

# Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

No. 399.—VOL. VIII. [Registered as a Newspaper.]

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 1888.

[Registered as a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

The Editor will be absent from Town for a month, and begs the indulgence of any correspondents who may personally address him during that time. He begs that all letters may be addressed to the Office of "LIGHT," and that those requiring his personal attention may be marked "private." No great delay will occur.

One chapter in D. D. Home's life relates to Sir David Brewster and Lord Brougham. It was after a sitting with Home that Sir D. Brewster made use of the expression, "This upsets the philosophy of fifty years"; and Lord Brougham expressed his willingness to put off every engagement for further investigation. (*Morning Advertiser*, October 15th, 1855.) The world knows how these men attempted, when the impression had faded, to deny that it had existed. But fortunately Sir David had told his experience to more than one person: one correspondent writes that he had received from him "a very remarkable account of the extraordinary powers of Mr. Home"; and the late Lord Dunraven tells that he "was so struck with what Sir David—with whom I was well acquainted—told me himself, that it materially influenced me in determining to examine thoroughly into the reality of the phenomena. I met him one day on the steps of the Athenæum . . . he spoke most earnestly, stating that the impression left on his mind from what he had seen was that the manifestations were to him quite inexplicable by fraud, or by any physical laws with which we were acquainted." I take pleasure in placing on record that noteworthy admission as an antidote to a more recent letter to the *Advertiser*, in which Sir David Brewster disclaimed all belief in Spiritualism, and roundly attributed to imposture that which, when his impressions were fresh, he had described to Lord Dunraven as quoted above. The story is not an edifying one, and I have no wish to reproduce it in all its unedifying details. Sir David had protested too much; he had a reputation at stake, and he hedged. That is all. He was neither better nor worse than many an equally famous man. "Spirit is the last thing I will give in to." He told Mr. Coleman that the phenomena were not produced by trick, that he was not deluded, that he did not know how they came about, but with true logical precision, and scientific accuracy—"Spirit is the last thing I will give in to" was his ultimatum.

The number of distinguished persons who witnessed some of the phenomena of Spiritualism in the presence of Mr. D. D. Home was very great. No record, I fear, has been kept that is in any degree complete, for Home had

a great dislike to hear details of his séances, and I believe he kept nothing in the form of a diary. But from the recent life of him it seems that during the comparatively short time that he was in America he introduced the subject to

William Bryant (the Poet)	Dr. Hull
Professor David A. Wells	Dr. Clark (Bishop of Rhode Island)
(Harvard University)	Mr. Hiram Powers (the Sculptor)
Professor Mapes	Hon. R. Dale Owen
Judge Edmonds	Mark Twain
Dr. John Gray	Mr. Henry H. Brownell (the Poet)
Mr. Ward Cheney	

and no doubt to many others. I do not suppose that all these people heard of Spiritualism first, or solely, from Mr. Home; and this remark applies to the much greater number of persons on the Continent of Europe and in this country who attended some of his séances. Nor am I to be understood as putting forward these people as Spiritualists. Some were, some were not. But they all evinced so much interest as to attend a séance, and they all, as I believe, were satisfied with the objective reality and genuineness of what they saw. It is no little praise that the subject of Spiritualism, in some of its most palpable manifestations, should have been presented to so distinguished a body of people of position and influence under conditions suitable for exact observation. In this respect the séances held by Mr. Home have never been surpassed.

The list in England is a long one; I have not attempted any orderly classification, but it will be seen that the list includes men of science (Lord Brougham, Sir David Brewster, Dr. R. Chambers, Mr. Crookes), men of letters (Lord Lytton, Lord Houghton, Mr. Laurence Oliphant, Mr. Ruskin), men of the world (Lord Dunraven, Sir Emerson Tennant, Mr. Abraham Hayward), ladies of fashion (their name is legion), a chairman of the Stock Exchange, a British Minister at the Court of Madrid, "Jacob Omnium," "Father Prout," and a crowd of notables, who besieged Mrs. Milner Gibson for permission to see this new thing. In quite another way Mr. Home excited as much interest in the occult as the Society for Psychical Research have done in their phantasms; but Mr. Home's phenomena were not other than Spiritualistic, referable and referred to the action of departed human spirits. In those days theories were sparse and phenomena more rife than they now are. Amongst the sitters were the following:—

Lord Brougham	Mr. Cromwell Varley, F.R.S.
Sir David Brewster	Dr. Huggins, F.R.S.
Dr. Robert Chambers	Mr. Serjeant Cox
Earl of Crawford and Balcarres	Dr. Garth Wilkinson
Earl of Dunraven	Sir Charles Nicholson
Lord Dufferin	Sir Daniel and Lady Cooper
Lord Lyndhurst	Mr. Pickersgill, R.A.
Lord Lytton (the late)	Mr. and Mrs. Howitt
Lord Howden (British Minister at Madrid)	Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall
Dr. Ashburner	Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Wilkinson
Dr. Elliotson	Mr. and Mrs. Newton Crosland
Mr. Buckle	Dr. Gully (of Malvern)
Mr. Ruskin	Dr. Cumming
Mr. Thackeray	Mr. Heaphy
Mr. John Bright	Mr. Edmond Beales
Sir Fitzroy Kelly	Mr. J. C. M. Bellew
Lord de Tablet	Mr. Rudall
Lord Houghton	Mr. Jencken
	Hon. Colonel Wilbraham

