, normal emanation of a soul whose life is based upon goodness, and stands in the equilibrium of perfect harmony with the laws of nature for universal good. "Having attained the supreme light, the Ego dwelleth in its own-ness," says the Upanishad. We are no more conscious of radiating this light than the lark, poised in mid-heaven and pouring out its inmost being in melodious strains of joy, knows that its song is delicious to human ears; than the bird of paradise, whose feet are supposed never to touch the earth, knows that it is beautiful to human eyes; than the star, beaming from a clouded sky after a stormy day, knows that it is the symbol of hope and faith to tempest-tossed human beings. But if we are not egotistically conscious of this radiation as an attribute of our differentiated individuality, we are momentarily conscious of the inflowing happiness proceeding from the spiritual realms with which we have become harmonised; and we have deep, inward sensations of which the intellect can judge. We have become a portion of a higher life, to which we vibrate with intellectual and spiritual response, like a well-tuned harp. But as it is a matter of our inmost being, and spontaneous, we do not stop to think of it, to weigh or measure it. If we can rejoice in this harmonious adjustment of our inner selves to the higher realms of life, how immeasurably more do we seem to rejoice in its beautiful emanations from the lives of those who may perhaps in another life, as well as in this, have gone in advance of us. How happy we are in the light of their beautiful souls: how we admire, and are lifted to the highest point of emulative aspiration in silently contem-

plating, the picture they present of human perfection attained, as we know it can only be attained, by lives of struggle and conquest over the lower self. Ofttimes this sublime picture comes before us in the form of old age; sometimes in the vigorous activity of middle life; sometimes in the silently expanding beauty of young girl or boy life. Indeed, the very infant on our knee may proclaim to the inner sight that a soul *old in progress* has come to visit and bless the earth again, with the purity and wisdom gained through long ages of evolution. Through the folded petals of the lovely human bud radiates the light of an advanced soul.

We need not old age to bring this climax of human beauty to our observation. The age of the body does not always reveal the age of the soul. Some who die in babyhood, or in the half revealed loveliness of early youth, are already old enough in soul to rank alongside the oldest in body. And some who attain to a venerable age are so young in soul as to have reached only the most childish stages of evolution.

A long life is one of the greatest blessings if we spend it in unselfish usefulness to our fellow-beings, with the practice of all those virtues whose exercise is essential to render us in the highest degree useful, amongst which self-abnegation holds a paramount place. But to "train oneself for old age" would seem a fruitless laying up of treasures for a transitory and, at the most, very uncertain period of existence. Our "central idea" should always be the *evolution of the highest*, without any thought as to whether old or young age is to crown our efforts. With such noble aim ruling our lives, everything will be sure to fall into its proper place. Evil tendencies will disappear under the friction of opposition which this ruling idea will inevitably cause, and if old age be attained, it must be beautiful.

There are many halting places for nature on the road of spiritual progression, wherein certain souls may seem to observant eyes to cease from progress, or even to retrograde. There is doubtless in such cases some inscrutable process going on within, for the time being; some insuperable mental obstacle is to be removed; or some inherited constitutional weakness, or disease, is silently working itself out. Nature knows her times of rest from labour; she also knows exactly how far her material elements will carry her, and when these potencies are worn out, everything seemingly falls into decay; it may be, as regards the human being, into the weakness of senility, or childish imbecility. In old age the substance of the brain deteriorates, as well as that the limbs lose strength and power, and become tottering and incapable. The mind then meets with but a poor response to the thrills of thought it was wont to send through the brain, and along the nerves, bracing them to action, as if by the fiery track of an electric fluid. The body yields no prompt obedience to the behests of the soul, and a gentle numbness slowly sinks upon the senses. The soul, in some cases, withdraws itself upwards previous to death, and hovers above its mortal tenement, held to it by a magnetic link, until that link be severed by death.

In the case of very depraved persons who have led selfish and animal lives, it is even said the soul—*i.e.*, all those higher principles which are capable of progression, and are therefore in themselves immortal—separate from the demonised lower personality, long before the body is worn out, which may then become possessed by some lingerer in the astral shades, perhaps a poor wretch who had been forcibly ejected from his body in expiation of crime, or otherwise. This theory would probably account for many cases of insanity, or diabolical wickedness with which society is so frequently shocked. Often the physical constitution inherited is a strong one, and whether it is taken care of in a wise way or not, old age, in such cases, must be reached. Very often a depraved being has to wear out a strong body

during a long life. Perhaps this may be a mercy in disguise to themselves, but it is rarely so to others; unless it be in the exercise of patience, forbearance, and long-suffering it compels. A man or woman retaining the full vigour of intellect unimpaired up to a great age, is a rare and beautiful sight, and with them death often comes after a short illness, when their fall is like a noble oak struck down by lightning. Some have been found seated dead in their chairs, after no illness at all; the usual occupations of life having been continued in peaceful serenity up to the last moment. Such a death had Washington Irving, the light of whose harmonious and beautiful soul still shines over mankind. Such a gentle dropping to sleep in the arms of nature is much to be desired, and would seem to indicate that high spiritual conditions have been reached. Most of the great men and women on earth, noted, that is, on the side of intellect or genius, as it is termed, crown their distinguished lives by more or less of a beautiful old age, and a happy peaceful death. But on the other hand, how many noble and promising young lives do we see sacrificed at the call of duty. Which can be called greatest? Which the most spiritual? It is all doubtless a destiny regulated by the necessities of the soul's expansion into spiritual perfection; and the mysterious working of that law of Karma, taught by the Easterns, which so few rightly understand. The effects of Karma, good or evil, are carried on from life to life, until at length all the evil effects are worked off in lives of spiritual good; and there being no remnant of evil Karma left, the spiritualised entity has no further necessity for Re-incarnation, and returns no more into material bodies. Accidents, illnesses, misfortunes, the very sort of death which falls to our lot, as well as every blessing, success, and happiness, arise from the retributive or rewarding effects of evil or good Karma.

In the mirror of the present we may often read the character of the past, not only of our own, but of others. But, as before stated, we may often make mistakes in judging of the deeply hidden spiritual condition of our fellow beings. When we observe a life which has always been, so far as we know, evenly and harmoniously good, declining towards its setting, unclouded, serene, and happy, and still a source of good and happiness to others, we may reasonably conclude that a previous accumulation of good Karma, perhaps in former lives, is bearing fruition in this. But when, on the other hand, we see a life which to our daily experience has been one of quiet, domestic virtue, illumined by many noble, generous attributes, some distinction as regards talent, genius, or intellectual superiority—a life we have always rejoiced in, a bright nucleus of social happiness for a large or limited circle—when we see such a life towards its close, sink into a condition of unrest, the infirmity of tormenting fretfulness, and exacting selfishness; a wandering of mind wherein the most fantastic conceptions appear as truth; the formerly amiable, loving nature seemingly utterly transformed—it is reasonable to conclude that a secret and increasing disease of the brain is going on. This may be an inherited constitutional defect, physically inevitable, even had the most careful "training" been resorted to in the beginning of life. We do not know whether in the transient gleams of rational consciousness, the soul may not be secretly garnering up its last lessons in humbling self-knowledge, which shall fit it for higher flights upon another trial.

In looking upon such a ruin, like the ruin of some beautiful palace, we should picture to ourselves the beauty of the past; letting it surround with a halo of brightness the sad close of a life dear to us. We behold a shattered instrument—a harp whose strings are broken, and can never more produce harmony. With the utmost tenderness, and patient long-suffering should we deal with the unstrung nerves, whose sensitiveness has become excessive and abnormal from the long-continued presence

of disease. We, in health, can form no idea of the exquisite agonies which are produced by abnormally sensitive nerves, alone sufficient to cause a shrinking fretfulness approaching to childish imbecility. There are so many mysterious subtleties in the human organisation, that the most spiritually enlightened clairvoyance would be essential to acquaint one with the secret causes at work to produce the eccentricities of disease betraying bodily decay. The soul intimately sympathises, and finds itself bereft of the power of self-control, which increases its secret tortures. We cannot tell what may be going on behind the veil, and it behoves us to be patient, and even reverentially attentive, for, although of common daily occurrence, the gradual decay and death of human bodies is one of the grandest processes of nature going on around us, from which we may derive the most useful spiritual lessons.

To the perfected man alone is given the power of so mastering the body as to eliminate disease, and even to ordain the time and manner of death; which proclaims, more forcibly than perhaps anything else could, the almost unlimited power yielded into the grasp of the Divine-spiritual man. NIZIDA.

A THANKSGIVING.

Thine is the seed, and Thine the sowing,
With what worship soever the creature prayeth
When we feed with Faith the body of knowing,
Or nourish with Knowledge the life of Faith.
All we have is of Thee; all we are, Thou knowest;
What Thy bounty has given, our lives display,
And, in all some side of Thy life Thou showest,
And all some law of that life obey.

A Law that at once is one and many,
Single in spirit,—diverse in form;
A Law in its essence unseen by any,
All feel in its fires the soul that warm.
It may whisper "Wait," it may win us to labour;
It may soothe to suffer, or urge to do;
A Law to you, though not to your neighbour,
A word to your brother, though not to you.

Yea! many and one is the life of being,—
Liberty married in Time to Law,—
The one and the other alternate seeing
Man sees to-day what his Fathers saw,
The Spirit unchanging. The shape may vary,—
To our Brother the Bridegroom, to us the Bride,
Bowing, the one, the knee to Mary,
And walking the other her Son beside.

Worship is one! and Good immortal!
Man is many; but One is Love.
The City of God has many a portal;
There is many a House in the Home above.
Dry, oh! weak one, the eye that is tearful,
The night of sorrow and shame is past;
Freedom is thine. Fear not! The Fearful
Out of the City of God is cast. A. A. W.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUAL INSTITUTE, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday last, Mr. Robson spoke to a crowded audience. Next Sunday at 7 p.m. we shall have an address by our President, Mr. J. Veitch.—W. E. LONG, 2, Pasley-road, Walworth.

LOWESTOFT.—On Sunday afternoon and evening Mr. T. Dowsing, of Framlingham, held his usual monthly services at Daybreak Villa, which he has carried on as a trance speaker for ten years. On Sunday Mr. Dowsing introduced "Cards of Sympathy" for the "Church of Humanity," which is based on the simple fundamental principle of all religions. There was a good attendance. A number of cards were taken, and small donations were given for their free circulation.—[CORRESPONDENT.]

KENTISH AND CAMDEN TOWN SOCIETY, 88, FORTRESS-ROAD, KENTISH TOWN.—Mrs. Cannon's séance, on the 19th inst., was highly successful; spirit-lights were seen in great numbers, as was also a spirit-hand. The clairvoyant descriptions were all recognised. May 30th, no meeting. Thursday, June 2nd, Mrs. Cannon, "Clairvoyance," &c. Monday, June 6th, Mrs. Swatridge on "What is Property?" 9th, Mrs. Cannon, "Clairvoyance," &c.; 13th, Mr. Swatridge on "Spiritualism the World's Redeemer." All meetings at eight o'clock punctually.—T. S. SWATRIDGE.

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

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Tight:

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

SATURDAY, MAY 28th, 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.

ILLUSIONS.

Carrying on the argument in regard to demonstration and proof, and reminding the reader that there is a vast difference between proof in science and proof in things spiritual, the latter depending far more than science upon imagination, we come to the next step in importance. Imagination is illusive. It rarely conducts to truth without leading us through error. It takes up our knowledge where it finds us, suggests likenesses, connections, and explanations, and finally conducts us to superior knowledge. Imagination suggests: Reason follows. Imagination is the mother of working-hypotheses. That which we call Knowledge at a given time is tabulated and reduced to Law—a mere idea of the imagination; and that is perpetually being advanced as increased experience, which we call Science, grows and develops.

This is the scientific side of the question. But imagination enters into other domains. Sympathy is only one form of imagination touched with love: the power of imagining, of entering into the joys and sorrows of our fellow-creatures. Imagination, then, is no abnormal or unreal faculty, but that by virtue of which a man best understands and appreciates the world of whose inhabitants he is a unit.

To turn now to Reason. Reason proceeds by the inductive or the deductive method, *i.e.*, it frames from a number of particular instances a general truth, or from two admitted statements it deduces an inevitable conclusion. Now, if we regard induction, the initial part of the task falls on imagination, *i.e.*, the positive and suggestive work; the negative and eliminative part is done by the reason. As regards deduction, reason ascertains that the premisses are properly constructed and duly correlated, but even there imagination plays its part. "If *a* is included in *b*, and *b* is included in *c*, then *a* is included in *c*; or, to put it in concrete form, if a watch is in a box and a box in a room, then the watch is in the room." This is a general proposition arrived at, as all general propositions are, by the use of the imagination. It is perhaps true that errors seldom arise and truth is seldom discovered by the use of deductive reasoning. As a fact, from two things known we deduce another on the same plane, and are not materially advanced. We need something else in order to proceed to a higher knowledge.

That higher knowledge is always conveyed, must needs be contained in Illusion. Let us have some definitions. Illusion is *wholesome error tending to the ultimate*

attainment of truth. Delusion is *harmful error arising from a perverted imagination.* Hallucination is a *wandering of the imagination without any guidance or support of facts, involving delusion of the most obstinate character.* Fallacy is an *error of inference or reasoning.* Mistake is the *result of mal-observation or weak memory.* Error is a *general term for any deviation from the truth.*

Now that the ground is cleared by definition, notice this. Illusion is frequently an ornative tendency of the mind, leading a child, for instance, to regard his parents as perfection: luring us on, young and old alike, over the rough places of life, with "hope springing eternal in the human breast"—a hope seldom or never fulfilled. Illusion, to lift the matter higher, is "a divinely utilised integument for the preservation and development of aspirations that shall ultimately find a perfect fulfilment in harmonious co-operation with the Divine love." It is a platitude to say that the senses deceive us, that we are all through life the victims of illusion. Illusions in Nature are most powerful in her best and highest teaching, and illusions, as might be expected, are rife throughout the spiritual teaching recorded in the Bible. "Is not the Promised Land a proverbial type of illusion? Do we not recognise illusion in every age of Christian revelation?" even in the very disciples of the Christ.

We must say a little in elaboration of this last statement that may sound startling in its bald nakedness. We have already said that nature has her illusions. The Old Testament exhibits illusions in every page; now for the illusions of the New Testament. The Fourth Gospel is packed with them. It contains a long string of metaphors all "illusive" to, and wrongly interpreted by, those to whom they were addressed. "Flesh—blood—water—birth—death—life—bread—meat—light—way—night"—one after another metaphorical usages of simple words (as we now very well see) are presented, which were to those to whom they were first addressed one continuous misunderstanding. Putting aside all questions of accuracy of the record, on the face of what purports to be the record this is so. So that in Nature, in the Bible, and in our common lives we are subject to illusion. To exclude illusion from life is impossible: as impossible as it is to require mathematical demonstration of a spiritual truth. As Christ was sure to be misunderstood by those to whom He spoke in parables, so surely are those who speak to us necessarily misunderstood by those who approach them and their message from the plane of material life. "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" said a practical person in the days of Christ, not seeing how literally foolish was his objection. "What do you make of it all? Let us have some measurements, some tests, some conjurers and experts in trick, and then see where we are," say the practical persons nowadays.