Lord and Lady Clarence Paget	M. Tiedemann (M. Tiedemann
Sir Richard and Lady Burton	Marthese)
Mr. Hain Friswell (the Author of	"Father Prout"
<i>The Gentle Life</i> )	Mr. Jas. Hutchinson (Chairman
Mr. Patrick Alexander, M.A.	of the Stock Exchange)
(author of <i>Spiritualism: a</i>	The Duchess of Hamilton
<i>Narrative with a Discussion</i> )	(daughter of the Grand Duke
Mr. Robert Bell (writer of the	of Baden)
<i>Cornhill</i> article, <i>Stranger than</i>	The late Duchess of Sutherland
<i>Fiction</i> )	Countess of Caithness
Sir Edwin Arnold	Marchioness of Hastings
Mr. Durham (the Sculptor)	Duchesse de Pomar
Mr. and Mrs. Nassau Senior	Lady Shelley
Mrs. Adelaide Senior	Lady Gomm
Dr. Lockhart Robertson	Lady Otway
Sir Emerson Tennant	Lady Dunsany
Mr. Laurence Oliphant	Lady Londonderry
Mr. Abraham Hayward	Lady Trelawney
Mr. Higgins ("Jacob Omnium")	Lady Helena Newenham
Dr. Hawksley	Mlle. Tietjens
General Drayson	Mrs. Milner Gibson
Rev. J. G. Wood	Mrs. Grote
Captain Gerard Smith (Scots	Mrs. Macdougall Gregory
Fusiliers)	Mrs. Trollope
Captain C. Wynne (cousin of Lord	Mrs. E. Barrett Browning
Dunraven)	Mrs. Parkes
Mr. Bertolacci	Mrs. Hennings
Mr. Benjamin Coleman	Mrs. Scott-Russell
Mr. T. A. Trollope (the well-known	Mrs. Honywood
Author)	Miss Catherine Sinclair
Mr. Crookes, F.R.S.	

As Mr. Home spent a large part of his time on the Continent the list of notables is long and contains many eminent names.

The Emperor of Russia (and his predecessor)	Countess Panigai
Emperor of Germany (William I.)	Count Branicka
Emperor and Empress of the French	Countess Potocka
King and Queen of Hanover	Count de Sancillon
King of Wurtemberg	Count de Villiers
King of Bavaria (the late)	Count de Riancourt
Queen of Holland	Counts Alexander and Wladimir de Komar
The Grand Duke Constantine of Russia	Count Koucheleff
Prince Luigi (brother of late King of Naples)	Baron de Pontalba
Late Duke of Parma	Baron de Retz
The Prince of Solms-Braunfels.	Baron de Stakelberg
Prince Albrecht of Solms-Braunfels	Baroness Taube
Prince of Saxe-Meiningen	Baron de Meyendorff
Prince and Princess Murat	Count Steinbock-Fermor
Princesse de Beauveau	M. Marie and Madame Grisi
Prince and Princess of Nassau	Madame de Balzac (widow of the Novelist)
Princess Mentchrikoff	Madame de Girardin
Prince and Princess Metternich	Rossini (the Composer)
Princess of Mingrelia	M. Blumenthal (the Composer)
Princess de Montléart	Hebert (the Painter)
Duchesse de Bassano	M. Tourgenieff (the famous Russian Author)
Duchesse de Tascher	Cavaliere S. Fenzi
Duchesse de Medina-Celi	Count Alexis Tolstoi (the Russian Poet)
Duchesse de Montebello	Countess de Lourmel
Duchesse de Valmy	Alexandre Dumas (the Elder)
Nubar Pacha	Professor Boutleroff
Marquis de Belmont	M. Alexander Aksakoff (Russian Imperial Privy Counsellor)
Marquis and Marquise de Fontenelles de Rambures	Dr. Karpowitch
Marquis de Boissy (Countess Guiccioli of Byron fame)	M. Henri Delaage (Author and Journalist)
Marquis Duplanti	His Excellency N. Aksakoff
Marquis Strachan de Salza	M. Lacordaire (brother of the celebrated Preacher)
Countess Orsini (née Orloff)	

Doubtless there are many more: but even these may give pause to those too clever theorists who regard such phenomena as occurred in the presence of D. D. Home and other mediums as the product of successful conjuring. To any one who was even once present at a séance of his, this explanation will be on the very face absurd. Nor is the theory to be squared with the singular fact that the psychical force which Mr. Home possessed was extremely variable in its manifestation. On repeated occasions an exact prediction of its withdrawal and restoration at specified times would be given. This period sometimes extended to a year, and during that time no manifestations whatever could be had. This would appear consistent only with the presence and action of an external intelligence. But what was the force, and how came it to be in abeyance for these predicted periods? I am familiar with the same thing in myself, and I can offer no explanation beyond this: the controlling intelligences seem to have the power of calling this force into action, and of using it at their will. I can see no other explanation.

"FACTS are not intellectual wealth, but are the counters which represent principles, of which it consists, as coins are not material wealth, but are merely the counters which stand for it."—From "The Education of Man," by JOHN G. SPEED, in *Phrenological Magazine*,

### "LE JOURNAL AMUSANT" AND FRENCH SPIRITUALISM.

A trial which has recently taken place in France, and to which we may refer when we have fuller information, has created considerable sensation there, and has very naturally roused the ire of those in whom the idea of any existence other than this, causes emotions not easily to be distinguished from fear. That there was some atrocious wickedness practised by certain French Spiritists there seems to be no doubt, but that is no reason why Spiritualism is to be condemned, any more than religion is to be denounced because a good many of its professors have practised its outward forms for very unholy ends.