What do we then conclude? That our senses are unserviceable? That we are unable to make a working diagnosis in spiritual things? By no manner of means. But rather that we should not import into spiritual matters methods of test and experiment which are wholly inapplicable to them: that we should not seek to weigh spiritual truth by the pound, or measure it by the yard: that we should recognise the fact that "spiritual things are spiritually discerned," and not seek to apply to them measurements meant for that with which they have no concern. $2 + 2 = 4$ is a demonstrable fact in mathematics, but nowhere else: and only in what we now call mathematics in the state in which we are at present conditioned.

We close what we have now written by once more recommending our readers to study the book—*The Husk and the Kernel*—to which we are indebted for anything worthy that we have been enabled to suggest for consideration.

A STUDY IN ASTROLOGY.

In "LIGHT," of July 3rd last year, I called attention to the astrological doctrine of the significance of planetary positions at the moon's changes in regard to imminent public events. The same doctrine holds in regard to the fate of individuals in relation to the horoscope and "directions." In the article referred to I took a class of events—the fall of Administrations—and showed that the astrological symptoms selected occurred more than three times as often as the numerical expectation arising from the very simple calculation which had to be applied. I consider this comparison of results with exactly ascertainable chances to be the true line of verification, and scientifically superior to the occasional success of predictions against which must be set off indefinite failures. But this method has to be carried on upon a large scale. And though I am diligently pursuing it, I turn for the moment to give an account of two instances of great notoriety in which the particular astrological dictum in question received most striking exemplifications.

The dictum is, that if the place of the moon at the new or full moon, or first or last quarter (as the case may be), which last precedes any event, happens to be on an evil place of the horoscope, it foretells diseases, disasters, murders, &c., but if on a good place, success and happiness. Placidus said he had never found this to fail; but seeing that there are about 52 moon's changes in the year, falling usually in different places in the Zodiac, and in every horoscope must be a rather considerable number of "afflicted" degrees, and degrees favourable, it is evident that we cannot *predict* from the occurrence of positions of such necessary frequency. I am, for instance, inspired with no apprehension by the fact that the new moon of the 22nd inst. falls in rather close opposition to the place of Saturn at my birth; on the other hand, should misfortune occur, I should certainly look to the place of the moon at the last preceding change, in expectation of finding some signification of the general character of the event from the relation of such place to my horoscope.

On March 13th, 1881, the Czar Alexander of Russia was assassinated. The last change of the moon preceding this event was her first quarter, which happened on the 7th, in the 18th degree of the sign Gemini, or in longitude 78°. The Czar was born on April 29th (new style), 1818, on which day the planet Uranus, the great significator of sudden and sinister events, was in the 20th degree of the sign Sagittarius, (or longitude 260°), that is to say, within 2° of the exact opposition (180°) to the place of the moon on March 7th, 1881. Saturn on the day of birth was in the 16th degree of Pisces (longitude 346°), thus within 2° of the exact square (90°) of the moon at her change on March 7th, 1881, the sun at this date being in conjunction with the place of Saturn at birth. No astrologer could imagine more ominous positions. But take the secondary direction. (The primary cannot be calculated without knowledge of the hour of birth.) This is calculated by allowing a day for each year of life from the birthday, two hours for a month, &c. The moon's position at noon of the sixty-third day (July 1st, 1818) from birth (representing sixty-third year of life, 1881) was in 16° Gemini, thus only 1° from her place on March 7th, 1881, with the same bad aspects to the malefics Uranus and Saturn of birth. But yet more; Mars, the significator *par excellence* of violence and bloodshed, was at the direction in the 25th degree of Leo, and the assassination occurred soon after one p.m. (Petersburg time) on March 13th, when the moon was in exactly that same degree!

On the 6th May, 1882, Lord Frederick Cavendish was assassinated at Dublin. The last change of moon preceding this event was the full moon of May 3rd, when the moon was in the 13th degree of Scorpio (longitude 223°). Lord

Frederick was born on the 30th November, 1836, when Saturn was in the 12th degree of Scorpio, thus only 1° from the place of the moon on the 3rd May, 1882. On this latter date Saturn was also within 3° of the exact opposition to the moon, being with the sun at the lunation, which happened at 8.6 a.m. (Dublin time) on that day. At this time Mars was in the 1st, or Ascendant house of the figure, Uranus in the 4th, within 5° of exact opposition to the meridian point, the place of government and great personages. The 16th degree of Cancer was rising, and Mars at the last Solar Revolution of Lord Frederick Cavendish—governing the year—was in the 15th degree of that same sign. At noon of the forty-sixth day from birth—the secondary direction for the forty-sixth year—the moon was in the 10th degree of Taurus, thus close upon the opposition to Saturn at birth, and to her place at the lunation preceding the murder. Now let us come to the day and hour of this atrocity—the 6th May, "a few minutes after 7 p.m." (*Annual Register*, 1882.) This, of course, is Dublin time, and I erect a figure for 7.5 p.m. there. The 12th degree of Scorpio, the very degree of Saturn at birth, is exactly rising. Uranus and Mars are in elevation above all the other planets, the degree on the meridian being also only 6° remote from the place of Mars at birth.

Even while writing, another illustration comes to hand. I find in this morning's newspaper a notice of the death, last night, of Lord John Thynne, resulting from an accident on Monday last. He was born on May 27th, 1857, and the last change of moon was on the 14th inst., when the moon was in the 24th degree of Aquarius, Uranus at birth having been in the 26th degree of Taurus, only 2° from her perfect square. And on the day of the accident the sun was on the very degree of Uranus at birth, and the sun at the direction, the thirtieth day after birth, was on the very degree of the cusp of the 8th house—the house of death—at the lunation.

Certainly, the chance in favour of the occurrence of one or other of a number of positions, which would be recognised in astrology as significant, has to be accurately computed in relation to a large number of cases which shall not be selected just on account of their conformity to the astrological rule. It is the cumulative testimony in particular cases which is so striking. As regards the single testimony specially regarded above—the falling of the moon at a given lunation within certain given distances of the three malefics in the horoscope—the computation is of course very simple. There are four aspects considered to each of the three planets, and taking the range of 2° on each side of each aspect, we have 16° afflicted for each, and 48° for the three, supposing there to be no coincidence among themselves. Forty-eight degrees out of 360° give a chance of $\frac{1}{7\frac{1}{2}}$, or it is 6½ to 1 against the occurrence. But the facts above presented are quite phenomenal in character.

May 20th.

C. C. M.

A DEATH.

(Born in Bath, May, 1886. Died in London, May, 1887.)

'Tis but a Cat! her life was brief;
Yet fills her master's heart with grief.
Endearing, faithful, tender, true!
Will she a future life renew?
Who dares to say a good life dies?
That from the grave can never rise?
Such loving memories cannot die;
Some say they do: so say not I!
For this I know—that God will see,
What makes us happiest, that have we!

May 18th, 1887.

S. C. HALL.

On May 15th, suddenly, of heart disease, Major-General John Norman Hector Maclean, Madras Staff Corps, aged sixty-five.—*Times*.

SIX EXPERIMENTS WITH EGLINTON.

COMMUNICATED BY JULIUS GILLIS.

From the April Number of the *Sphinx*.

Translated by "V."

Mr. William Eglinton, who has now been staying a short time in St. Petersburg, has obtained unqualified approbation in high circles, including the highest of all, for his sêances, the results of which are so contrary to every physical law with which we are acquainted that people are unable to credit them in spite of the strongest assertions they hear made. It is only those who have themselves been witnesses of these wonderful occurrences who can gradually bring their minds to believe that they really have happened, though they still remain a matter of incomprehensibility.

On the 12th of March Mr. Eglinton gave me a sêance at noon on a bright sunny day, to which I was accompanied by several friends, Herren G., von K., and von S.,* all three of whom occupy prominent public positions. We sat with Eglinton at an ordinary card table, and the following six experiments took place, without, as it seems to me, the remotest possibility that either of them could be produced by any physical means or trickery, and at the same time without a possibility of accounting for these physical manifestations by any of the theories put forward by modern science.

Mr. Eglinton first requested that a simple question should be written, the drift of which he should not be told, upon one of the folding-slates I had brought with me. He said he only wished to prove that a question of which he was ignorant might be answered in the folding-slate by an unknown power. Herr von S. thereupon wrote: "How old is my mother?" The slates were closed and placed upon the table and the chain was formed, both Mr. Eglinton's hands and my left hand resting upon the slates. After a short time three raps signified that the answer was given; it consisted of the two figures 62, which rightly described the age demanded.

Next, upon one of Eglinton's ordinary slates, this question was written: "What is the meaning of the phantoms which I see sometimes at night before going to sleep?" Eglinton and I held this slate with the side not written upon, on which was placed a morsel of slate pencil, closely pressed against the under side of the table. After a short pause, the scratching of the pencil was heard, and the answer written was: "We cannot explain these phantoms to you unless we saw them ourselves."

For the third experiment we made use of a number of slips of paper, tightly folded up, upon which, years before, I had written various names, such as John, Paul, Frederick, &c. Herr G. selected one of these slips without either of us knowing which name was written upon it. The slip was placed within the folding double slate, which was held exactly as in the first experiment, and when opened the name "Alexander" was found written inside it, the tightly doubled-up piece of paper not having been opened. The name corresponded with that written on the paper.

For the fourth experiment, Herr von S. was asked to place a bank note, of which neither he himself nor any one present knew the number, in a double slate with a lock. When he had done this he locked the slate, put the key in his pocket, and the chain was again formed, Eglinton's and my hands resting upon the slate, in which we soon heard the sound of writing. When it was opened the number 582,337 was found written in strongly marked characters, this being the correct number of the note.

For the fifth experiment, Herr G. took a volume from the Tauchnitz Edition of British Authors without opening it, and then wrote on a folding-slate "Page 133," under which Herr von K. wrote "Line 25," and Herr von S. added "Second word." Of course all this was done without Eglinton seeing it. The problem was to give the word thus described.

The slate was then closed together and laid on the table with the book under the hands of Eglinton and myself, the chain formed as usual, and the three raps soon announced the accomplishment of this marvel. We opened the slate and read written, "The word is 'To'"; and this we found to be correct, although so incomprehensible.

Before finishing I wished very much to try the well-known experiment of obtaining knots in an endless cord, which had

first been successful with Zöllner through Slade, and afterwards with myself in London, and I produced the knotted cord which I had obtained in London. A similarly arranged cord, without knots, was laid upon the table, and Eglinton then asked his guides if they could produce the knots. Thereupon a great deal of writing was heard going on upon a slate which was held under the table as in the second experiment, and after the customary three raps we found one whole side of the slate was written upon.*

The writing upon the slate, which proves among other things that Eglinton's control (*Schutzgeist*), Ernest, writes very imperfect German, runs as follows:—

"MEIN LIEBER HERR! Vor Jahrhunderten wussten (kannten) unsere Vorfahren diese Phänomene und hatten auch die Kraft, dieselben hervorzubringen. Jedoch durch den Fortschritt der Welt in anderen Dingen kümmerte sich man (man jetzt) weniger mehr über (um) das menschliche Schicksal; jedoch jetzt sollte man es mehr denn je (je). Wir hoffen, dass durch die (in Veranlassung der) Thatsachen, welche wir Ihnen vorführten, Sie sich mehr und (und) mehr mit diesem Gegenstand befassen werden.—Ihr ergebener,

"ERNEST."

[TRANSLATION.]

"DEAR SIR,—For centuries our predecessors have been acquainted with these phenomena and have had the power to produce them. But engrossed by the progress of the world in other things, men have troubled themselves less and less with what concerned the destiny of man; now, however, they begin to do so more than ever. We hope that the facts we have been able to bring before you will induce you to occupy yourselves more and more with these matters.—Yours truly,

"ERNEST."

The writing in English was as follows†:—

"The experiments which you demand would take a very long series of sêances to accomplish, and we could under no circumstances promise them."

When we consider that between the slate and the under side of the table there was only the space of about the eighth of an inch, and that the bit of pencil was about double the length, so that even the solid material of the table formed no hindrance to the writer holding the pencil and writing with it, this fact alone surpasses all our ideas or explanations, and proves by itself the supernatural nature of the written answer.

The sêance recorded above was undertaken in a spirit of earnest inquiry and for the purpose of solving the question, "Are Eglinton's direct or spirit writings supernormal productions or not?" This question was completely answered in the affirmative to the satisfaction of myself and my three companions; more we did not demand.

JUBILEE GOLD MEDAL.

The Jubilee Gold Medal offered by the Committee of "The Bath Philharmonic Society," for the best cantata for soli, orchestra, and chorus, was awarded on Saturday last to Mr. Charlton T. Speer, Associate and Professor of the Royal Academy of Music. There were twenty-three candidates, and the adjudicators were Sir Arthur Sullivan, Dr. Mackenzie, and Mr. Eaton Faning. The successful cantata is entitled "A Day Dream," taken from Lord Tennyson's poem, "The Sleeping Beauty," and will be performed at Bath on the 20th June next. Mr. Charlton Speer gives his sixth annual pianoforte recital at Princes' Hall, Piccadilly, this (Friday) evening, May 27th, at 8 o'clock.

Social Drift (Muskegon, Mich., U.S.A.), a magazine the ability and general excellence of which we have more than once recognised, reproduces Mr. Paice's address *in extenso*, and has for "LIGHT" some kind words of commendation, which we read with pleasure, and for which our thanks are due.

OPINION.—'Twas a good Fancy of an old Platonick: The Gods which are above men, had something whereof Man did partake, [an Intellect Knowledge] and the Gods kept on their course quietly. The Beasts, which are below Man, had something whereof Man did partake, [Sense and Growth] and the Beasts liv'd quietly in their way. But Man had something in him, whereof neither Gods nor Beasts did partake, which gave him all the Trouble, and made all the Confusion in the world, and that is Opinion.—JOHN SELDEN.

* In the *Sphinx* there is a facsimile of the slate, half the real size, taken from a photograph. The letter is written in the English character, not the German, and is in the handwriting of "Ernest," what is added being in that of another of Mr. Eglinton's guides, who signs the initials "J. S."; both handwritings being well known to me. I have myself received through Mr. Eglinton's mediumship a letter in German from my own guide and friend, who was an Austrian, which is written in the German character and the German of which is perfect.—Tr.

† Written round three sides of the slate.—Tr.

* The names of these gentlemen are well known to me.—Ed. *Sphinx*.

M. AKSAKOW'S REPLY TO DR. VON HARTMANN.

TRANSLATED FROM *Psychische Studien*.

(Continued from page 231.)