According to *Le Spiritisme*, it is the *Journal Amusant* which is now seriously concerned for the stability of French reasonableness, and for the protection of those who cannot protect themselves. This journal pleasantly proposes that all Spiritists should be sent into penal servitude. "Au Bagne," says the *Journal Amusant*. Those of our readers who are acquainted with this admirable paper will perhaps not be surprised, though they may be amused. The *Journal Amusant*, they will recollect, is given to drawing delight for its readers from the same fountain head of purity as modern French playwrights generally draw their inspiration. The editor, then, of the *Journal Amusant* suggests that Spiritists should be sent to the galleys. "But," says M. Gabriel Delanne, "this generous individual totally forgets to tell us how such a law is to be drawn up. On what consideration must the legislator rely? Is it in the name of morality that he would speak? To this we reply that we teach the love of our neighbour, the elevation of man by incessant effort made in his own behalf, and that in giving an experimental proof of the survival and responsibility of his acts, we present the world with the most powerful lever for raising its moral nature." Further on M. Delanne continues: "It is curious to see what unconscious ferocity these professional amusers display, when they find themselves face to face with the great problem of what is outside this. Accustomed to treat with graceful carelessness the most serious questions, they do not fear going to any extreme when anything arises which seems to be out of harmony with their own small ideas."

Addressing M. Véron, the editor in question, M. Delanne says: "You call us idiots, which, while not complimentary to ourselves, becomes intolerable when applied to your friends Victor Hugo and Vacquerie. If my memory serves me, I think I have read certain dithyrambic eulogies on the great poet or politician who represented in your eyes the *summum* of human faculties; how is it, then, that now you place him among the simpletons? Can a man be a genius as to part of the human mind, but an absolute fool when Spiritism is in question?" Then M. Delanne adds, with admirable simplicity, "We are used to this kind of hateful criticism from MM. Bersot and Jules Soury, but we expected better things from a man of intelligence and a Republican who ought to have lofty and generous ideas." Of M. Delanne we may indeed say, "O man, great is thy faith." Nevertheless, M. Delanne, we are glad to note, takes the opportunity of speaking in no measured terms of those who make capital out of human credulity. "We have," he says, "for a long time energetically repudiated all communion with those people who make a paying business of Spiritism. We, as honourable men, are not willing to be mixed up with the impure crowd which carries on a vile traffic in mediumship, and which beats the big drum over the grave of the dead!" For these words one cannot be too grateful to M. Delanne.

The article concludes with these energetic sentences:—"You are an important personage, M. Véron, a pillar of contemporary journalism, take advice from one of the more

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lowly sort, never talk about what you do not understand, unless you are willing to run the risk of uttering . . . inexactitudes which give evidence of unexpected simplicity in a man of sense. Study the matter, and then if you want to send us to the galleys, at any rate you will know why."  $\pi$ .

### ON THE DEFINITION OF THE WORD "SOUL."

BY HELLENBACH (*Posthumous.*)

Translated by "V."

If we imagine two circles which have different centres but partly cover one another, we have a representation of two ideas which bear the same name and yet are very different. With objects visible to the senses, a misunderstanding as to their nature is less to be feared than it is in considering abstract ideas; we are readily agreed what man is, but almost everyone has a different idea as to what the expression *soul* or *spirit* really denotes, and in consequence of this diversity of opinion, the transcendental basis of human beings is sub-divided into *spirit* and *soul*, the one being denied and the other allowed to animals, and the first described as being the seat of self-consciousness, &c., without any very apparent reason. The cause of this is that each one includes under this idea what he chooses, without regard to the fact that these definitions are of ancient origin, and should not be remodelled carelessly or at will. The discoverer of a new element or planet can without blame give it a new name; but to give new names to old things, or new meanings to old names, must cause great confusion. If we wish to find out whether the words *spirit* and *soul* can be rightly applied in connection with man, we must first of all be quite clear as to what and how much we really do know about the basis of human beings.

We know that within us is a *subject* which wills, feels, and thinks, and which, according to all probability—since no other factor is known to us—also has an organism, composed, however, not only of living cells, like that of the senses, but possibly of some other matter, or substance, as well. I have prefixed *meta* to this possible second organism (like *meta* in metaphysics), solely to distinguish it from the physical organism, without prejudice against any other definition.

Now, we read here and there that the *subject* is the *spirit*, and what I term the *meta-organism* is the *soul*. Is this correct? Up to the present time *both* have always been understood by the word *soul*, and whatever grounds we may have found for this transcendental basis, both have always been comprehended in the word *soul*, for this idea does not analyse the being of the *soul*, but comprises that which lives, feels and acts in us. Therefore we speak rightly of the *soul* of an undertaking and of the *soul* of man. It is a shorter term for the "intelligible" *subject*, with all its known and unknown attributes, and this expression should not be further upset. *Soul* in ordinary language means the whole (*i.e.*, *soul* and *spirit*).

Is this *subject* indeed a *spirit*? Who can define it? Is it immaterial? But what then is matter? Not without reason does Schopenhauer call it "causality." In common life, matter is looked upon as that which acts upon the senses; but now we know that it is a combination of atoms. But then what is an atom? An invisible, indivisible, indestructible, eternal and infinite something! It is so small that we can form no conception of it, and yet it extends to the cloud-like milky-way of the universe! Finally, it is a varied collection of ether atoms! In the old times we might speak of *spirit* and *matter*, but now we do not know how *spirit* and *matter* can be defined. Hence it arises that *spirit* and the words derived from it have such different meanings, while the idea of the *soul* has always remained the same.

To say that "the *subject* in us is a *spirit*" is open to two objections: firstly, because it is not clearly defined, and therefore we cannot know what a *spirit* is; and, secondly, because neither do we know what this *subject* is. We cannot absolutely deny any one who says it is identical with the "will" of Schopenhauer, or the "unconscious," or the "monad" of Leibnitz, &c.; neither, indeed, can this be proved! But we can chase this metaphysical ghost from the grave of the departed; we know at least that there its place is *not*. It may be even that in our second form of perception we shall not be capable of determining which of these ideas is the right one, and the solution of the mystery may be still deferred; but in *summa summarum* we do not know what the *subject* is. We only know some of its attributes, and are using our utmost endeavours to increase this knowledge.

It is owing to the obscurity of the term *spirit* that many consider it to be the seat of self-consciousness, both of which are denied to animals, with what justice remains to be proved. Self-consciousness is only an increased development of the *Ego* in ordinary consciousness; this self-consciousness is less developed in the lower races of mankind, but it is still a question whether it is wholly wanting in the higher species of animals. Animals have everything in common with man: they will, feel and reason, though they are inferior to him, because they stand on a lower step of organisation. It is impossible to decide with certainty whether there exists more than a comparative difference in the *subjects* of both. The animal has even speech, which far transcends the mere power of expressing pleasure or the reverse. On my terrace, which is covered by a vaulted roof, supported by pillars, some swallows were in the habit of building their nests. I once wanted to keep one particular spot there free from uncleanness, and so had the repeatedly-commenced nests cleared away, in the hopes that, after several attempts, the swallows would select another place in the arcade for their building operations. But now as many as thirty more swallows appeared, who joined in their labours, so that four or five were engaged at the same time on one nest! and I had to capitulate. Now, there can be but two ways of explaining this occurrence; either the birds must have communicated their thoughts to one another, or the swallows, which were flying about, recognised their companions' need and acted on their own initiative. In either case we recognise a degree of thought which shows how much we undervalue animals.

Formerly, people considered that thought was an attribute of *spirit*, and sensation of the *soul*, but now it is known that the most ordinary feelings of the senses are a result of reason, and, therefore, of thought. If we concede this power of thought which dominates the reason to *spirit*, we cannot deny it to animals, for animals reflect as we do. Only abstract thought, therefore, remains, such as that concerning God, virtue, &c. But this boundary line is very difficult to define, and it cannot well be asserted that the *soul* has no share in this or the *spirit* in that. Ideas which are not clearly defined must always be the cause of error; in normal matters this evil can easily be rooted up, but it is a very difficult thing in dealing with metaphysical subjects.

Men and animals both have a *soul* in which a *subject* is contained, and one which wills, feels, and thinks; but whether this *subject* is a *spirit* I shall not be able to determine till I obtain a perfect definition, and therefore a clear conception of what *spirit* is. It is, therefore, to be wished that men—at least, those who belong to the same school—should by the word *soul* understand it as comprehending the whole, as is usually done. The use of the word *spirit* and words derived from it in ordinary conversation, can at most indicate a more refined or attenuated *soul*, it can never be intended to denote a separation between *soul* and *spirit*. The *soul* may

in a certain sense become spiritualised, but to determine whether it is or becomes a *spirit*, it is first necessary to have a clear and exact definition of what *spirit* is, and one which would be universally recognised, but at present none such exists.

### PSYCHICAL ATTRACTION.

#### No. I.—THE STATE ITSELF.

By psychical attraction I mean a state in which conscious and unconscious human beings are attracted towards each other by reason of their *internal* nature or existence, as contra-distinguished from their *external* nature, or form and organisation in connection with their immediate environment.

The reason which induces me at present to seek permission to make the columns of "LIGHT" the vehicle of some observations on this obscure subject, is the circumstance that, while for many years I have been a more or less interested spectator of these psychical phenomena, acting in their own sphere, I have for some time past observed that several accomplished authors have made sensations similar to mine the subject of their literary labours, and have accepted such sensations, under the name of telepathic, as on the whole correct impressions derived from a state external to the percipient. I have also observed that the authors, known to me, who have written on this subject, have given very distinct colours of their own to the system which they describe, knitting it on to their private opinions, to the personal imagination, the views of ancient sages, and their prospective notions with regard to the future history of mankind. I have therefore been induced by a very natural desire to speak what seems to me to be the truth on this subject, to crave patience for such an account of psychical attraction as proceeds from an unmoved or impassive spectator.

Notwithstanding, however, all that has been written upon the now widely used and appropriated term, *Telepathy*, it must be owned that it still remains the sign of ideas of dubious reality. As far as I am aware, no scientific proof of its reality has as yet appeared, so that, in the presence of a sceptical world, its phenomena cannot be with certainty distinguished from sensitised ideas of the brain—those encroachments of the higher order of perceptions on the lower—a notion which is the popular explanation of these singular indications of a psychical interaction among mankind. The supposition, however, of hallucination, means only the absence of scientific proof conjoined with the assumption of impossibility, and to a mind accustomed for many years to the distinct perception of telepathic communications, to discern those minute differences in them which are always the results of something real, and to receive messages framed in a considerable number of consecutive sentences, to such a mind these considerations, taken along with so many confirmations as may be found in various works, render external objections, if not altogether worthless, at least of feeble import.

The state to which I have given the name of psychical attraction opened itself to my observation almost suddenly, while I was living alone and in the complete possession of my ordinary physical and mental faculties; and, during a term of nearly sixteen years it has so remained, during which period I have never sought the co-operation of another human being with respect to the development of that state, for the very good reason that it does not make a medium of me, but only seems to participate in my ordinary life and ideas. In its sensible manifestation it usually presents to the unoccupied mind the aspect of a large multitude of figures faintly discerned by the inner eye, several of which seem always engaged in the act of speaking, either aloud or in whispers. These spectres seem more or less connected with and affected by each

other. From time to time, especially during darkness, these perceptions pass into some complete or definite object of view, such as the interior of a house with its inmates, a wooded landscape with stream, declivities, and hollows, and other common scenes. These appearances are commonly accompanied by a sensation of resonance. After some years' experience, I became convinced from the extreme plasticity of the state to the impressions of my own mind that its current language, as connected with my own thoughts, was totally untrustworthy, although sometimes I heard sensible and clever thoughts as to the nature of the state and various other subjects.