In the way above described moulds of entire hands and feet of the greatest variety of conformation were successively obtained in a multitude of experiments. The conditions under which the experiments took place and the results obtained seem to be perfectly satisfactory; but criticism took its course, and strove to discover by what means the *fraud* was accomplished, for fraud there must be. It was first suggested that the medium might have prepared the moulds, brought them to the séances, and passed them off as obtained on the spot. Then Professor Denton had recourse to the following test:—He weighed the mass of the paraffin before the séance, and when the séance was over he weighed the mould obtained and the remaining paraffin; the sum of the two weights was found to be equal to the weight of the (original) collective mass. This experiment was carried out three times, publicly, before large assemblies by committees chosen by the public itself, at Boston, Charlestown, Portland, Baltimore, Washington, &c., and each time with complete success. Then another objection was resorted to: the medium might have been able to abstract the requisite amount of paraffin with foot or hand, and hide it somewhere. It was required that the medium should be put *in a sack!* This was done. At about twenty public séances the medium was put in a sack, which was drawn fast round the neck, and each time the same result was obtained, and always under the eyes of a committee chosen by the public. But soon this test no longer sufficed; it was suggested that the medium might have undone part of the seam of the sack, and resewn it after using his hands, although the selected committee had observed nothing of the sort. Hereupon a test was devised, which was to afford the highest and most absolute proof: the mould must be produced in a locked box. And as in truth such a proof must be regarded as the highest and most absolute, I here give the description of this experiment from the document which was signed by the committee, and published in the *Banner of Light* of the 27th May, 1876.

There is first of all the description of the box prepared for this experiment according to the directions of Dr. Gardner:—

"This box, rectangular in shape, is thirty inches long, thirty deep, and twenty-four wide. The four posts of the frame-work are of wood, as are the bottom and the folding cover; and the part between the cover and the wire-work is of wood, eight and a-half inches in height, and pierced with holes about an inch apart, and originally three-quarters of an inch in diameter, but subsequently reduced, by an interior lining, to one-quarter of an inch. The wire carried round the box is of a single piece, the two ends coming together on one of the corner posts, and at the point of contact being covered with a strip of wood firmly nailed to the post. The cover is in two parts, opening from the centre outward; one fold of the cover may be secured by two bolts that run into the wood-work on each side; the other fold was at first secured by a single lever lock. The wire-work is strong, thick, three-eighth mesh. After several successful experiments at which we were not present, attention was called to certain defects in the box, and it was improved and repaired so as to obviate all objections. Two locks, one at each side, made the cover when shut, bolted, and locked, tight and secure. The holes in the woodwork were reduced as already described, and no flaw was left unremedied. We have been thus particular in our description of the box, because we regard it as the instrument of a test wholly unaffected by any question as to the medium's good faith in the case."

The following are the details of the experiment:—

"Monday, May 1st, 1876, present in the basement of Mr. Hardy's house, No. 4, Concord-square, were Colonel Frederick A. Pope, Boston, John Wetherbee, J. S. Draper, Epes Sargent, Mrs. Dora Brigham, and Mr. and Mrs. Hardy. The box was thoroughly examined. Colonel Pope, an expert in all carpentering work, turned the box upside down, and tested it on all sides, inside and out, the other gentlemen looking on, and afterwards examining it themselves. Particular care was taken to see how far by working with an iron instrument the wire interstice could be enlarged and then replaced, so as to admit of the passage of anything more than half-an-inch in diameter. This was found impracticable under the conditions; while an enlargement for the admission of a hand could not have been made without forcibly severing or untwisting the wire in a way that could not fail of detection.

"Everyone being satisfied as to the security of the box, Mr. Wetherbee lifted a pail of clear, cold water, which, after being examined underneath and on all sides, was placed in the box. Colonel Pope lifted the pail of hot water with a top layer of

paraffin (which we tested by touch, stirred about, and found to be all in a melted and fluid state), and placed it, after examination, in the box. The covers were then closed, bolted, and locked, and to make security doubly secure (though the precaution was needless, since we could all the time see the medium), seals were put on both keyholes, also across the seam between the shut covers, and also across the lines of separation at the sides. As the room was light we could all now see, and did see, through the wire of the box, that, except the pails and their contents, there was nothing else inside of it.

"In order to produce a dark chamber for the operating force, a cloth was now thrown over the box, and the light of the room was subdued, but not so much that we could not distinguish the time of day by our watches, and see one another's face and movements, including those of the medium. Mrs. Hardy took a seat in front of the circle, and just behind the box at one of its narrow sides. Mr. Hardy kept aloof all the while, and took a seat in the rear of all the rest.

"No checks or restrictions were put upon the sitters. There was no singing, no noise, though conversation in a low tone was going on much of the time. Mrs. Hardy was in her natural state, easy and unpreoccupied. The harmony of the circle was perfect, and all eyes were on the medium. Occasionally a question would be put to the operating force, and it would be answered by raps. At length, after a lapse of perhaps forty minutes, a quick succession of jubilant raps announced that a result had been obtained. All rose from their seats, we took off the cloth, looked in through the wires, and there, floating in the pail of water, was a full-sized, perfect mould of a large hand. We looked at the seals; not one had been disturbed. We again carefully tested all the sides of the box; wood and wire were perfect; all parts were unimpaired, unchanged. Then removing the seals from the keyholes, we unlocked and unbolted the cover, lifted the pail, and took out the mould. We saw, and still see, no escape from the conviction that the mould had been formed and placed there by some power capable of materialising the members of an organism wholly distinct from the physique of the medium.

"Thursday, May 4th, a second sitting was had, at which, in addition to the persons already named, Mr. J. W. Day, of the *Banner of Light*, and Mr. J. F. Alderman were present. The conditions were the same, and the success was, if possible, greater than at the sitting of May 1st, inasmuch as the mould was larger, and the fingers more spread. The same precautions were taken both before and after the sitting; the box was twice thoroughly overhauled and examined by the six gentlemen of the party. A doubt having been raised as to the hinges, a screw-driver was obtained and the screws tested and tightened. Besides the mould in the pail of water, a part of another one was found on the floor of the box.

"Our conclusions are:—

1. "That the mould of a full-sized, perfect hand was produced in a closed box by some unknown power exercising intelligence and manual activity.

2. "That the conditions of the experiment were independent of all reliance on the character and good faith of the medium, though the genuineness of her mediumship has been fully vindicated by the result.

3. "That these conditions were so simple and so stringent as completely to exclude all opportunities for fraud and all contrivances for illusion, so that our realisation of the conclusiveness of the test is perfect.

4. "That the fact, long known to investigators, that evanescent, materialised hands, guided by intelligence, and projected from an invisible organism, can be made visible and tangible, receives confirmation from this duplicated test.

5. "That the experiment of the mould, coupled with that of the so-called spirit-photograph, gives objective proof of the operation of an intelligent force outside of any visible organism, and offers a fair issue for scientific investigation.

6. "That the inquiry, 'How was that mould produced within that box?' leads to considerations that must have a most important bearing on the philosophy of the future, as well as on problems of psychology and physiology, and opens new views of the latent powers and high destiny of man.

"J. F. Alderman, 46, Congress-street, Boston.

"Mrs. Dora Brigham, 3, James-street, Franklin-square.

"Colonel Frederick A. Pope, 69, Montgomery-street.

"John W. Day, 9, Montgomery-place.

"John Wetherbee, 48, Congress-street.

"Epes Sargent, 67, Moreland-street.

"J. S. Draper, Wayland, Mass.

"Boston, May 24th, 1876."

—*Spiritualist*, 1876, p. 274.*

Among these signatures we meet the name, well-known in American literature, of Mr. Epes Sargent.

So that we have here an experiment succeeding under con-

* Having regard to a possible objection by those who take extreme views of the fallibility of "continuous observation in the presence of the medium," it is as well to recall attention to the fact stated in the above account, that *after* the box had been bolted and locked, the investigators "could all see, and did see, through the wire of the box, that, except the pails and their contents, there was nothing else inside of it." This fact makes it quite immaterial that the preparations were made in the presence of the medium.—Tr.

ditions which must completely satisfy Herr von Hartmann : no confinement of the medium, who sits with all the other witnesses in a sufficient light, the mould being produced in a space inaccessible by any ordinary means. We have here, therefore, an absolute, objective, and enduring proof that the apparitions of hands produced at mediumistic séances are no hallucinations, but an entirely actual and objective phenomenon, apparently justifying the term "materialisation," though it is not pretended that this term explains the true process.