From my own observations and from various serious communications, I came to the elementary and vague conclusion that a number of human beings, quite independently of their local contiguity, gravitated *psychically* towards a certain area. If this fact is true it points probably to a condition common to all men, perhaps to all animals; for what can one's consciousness of this state imply but a sudden awaking up to the realisation of a secret life present with the percipient from his earliest days? Why and how this common psychical life exhibits itself principally by means of speech shall be the subject of the next section.

Although to me language is the most prominent feature in psychical life, I was soon compelled to think, from the imperfect manner in which it was carried on, that the state itself was not, of its own nature, intended for the communication of thoughts, but had a far more profound constitution, belonging to the very roots of life. It would seem as though there existed a system of universal gravitation which, while leaving unaffected matter in the mass, as far as my experience testifies, had for its function the combination of atoms belonging to the most distant beings; or perhaps the idea might be better expressed by imagining all individuals to be stripped of their visible forms, and existing as mere atoms in the midst of those of the inorganic world. Thus, from the standpoint of real life, each one might be supposed to have a power of communicating sensations and ideas to others. One might penetrate further into this interesting subject and arrive at the imagination of an immense variety of combinations of atoms, by means of which nature imprinted the germs of life on the seeds proper to each kind of existence, the electric-like forces through which such vitality was conveyed to the seed being always at work, and carrying on their functions so as to bind together in one those who sprang from the same modification of matter.

Though there are, no doubt, other more immediate causes of the consciousness of psychical attraction, the state of sleep seems to be that by which it is really imprinted in every human being; though but in few cases does it rise to the brain while awake, and thus become a part of actual life; probably it hangs about the nerves in the spinal cord, from which point certain indistinct thrills and faint representations of it may from time to time make themselves felt in all. I have sometimes thought that the state of sleep is a great normal power in the world, and that by some totally unknown function it extends its reign, quite irrespective of locality, among the wakeful as well as among those asleep. It would seem, although no doubt the idea is capable of some clearer explication, as though a world of slumber brooded over the earth, hanging about us, as it were, and receiving us into its wavy bosom, whenever the idle brain was exhausted by the wear and tear of existence. I must own, however, that this idea was suggested to me by the circumstance that many of those who communicate in the best and quietest manner from the invisible state spoke of themselves to me as asleep. Often their very respiration seems to be united with that of the listener, suggesting usually a closer psychical proximity and relationship than that which holds good amongst those who are awake.

## JOTTINGS.

Mr. A. P. Sinnett has been for some time travelling in Switzerland. He left town in the beginning of August and does not expect to return till the early part of October. Meantime letters will reach him irregularly, as they will most of us who are now holiday-making.

Mr. A. J. Harvey (12, Landridge-road, Fulham) sends us some account of his plan of self-healing. He starts from some known physiological laws, and argues that from them force can be directed to the several enfeebled or diseased parts so as to effect a cure. His leaflet can be seen at our office.

The holiday season in this year that so lends itself to outdoor festivity is upon us, and the publishers (125, Fleet-street) are moved to supply excursionists with a sixpenny handbook to the Ardennes. *Walks in the Ardennes, Cycling, Driving, Boating, by rail and on foot, with some Fishing and Shooting Notes*, is a marvel of cheapness. The illustrations by Julian F. Weedon admirably fit in with the text of Percy Lindley, which is much superior in style to the average guide-book. Clear information, well printed and illustrated, and in portable form—that is the verdict. The handbook may be commended as a model.

In *Lucifer* (August) Mabel Collins concludes her powerful story "The Blossom and the Fruit." But why the addition of her "—" coadjutor? We may expect the novel in book-form, if it has not already appeared.

M. Emile Burnouf has been writing "courteously and even sympathetically" of the Theosophical Society in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, in an article, entitled "Le Bouddhisme en Occident."

The distinguished scholar sets himself to inquire into the origin of three religious organisations—Buddhism, Christianity, and the Theosophical Society—which latter he calls "a new association, created for the propagation in the world of the Buddhistic dogmas." Starting on this erroneous assumption, he seems to us to miss his way throughout. The current number of *Lucifer* has a long expository and elucidatory article on the topic.

In the same number "Waves of Sympathy" is worth attention. We may recur to the facts therein stated. "My Uncle's Strange Story," too, is a condescension to the level of the ordinary mortal who cannot tread the heights. It is good reading.

Re-incarnation finds its way even into this last publication that deals with the mystical and occult. Mr. E. D. Walker has published a book in New York in which he shows, or tries to show, that Re-incarnation is simply the enunciation of one of nature's laws. His book, reviewed in this number of *Lucifer*, is warmly commended.

Mr. A. F. Tindall sends us a small volume of "Mystical Lays" which, at his desire, we have placed in the library of the Alliance. They are published for the author at 30, Wyndham-street, W., and are dedicated to the wife of the member for West Marylebone. The poems are inspirationally given.

The contents include "Mazarini, a Drama in Four Acts"; "Soul Reveries"; "The Village Festival, a Fairy Operetta"; "Eustace and Isoline, a Tale"; "The Nemesis of Evil"; "The Dream of Life"—the two latter of which we prefer—various lyrics, sonnets, and poems. Mr. Tindall is a poet both in sounds and words.

The *Glasgow Herald* has published some long articles on "Curiosities of Mesmerism," dealing with problems of Hypnotism in a way that will strike its readers, but which do not advance the knowledge of those students who have followed the latest investigations in Paris and London. This, however, is not any bar to the usefulness of popularising recent research.

Dr. Arthur Merton, the "Sivartva" of the *World's Advance Thought*, has sailed for Europe with a view to "the redemption of Palestine." He is going, or thinks he is, to restore the Jews, rebuild Jerusalem and its temple, and so forth. One of the many speculative plans that adorn or encumber this speculative age.

Psychography before 1859. In 1859 was published a book entitled *Twelve Messages from the Spirit of John Quincy Adams, to his friend Josiah Brigham through Joseph D. Stiles, Medium*. We learn from a notice in the *Golden Gate* that:—

"The book was written in Quincy, Mass., Mr. Adams' former residence, in the house of an old friend of Mr. Adams, Mr. Brigham; through the hand of a mechanic (whose penmanship differed much from that of Mr. Adams), and in the handwriting of Mr. Adams in his latter days, feeble and tremulous. Manuscript covering over 400 octavo printed pages was written, all in the peculiar handwriting of John Quincy Adams previous to his so-called death. One of the twelve messages was devoted to George Washington, to which, at the close of the work, Washington writes several pages of reply, and in the earthly handwriting of George Washington. Mr. Adams pays a warm tribute to his mother's virtues and excellency of character in the course of his *Messages*; and Mrs. Abigail Adams (his mother) also submits a few pages in rejoinder, this being written in her earthly handwriting. At the termination of the volume, a few lines endorsing the general truth of the contents of Mr. Adams' *Messages* is signed by over 540 different spirits, each signature being in his or her own peculiar handwriting."

"The medium affirmed that he felt a new influence while his hand was controlled to write each signature. A comparison made by me of the signatures of the public characters, as given in this book, with their signatures as found in literature and public documents, shows that in no case is the spirit signature an exact fac-simile of the ante-mortem signature, but it bears a strong resemblance thereto, just what under the circumstances would naturally be the case, supposing the medium to have been really influenced by the persons whose names were being written by him, the same peculiarities of style, &c., being indicated with some variation."

This is, we gather, a case similar to that which "M.A. (Oxon.)" has partly published an account of in his *Spirit Teachings* and other communications to the Press. We know nothing of the evidence in this early case, but the fac-similes of signatures and the various character of the automatic handwriting in the later case are very marked.

The parallel does not stop there:—

"The language is uniformly good, devoid of obscurity or rhapsody, vagueness or idealism, such as are found in so much of the so-called spiritual literature. The work is plain and practical, full of sturdy common-sense; albeit, it has too much of the devotional element in it to be palatable in all respects to the more radical thinkers of the Spiritual and Free Religious schools."

*The Seventh Dream\** is a fearfully and wonderfully occult story. Its cover is adorned with a spider's octagonal web of sevens, and with sevens so disposed as to look very like the mystic *crux ansata*. As for the "shilling shocker," it must be read to be believed—or otherwise. We have met with "Rita" before, and our readers know what we then said. But, occult or not, there can be no mistake in commending this well-printed little book to weak eyes and less weak understandings for an hour's railway journey, or a dawdle on the beach. The central idea—which we do not betray—is well worked out.

## MARRIAGE OF MR. LAURENCE OLIPHANT.

We are authorised to announce the marriage of Mr. Laurence Oliphant with Miss Rosamond Dale Owen, daughter of the late Robert Dale Owen, sometime American Minister at the Court of Naples, whose works are among the best known and most interesting in the literature of Spiritualism. The present Mrs. Oliphant is herself favourably known, both in America and in this country. She is a granddaughter of Robert Owen, the celebrated Socialist author. The marriage was at the Registrar's Office, Upton-on-Severn, Worcestershire, on Thursday, August 16th; Mr. Oliphant and Miss Owen having been the guests, during the requisite period of previous residence in the district, of Mr. and Mrs. Hankin, Mountside, Malvern. The attesting witnesses were Mr. Charles Wright Hankin and Mr. C. C. Massey. After the formality, Mr. and Mrs. Oliphant proceeded to London. After some visits to friends in the country, and a short stay in Paris, they will depart for Mr. Oliphant's residence in Syria.

"THE amount both of thoughtfulness and reflective power which rough settlers will develop out of one really worthy book is quite astounding to more civilised beings, who drive one book through their head after another until they wear a smooth hole incapable of retaining permanently anything that passes through it."—Rood, p. 63.

\* *The Seventh Dream*. By Rita. Author of the *Mystery of a Turkish Bath*. (F. V. White and Co., 31, Southampton-street, Strand.)

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

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## Light:

EDITED BY "M. A. (OXON.)"

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25th, 1888.

**TO CONTRIBUTORS.**—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor. 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.

### CONVERSION—AND THE UNSEEN.

In investigating the evidence for spiritual phenomena one field, owing to the repugnance it causes in many minds, is perhaps too often neglected, namely, that of the rapid salvation propaganda in its varied forms. A little consideration will show how much is to be expected from this quarter. The constant nervous excitement, differing much in its effect, though not perhaps so much in kind, from the studious contemplation of things in general under a bo tree, must of necessity open up channels for the reception of spiritual influence on the one hand and for the discharge of that influence on the other. That the influence in either direction is necessarily good is quite another question; indeed it is possible to consider the results as being very often, if not always, somewhat mean and contemptible, but that is of little importance from the point of view insisted on here. As an illustration of this there occurs in a recent number of *The Christian* a short account of a rapid conversion told by the Rev. William Haslam, M.A., a clergyman of the Church of England. There seems no reasonable doubt as to the truth of the story, which is somewhat above the distressing blood and fire accounts of the *War Cry*.