The only exception which could be taken to this experiment would be that it was carried out in America, the classic land of every sort of humbug. This objection might have a certain foundation in the given case, were that only a single and completely novel one, without any previous history. But for him who studies this question somewhat more closely, this case is only the latest development of a whole succession of experiments relating to the same phenomenon. The names of Professor Denton, the inventor of this method of proof, of Dr. Gardner, one of the most estimable representatives of Spiritualism in America, to whom belongs the idea of the experiment with the box, and under whose supervision the first experiments with it were instituted (see *Banner of Light* of 1st April, 1876); further, the testimony of Mr. Epes Sargent, a well-known author and Spiritualist, who, in sending the report of the committee to the *London Spiritualist*, wrote to the editor of it: "Having been present at the séances referred to, I can vouch for the scrupulous accuracy of the statements" (*Spiritualist*, 1876, p. 274), and who also transmitted the opinion of an expert in moulds—the sculptor O'Brien*—all this furnishes every necessary guarantee. It is true that reports coming from America are often exaggerated and wanting in exactitude, and in my studies in Spiritualism I prefer, as may be seen, to draw from England, where, moreover, many of those who take an active interest in the subject are personally known to me. Therefore, I shall here also give a detailed account of experiments of this nature which have been instituted in England, and which will perhaps afford still more cogent evidence.

* "This is, on special request, to certify that I am a modeller and sculptor of twenty-five years' experience, several of which years I spent in Italy, in the study of the great masters of painting and sculpture; that I am at present a resident of Washington, having my studio at 345, Pennsylvania-avenue, and that on the evening of January 4th inst. I was asked by a friend to repair to the residence of a private citizen, 1016, I-street, N.W., Washington, to examine some gypsum casts of hands and give my judgment thereof; that I was there shown by a gentleman, who was presented to me as Mr. John Hardy, of Boston, Mass., seven casts of as many different sizes of hands, which I inspected under a strong light, and with the aid of a microscope; that I found each of these a wonderful production, correctly modelled according to anatomical laws, and wrought with such minutiae as to the lineaments of the cuticle, &c., as I have never before seen in models of hands, or any part of the human body, except when the same are made by the actual application of gypsum or wax to the naked hand, or other part, in several separate pieces, which, when united, form a 'piece-mould,' in which the casts are taken; that these casts in question bore no evidence of having been made in 'piece-moulds' (or 'waste-moulds,' as called in my art), but seemed to have been cast in solid moulds; that among these casts was one which I was informed is reputed to be that of the right hand of the late President, Henry Wilson, and made since his decease, and which appeared to me to be singularly like his hand in shape and size, I having viewed his hand a few hours after his death, when taking the only mask of his face which was made, and purposing to take a mould of the hand, which I was prevented from doing only by the anxiety of the awaiting surgeons to perform their post-mortem examination. I willingly add, as requested, that the above-mentioned cast of Mr. Wilson's hand would, if made by our 'modelling-tools,' do great honour, in my opinion, to the most accomplished artist who ever lived; that being specifically interrogated upon this point, I fearlessly give it as my judgment that not more than one in a hundred reputable sculptors could model such a hand, in all its details, and that it would be hazardous for that one to try; but there is no method known to my art in which these casts, in the condition in which they were, as presented to me, could be made, except in piece-moulds, as to general configuration, and then subjected to elaborate carving to hide the seams and other evidences of the manner of their production—a great work in itself, when I consider the microscopic inspection which the casts withstood; that the creation of one of those casts would (if possible to be effected by any one sculptor, without the aid of a most talented engraver) require several days' time; that I was shown on the same evening at the same place with the casts, two gloves, or moulds of hands, made of paraffin, in the like of which I was told the casts were taken; that I carefully inspected these paraffin moulds, and found that they were without seams in any part, and must have been made in some way whole, over some model, like a perfect human hand, for instance, which model might be dipped several times into some semi-liquid, adherent substance, like the paraffin, and then withdrawn, leaving the glove entire; but such was the shape of the glove and moulds (as well as that of the casts), with curved figures, wrists some inches smaller than the size of the hand at the centre, or over the *phalangemeta carpal* joints, &c., that I deemed it impossible to withdraw the gloves whole, and of even thickness throughout, and was therefore left without any satisfactory theory of the method of their production. I am also requested to say that I am not a Spiritualist, have never attended a séance, or conversed with a 'medium' so-called, to my knowledge, and know nothing of the philosophy of 'Modern Spiritualism,' except what is generally imputed to it as regarding the immortality of the soul, and the possibility of the spirits of the dead returning, the former of which is a matter of faith with me, but of the latter of which I have no evidence to entitle me to an opinion thereon *pro* or *contra*.—JOHN O'BRIEN, Sculptor, Washington, D.C., January 30th, 1876."

(To be continued.)

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.]

Personal Experiences.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—There must be many Spiritualists who in the course of their experiences have witnessed manifestations in some ways more remarkable than the objective phenomena which are more or less the common property of all who have practically concerned themselves with Spiritualism.

It would be interesting if investigators, favoured in the manner I suggest, would (with your permission) give publicity through your columns to such incidents within their personal experience as they may deem worthy of narration: and as example is better than precept, I venture to relate three instances of abnormal communications with practical issues made to myself.

In 1864 I was in the habit of testing, from time to time, the mediumship of the two Mrs. Marshall. The conversation that used to take place between me and one particular spirit—which professed to be one of my two especial spirit-guides—was secret, that is to say, I did not give vocal utterance to my part in the conversation—my questions, answers, and remarks being expressed only in thought, and I used alphabetically to note the raps or conversation on the spirit side, seated so far away from the two mediums that they had no knowledge of what was being rapped out to me. I mention this secrecy, not as of any great importance, but to show that no conscious or unconscious working of the mind of either of the mediums could dictate or even suggest the communications.

On one occasion I was asked, through the rappings by the spirit I have referred to, whether I "would like to become acquainted with a certain family" (in my own position in life), and that if so it was rapped that the spirit would introduce me. I asked (in thought) by whom the introduction would be made, and where, not understanding the promise of introduction by the spirit to supersede the ordinary formality of a social introduction. The answer was: "I will introduce you myself here; but not now, as they are not at present in London. Go to Scotland, as you intend, and on your return come here again; say nothing to anybody. I should like you to tear up the alphabet on which you have been writing." (I had, unknown to myself, been taking down the raps on the back of an alphabet.) Certain private information connected with the family in question was then given me. This I am, of course, unable to disclose, but I may be permitted to state that it proved to be absolutely correct.

I obeyed the spirit's behest as to tearing up the alphabet, and made no mention of the communication to any person soever.

On my return to London about eight weeks afterwards, I paid my next visit to Mrs. Marshall. The same spirit then desired me to "come to-morrow week at three o'clock," and enjoined punctuality and continued reticence.

I presented myself on the day and at the hour appointed, and within five or ten minutes a lady, whom I will call Mrs. Z., and her son arrived. They were accosted by the two Mrs. Marshall with some surprise, their presence in London not being known to them. We sat down at the table, and the spirit at once, in the ordinary phraseology of social intercourse, rapped out an introduction of me to Mrs. Z., addressing her by name, and mentioning my full name and the relationship I bore to herself (the spirit).

I ventured to ask Mrs. Z. what had caused her to come, or led to her coming to Mrs. Marshall's that day. She replied that she had been back in London a week, and that it was only that morning it occurred to her that she would like to see her old friend Mrs. Marshall, and that finding herself free from any other engagement for the afternoon she resolved to come.