A young incorrigible, to whom Sunday-school observances were somewhat irksome, was so great a trouble to the rector of the parish that the latter had serious thoughts of expelling the boy. Nevertheless—and it is well to note this,—he went on praying for him. So wicked was this boy that on one occasion, says the narrator,

"I was led to speak kindly to him about his soul, and he let me go on so long without interruption that I really began to hope the word was making an impression upon him. Suddenly, to my surprise and disappointment, he turned towards me, and said, 'I haven't heard a word you've been talking, and don't want to. You're not a-going to catch me like that—don't ye think it.'"

A very wicked boy indeed. The following evening the rector happened to be preaching in another church a mile or two away, and there, strange to say, was the young incorrigible, looking dull and unhappy. The rector addressed him, and he muttered "I had a dream last night." But the rector had better tell his own story.

"Indeed!" I replied, "what was it about?"

"He said, 'I did not like it. I dreamt that I was dead, and being carried away to hell.'"

"The poor boy had evidently not yet recovered from the fright he sustained in that dream. I said to him, 'You know

that dream must come true if you do not give up. You had better do so at once. Shall I pray with you?'

"He made no answer. I said, 'Have you been praying for yourself?'

"Yes, I have,' he muttered in a sullen way, with his head still bent down, 'as well as I could.'

"What did you ask for?'

"I prayed God not to kill me yet.'

"But what is the use of keeping you alive if you will go on in your bad ways, and set such a bad example to others? You had far better give up, I say.'

"I will,' he responded, in a mournful voice; 'I didn't like my dream.'

"Let us kneel down, then, at once. What is your prayer? What shall we ask for?'

"Ask the Lord God,' said the boy, 'to save me like Josey; he is downright good now. I should like to be like him.'

"We need not ask God to save you after any particular pattern,' I said: 'you had better ask Him to save you, and let Him do it as He will.'

"Oh, Lord God, do save me,' he cried out. 'I am bad, and I feel very bad; oh, do save me!'

This wicked lad was soon changed, and brought from death unto life. He was, as he said of himself, that happy that he could not help going to 'tell the chaps about himself.'

Now he attended the Bible-class where he used to be such a trouble, but in a very different spirit. He was a brand plucked out of the burning, and one who was not ashamed to manifest the great change which had been wrought in him."

This, one will be ready to say, is the usual Salvation Army story, and means very little. We submit that it means very much, that it is a kind of evidence not to be ignored, of the effect of the concentration, by prayer or otherwise, of a somewhat low order of embodied intelligence, where the moral faculties are but slightly developed, on a similar low order of intelligence just outside, where the moral faculties are still in about the same stage of progress. The salvation is of a very material kind, as we might expect. Of course our rector sees God's hand in all this, and would doubtless be horrified at even the suggestion of it all being the work of a set of not too dignified ghosts, the said ghosts being the hearers and answerers of his prayers. Yet even the rector is a little afraid of his own interpretation, for he says:—

"Shall we say that this is special favouritism? Does not God love other sinners in the same way?"

"God is not responsible to us for His doings or ways. He doeth as He will, and is perfectly free to do so."

That there is interposition is clear to the writer, though the optimistic vanity is instructive, for he says:—

"However remarkable this lad's conversion may have been, I think no one can consider the history of his own conversion without seeing signs of Divine interposition also. We cannot fail to observe that circumstances which had no connection with one another came together, and persons who had no agreement or intercourse with one another were made to work together, to the one end of bringing us to conviction and conversion."

That like appeals to like in spirit existence incarnated or not incarnated seems to be one of the few facts that we have arrived at without much doubt, and it follows that conversion, as it is called, of this kind would be more likely to occur than not. Those who have "gone before," being about the same in order of intelligence and morality as those "left behind," would generally be attracted to these latter, and conversion goes on apace.

This is, of course, only one illustration of a subject of very wide interest, and when properly investigated may throw considerable light upon many puzzling problems, such, for example, as the money getting power of the Jews, the intellectual superiority of certain races and families, and the moral degradation and inferiority of others.

π.

"TIME is but an arbitrary expression, and has no more real existence than has its representative, the man with the scythe and hour glass."—From "The Education of Man," by JOHN G. SPEED, in *Phrenological Magazine*.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## Clairvoyance.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The following incidents are rather *apropos* of the curious card case given some few weeks since by Mr. Massey, whilst the attendant circumstances again add weight to the theory that those psychical gifts are inherent in certain families.

A former acquaintance of mine, whose great-uncle had many years before been instrumental, through a clairvoyant dream, in bringing a murderess to justice, told me the following circumstance just at the time of its occurrence. He was quietly riding along a country road, when he saw a lady's pocket-handkerchief lying on the ground, and dismounted in order to pick it up, saying to himself *before looking at the article*, "Now for the initials," J. S. B. (or whatever the letters were), and immediately searching the corners he found he had correctly repeated the initials.

Another member of the same family told me how strangely correct his dreams sometimes were, and quoted as an instance that he had once lost his powder flask, when soon afterwards he dreamt that the missing article had been dropped in the hollow of a tree, and going to the spot he found the flask, which he had accidentally dropped whilst out rabbit shooting.

This is the third family in which I have been able to trace the development of this interesting faculty in more than one member.