After Mrs. Z. and her little boy had left, I asked the spirit for some explanation of the circumstance, and further, whether spirits were able to foresee future events. The answer was, "Certainly not. God alone can be said to foresee the future; but just as you in your sphere can to a certain extent pre-arrange events, so we can do this to a still greater extent. I told you to come here to-day, and by the aid and influence of the spirit

friends of Mrs. Z. I was able to get her to come here also, and thus I was able to fulfil my promise to introduce you to her."

I will not encroach further on your space, but if you kindly find room for what I have written, I will continue my narrative for a future issue.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

W. A.

Professor James in re Mrs. Ross's Mediumship.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I read with some anxiety letters on the above subject in "LIGHT." If the Professor really desired to satisfy himself on the truths of materialisation, how very easy it was for him to have done so. I myself was exceedingly anxious upon this point. After some months waiting for an opportunity, Mrs. Hall, of Gateshead, kindly consented to pay me a visit for that object. On the 26th of April, Mrs. Hall, with a lady friend, held a séance at my cottage, with very satisfactory results. My dear wife, who passed to the higher life on the 19th August last year, materialised, and came to me several times, bringing me flowers, placing her hand on my forehead, and drawing a handkerchief over my head.

When she gave me the flowers, our hands came in contact, and I never felt her hand on my head, and my hand to her hand, more tangibly in my life.

Several forms materialised, and spirit-lights were seen. There were nine sitters present, and all were highly pleased. If I could but paint in words, I could present a beautiful picture of what took place in my own house, and so save people perplexing themselves about trap doors, openings in the walls, and so forth.

I am very sorry that any honest medium should be so exposed to what appears to me dishonest motives.

Middlewich.

R. YEOMANS.

Mr. Eglinton.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I had a séance with Mr. Eglinton on the 27th of July last, the day following that on which the photograph of himself, supported by the materialised spirit, was taken.

On arriving I found him looking wretchedly pale and ill. He told me how greatly he had suffered the evening before, that he had vomited blood, and twice fainted away, and that he should have telegraphed to me not to come to London (as he had done on several previous occasions when a dense fog or indisposition on his part forbade the hope of a successful séance), only that he would have no opportunity of giving me another séance for some months, as he was leaving town the next day. I felt it almost cruel to tax him in the least; but we did sit for direct writing, and I succeeded, after a long time, in obtaining a very short letter, quite unlike my usual success. I have twice, more than two years ago, been present at materialisation séances given by Mr. Eglinton, and can bear witness to the excessive pallor and exhaustion which ensued; and it is well known how, since then, he has persistently refused to give such séances, especially since the very severe illness with which he was laid up last spring, in consequence of the over strain upon his powers.—Yours truly,

"V."

Mr. Milner Stephen.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—It is satisfactory to notice that your correspondent, "H. B. L.," finds it expedient to inform your readers that his sharp criticisms on Mr. Milner Stephen were actuated, not by a desire to attack, but to elicit facts, and he makes some compensation for his asperities by the admission that the one case he investigated appeared to be satisfactory. As the question of fees has been introduced in a manner calculated to raise a bias against Mr. Milner Stephen, I should like to state that on his learning the position of my daughter (whose case is quoted in his letter), that of an overworked and underpaid artisan, Mr. Stephen not only expressed his sympathy in the kindest possible way, but at once undertook her treatment gratuitously; in the fulfilment of which he gave her all the attention and consideration generally reserved for those who go weighted with golden fees. The thoroughness of our convictions of the benefits my daughter derived from Mr. Stephen's treatment may be estimated by the circumstance that after her return home we sent that gentleman the best pecuniary acknowledgment of his services we were able to render.—Yours faithfully,

Ryde, I. W., May 20th, 1887.

F. N. B.

Evolution of the Soul.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Your correspondent signing himself "B. A." is of opinion that "physical and material evolution [are not these adjectives both expressive of the same thing?] can only be regarded as the external manifestations of a psychical and spiritual process." So far, he is obliging enough to agree with Theosophy. I find it difficult, however, to grasp his exact meaning. Does he reject the doctrine of the objective reality of matter, not only in the now almost indisputably certain light of the unreality of the *phenomenal universe*, but in equally denying the objective *noumenon* which constitutes the basis of all cosmic activity. If he admits the existence of matter—regarded from the purely metaphysical standpoint, of course as opposed to the crude argument drawn from empirical reality—the evolutionary process is NOT a *merely* "psychical one" (unless a "spiritual matter," that most glorious of contradictions, is postulated!). I notice this point because there seems to be a tendency "in the air" to identify spirit and matter. Spirit, however, is a meaningless expression unless denoting *subjectivity* in its various phases. Matter—though only possessing a *manvantaric* reality, so to say—is the basis of all *objective* evolution. "Nothing," says Sankaracharya, "is spirit which can be an object of consciousness (*i.e.*, of any possible perception) . . . Spirit is the *subject* of knowledge." Matter is but the *vehicle* of spirit (*i.e.*, consciousness in all its phases)—the phase of subjectivity varying with the nature of its "sheath" or "*principle*." "B. A." appears to confuse matter and spirit altogether.

That the personality of each incarnation is but a stepping-stone to higher things—as "B. A." suggests—is a fundamental position of the Occultist doctrine. The grounds on which the logical basis of the "Re-incarnationist" argument rests are to be largely sought for in daily experience. The difficulty experienced in obtaining an impartial hearing for Theosophic or Hermetic teaching is largely due to the fact that the assailants of the evolution hypothesis of the origin of the individual soul through a series of re-births will not face our whole dialectical battery. Rather than meet the *cumulative* force of the Occultist argument, they raise trivial objections on its by-aspects; the argument from evolution and *anthropology* (the whole subject-matter of this latter is a living proof of our position); the argument from the necessary *justice* inherent in nature unthinkable in the hypothesis of *unmerited chance* distributions of terrestrial happiness, talents, dispositions, &c., &c., &c.; the great assistance afforded by Karma in explaining the "unsolved mysteries" of heredity (which *theoretically* makes the child invariably a duplicate of the parents, and in scores of cases is *practically* negated by facts); the periodical appearance of great men and reformers in cyclic regularity; these and other arguments could be multiplied *ad libitum*. Meanwhile, I wish to call the attention of your readers to a very remarkable fact. The Esoteric doctrine clearly teaches that no conception is possible without an entity pressing forward for Re-incarnation. I maintain we have here a complete explanation of one of the most puzzling problems of ethnology—the *sudden sterility which sets in often among low races causing their final disappearance*. Take the cases of the Australian aborigines and Tasmanian savages. Darwin devotes some space in his *Descent of Man* to a consideration of the latter question, and after various attempts to account for the mystery gives it up. In the former case, it is now known that the Australian blacks—relics of the seventh sub-race of the Lemurian Continent, which even Haeckel accepts and holds to have been "the cradle of mankind"—began to die out *before the arrival of Europeans*. In both these cases, brandy and ill-treatment have been largely present to aid the extermination of the native races, but a large margin of fact remains altogether unexplained by ethnologists. The last Tasmanian died in 1876; an *unaccountable sterility* having set in among the tribes for many years.

The case of the Hawaiians is still more remarkable, because it is impossible to maintain the hypothesis of cruelty at the hands of colonists as a factor in the equation. As is well known, the very contrary is and was the truth; a genial colony of some 5,000 whites being on terms of hearty unison with the natives. The island, moreover, is most fertile and capable of maintaining some millions of inhabitants. Crime is low and education high. The physical strength of the people is of a good average, and that of the chiefs—who, by the way, are to their great regret, almost all without progeny—striking. Yet from Cook's visit down till the present period the natives have

decreased from 400,000 or so to 54,000 ; and the annual decrease is still very high. Whole districts are falling out of cultivation, and in many hamlets the voice of a child is never heard. (For the striking details of the case see *Countries of the World*, pp. 24-35, Vol. IV., Cassell and Co.)

Here surely is the hand of Karma ! Usually, physical causes mainly determine the extinction of races, or in occult language, the *Physical Karma* (famine, disease, &c.) is the main agent. But, occasionally we have to look to a deeper source than the mere environment of a people. In this instance, the obvious explanation is that no more human souls are required to incarnate and harvest experience in that phase of humanity.

In reply to "E. M.'s" suggestion, I prefer the use of the expression, "the Unconscious," because Von Hartmann having familiarised European thought with this mental symbol, it seems wise to adhere to it. Of course I do not mean bare unconsciousness, but ABSOLUTE CONSCIOUSNESS, which, regarded from the standpoint of our empirical consciousness, can only be so described.—Yours truly,
E. D. FAWCETT.
Teignmouth.

Hypnotism.—The Schools of Nancy and Paris.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Mr. Omerin has done me the honour of devoting three columns of your valuable space to critical observations on a letter which I addressed to you last February, describing some experiments which I witnessed in the Salpêtrière. He seems to have gathered from it the erroneous impression that I agree with Dr. Charcot's theory in opposition to Dr. Bernheim's. I am quite impartial in the matter, for I am unacquainted with either gentleman and differ totally from both ; but I venture to suggest, as an explanation of the difference which exists between them, that it could be accounted for by the fact that Dr. Bernheim "had not formulated Dr. Charcot's theory"—which, of course, as he differs from it entirely, he could not do. Nevertheless, Mr. Omerin calls this explanation "as severe as it is unfounded," a remark which seems to me "as severe as it is unfounded," and I still venture to maintain that if Dr. Bernheim was as convinced as Dr. Charcot seems to be that the latter was right, he would be able to obtain Dr. Charcot's results.

I quoted Dr. Bernheim's words to the effect "that in order to put a limb into a state of catalepsy, it is *not* necessary to open the eyes of the hypnotics as they do in the Salpêtrière, &c.," because I witnessed an experiment in which it was necessary. Mr. Omerin, in answer to this, states that Dr. Bernheim "does not refer to all hypnotics in speaking of them in the terms thus quoted," which of course disposes of the question ; only it is a pity he did not say so.

Mr. Omerin quotes a paragraph in which I resume my conclusions, which he calls "a third explanation." I have never offered but one in regard to the points at issue between the schools of Nancy and Paris, which is that both having formulated their theories, they can, though acting with perfect sincerity and good faith, obtain results which will square with them. I am utterly at a loss to comprehend Mr. Omerin's insinuation that I ever attributed the difference to any but an honourable cause. It is not their fault if the forces they are investigating are too capricious in their manifestation for them to arrive at similar conclusions, so long as the methods they are pursuing leave out of consideration the most important factor connected with those forces.

I did not say that in *every* case the mind of the operator is responded to by that of the patient. I am as conscious as Mr. Omerin is, that this is not the case—but it is so sufficiently often to enable operators with preconceived theories to produce results which harmonise with them. When I say that hypnotic suggestion *need* not be verbal, the very phrase used implies that there are cases where it must be verbal. My object in writing on the subject was to call attention to the fact that highly eminent scientific men, some of whom have, as Mr. Omerin says, made thousands of experiments, extending over a period of twenty-seven years, and some during a period of eight years, under the most favourable conditions for observation, have arrived at opposite conclusions, which does not surprise me. I have myself been brought into close contact with this subject for over twenty years, during which the methods pursued, and the phenomena I have witnessed, were outside of anything I have ever seen described anywhere. With regard to these, I have arrived at certain very different conclusions, but as Mr. Omerin agrees with me that we should not be premature in formulating theories, I will not allude further to mine at present.—Yours obediently,

Haifa, Syria.
May 10th.

LAURENCE OLIPHANT.

Mr. D'Auquier.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to a paragraph in the current number of "LIGHT," in which mention is made of my alleged exposure of Spiritualistic manifestations at Oxford. Permit me to say that in that part of my entertainment referred to, I do not pretend to unmask genuine Spiritualism, for that would be as absurd as if I were to advertise "Christianity Unmasked," or "The Bible Unmasked," but rather to expose fraudulent Spiritualism, or the tricks with which impostors, under the cloak of Spiritualism, deceive a too credulous public for the sake of gain.

These persons, sir, are not genuine Spiritualists, and laugh in their sleeve at their dupes. Genuine Spiritualistic manifestations are as different from the absurd antics of coal-scuttles and fire-irons as genuine religion is different from the grotesque gambols of Salvationist trumpeters and Hallelujah lasses, and I claim that by exposing this fraudulent Spiritualism I am rendering a real service to the cause of which "LIGHT" is the organ, and in which I am a sincere believer.—Your obedient servant,
T. C. D'AUQUIER.

33, Hawley-road, Kentish Town, May 24th, 1887.

[Mr. D'Auquier heads his bills "Spiritualism Unmasked !" He speaks of "pretended miracles" ; of "famous mysteries so frequently attributed to occult agency reproduced and explained in full view of the audience." There is not from one end to the other of his sensational bill anything to lead people to believe that he is animated in what he does by any such motive as he now puts forward.—Eds.]

Re-Incarnation.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The discussions upon the above very debateable subject having again been revived in the columns of your excellent journal, it may interest some of your readers, who, like myself, do not presume to enter the lists with either combatants, to see what opinions some of the advanced spirits, on the other side of the "dark river," hold regarding the matter. I therefore enclose the following lines, which I received from a most worthy medium (when hundreds of miles away !) who in a far distant land had introduced himself as the *quondam* President of the first "Spiritual Association" which had been formed in London, some thirty years ago ; and who produced as his credentials two Spiritual newspapers of that time with his name—*Mr. J. D. Meers*—as such President, containing two long communications *in prose*, which he left for my perusal.

On reading them, I found that instead of being prose they were both in reality charming pieces of *poetry* ; one of them, as I remember, entitled "The Tulip," but the authorship not disclosed ; but I instantly recognised them as in the style of my favourite poetess, *Felicia Hemans* ! And on visiting the medium's family the next evening and sitting round a black-japanned table, I asked him if he knew the author, and he answered in the negative. I then named that lady as the authoress, when a phase of mediumship presented itself which I had not before witnessed, for the table instantly tilted towards him, and taking a sheet of paper he looked at the table, and like a schoolboy writing his copy, he wrote down a communication from that spirit, misspelling her name as *Fecilia Hemars*, addressed to myself, stating : "You are quite right in supposing that I was the author. I impressed you so at the time you were reading it. You have always been one of my warmest admirers, &c. I have written many times through this medium, but he does not know my name."

I have only to add that I asked the spirit to favour us with a few lines of her poetry, and also that the angel "Purity" (who was seen by the medium in her company, and from whom I have received many valued communications and great assistance) would add her blessing ! A few evenings after the enclosed lines were written on the same japanned table, and forwarded to me.

—Yours truly,

May 18th, 1887.

S.

To "S." AN ACROSTIC.

Peace to thy soul ! while holy angels sing,
Under the banner of our Lord and King !
Royal thy labour ! 'tis of God-like skill ;
Immense thy power ! unlimited thy will,
To soothe the sufferer and banish pain !
Your daily task, until you once again
Return to Heaven and God !

—FELICIA HEMANS.

(Concluding verse of a little poem addressed to "S.")

So useful labour is a work of joy ;
And you are one of God's own chosen band :
Wisely and well, for others you employ
The healing virtue, flowing through your hand ;
Gift of our Lord ! But you will once again
Cross the dark river,—Paradise regain,
And commune with the Lord !

—FELICIA HEMANS.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THE communications of "1st London M.B." ; Mrs. A. J. Penny ; and others are necessarily deferred till next week.