I will now relate two more striking cases of clairvoyance, given me some years since by a fellow-member of a Psychical Society at Bristol. The narrator had at the time taken a farm on Exmoor, to which he occasionally gave personal attention. The farmhouse belonging to the estate was a very primitive structure, the rooms not being ceiled; consequently conversations taking place in the lower rooms could be overheard by persons in the bedrooms. One night the master returned home rather late, and in the lower room was expressing his annoyance at having lost his tobacco pouch, when he heard laughter from the room above, occupied by his servant girl. Not being pleased with the familiarity, he called out in no very gentle terms to her to be quiet, when she replied, "Why, master, you dropped your pouch by the stile, where you were sitting just now smoking." On returning to the place he found the pouch just at the spot the girl had indicated. On another occasion he had reasons for suspecting one of his labourers of purloining his corn. The entrance to the farm was so situated that it could not be seen from the yard. He was standing in the latter place one day, when the same girl came to him and said, "W. E. is coming out of the barn with a bag of corn on his back." On repairing at once to the spot, he met the culprit emerging from the barn exactly as the girl had described him.

Mr. Massey having led the way, I hope many others will be induced to remember that to the scientific mind no *fact* is trivial, and in the interest of psychical research will garner up and give to the scientific world every fact, however apparently trivial, which may help to build the great temple of truth.—Yours truly,  
ELIZA BOUCHER.

## The Difficulties of Inquirers.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The letter of your correspondent "L. R." on the question "Should paid mediums be encouraged?" leads me to ask if you can allow me space as an earnest student of Spiritualism to express some of the difficulties I have encountered in the path of inquiry.

After many months study of the literature, both of the phenomenal and philosophical sides of the subject, together with two most interesting and instructive conversations with a courteous gentleman, a member of the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance, the combined testimony of which has convinced myself and a few friends that proofs of the life hereafter to which we are all drifting are fact and not illusion or hallucination, we still remain students only, so great have we found the difficulties in the way of obtaining conviction.

Doubtless many other novices besides our little circle of inquirers have felt reluctant to consult paid mediums, feeling that they could not be convinced of the genuine character of phenomena produced by such agency; but, even if willing to endeavour to obtain conviction thus, do the fees come within reach of those of slender means?

I do not know what the terms of admittance to public sésances are, but at all events any continued investigations in that way are not available for the great army of toilers, and, I

believe—which is perfectly reasonable—there is no certainty that anything will occur at a public sésance; and even should phenomena take place, I am told they are usually of the trivial physical order of manifestation, and carry with them none of the higher qualities which render Spiritualism ennobling.

Of course if a man devote his time to the development of mediumistic power, he is as much entitled to remuneration as the clergy are to their stipends; but it is impossible to get away from the idea of the possibility of jugglery and imposture in the exercise of so extraordinary a profession as it must appear to inexperienced minds.

The "Advice to Inquirers" of "M. A. (Oxon.\*)" is elevated in tone and plain in diction (although I am ignorant of what constitutes "positive" and "negative"), but we have been unable to form a successful circle. Once or twice "a cool breeze passing over the hands" has been experienced, upon which one or other of the sitters has been seized with fear, and the circle has had to be broken up without result; and it is not easy (if possible) to find the constituents of a new and braver circle amongst friends residing sufficiently near each other for regular sittings. Especially is there a difficulty in providing the female element said to be necessary.

In addition to this, I have lately read that the "spirit rap" is not now to be heard in any circles; how then are communications to be obtained?\*

Altogether I and my friends have almost lost hope of gaining conviction for ourselves, and can only take such interest as consists in reading "LIGHT," *The Medium*, and *The Two Worlds*; and now and again, when obtainable, some book of records of the experiences of others, and we are thrown back on the unsatisfactory foundation of orthodox creeds. Our faith lacks personal proof, but still we have hope that this belief may some day be exchanged for knowledge which has so far been denied us.

If any of your mediumistic readers can point out how a small but sincere band of fairly intelligent inquirers, all of whom are inexperienced in Spiritualism, and are anxious to prove that it is *true*, not that it is a delusion of the credulous, but is as capable as Christianity of being the religion of the many, not a creed for the elect few, can obtain elementary personal evidence, we should be grateful, and doubtless there are many interested but inexperienced readers of "LIGHT" besides ourselves who yearn for the realisation of your motto, "Light, more light!"—I am, sir, yours obediently,

Croydon, August 17th, 1888.

G. E. H.

\* [This is not quite so: our correspondent has been misled by an answer to an inquirer who asked whether he could obtain access to a private circle where raps were to be heard. There are many such not accessible to the public. We more and more regret the difficulty in forming a circle where the evidence that our correspondent craves for can be had. The Research Section of the London Spiritualist Alliance had in view the formation of such a circle among others, but lack of mediums and the difficulty of forming a circle, owing to the great distances from which material must be gathered, are obstacles not easily surmounted. Nevertheless we do not yet despair.—ED. "LIGHT."]

## Paid Mediums.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have just read in last week's "LIGHT" your remarks on the danger of public sésances to the medium, and I should like to say a word in behalf of almost the only medium whose sésances I have had the privilege of sometimes attending—I mean Mr. Husk. He is a very delicate looking man, almost, if not quite, blind, and evidently not in a position to give up public mediumship, even if he wished to do so. I remember asking him if the sésances were not injurious to his health. "Not sittings like these," he said—there were only two or three of us of one family—"but public sésances take it out of me a good deal." Of course they do, and they will take his life in the end if he is not protected. Why cannot a fund be started for the relief of such mediums as he? People pay their Church subscriptions even if they do not go to church, but here is a man who brings you face to face with those who once lived here, but whose existence has opened out under new conditions, of which they can and will give most valuable hints. Of course, the knowledge which through him can be conveyed to those who seek, is of infinite value, but he, the delicate instrument, is used too roughly, and almost disregarded.

If such a fund is started I am willing to subscribe, and surely many others would do the same. If it were not for paid

mediums hundreds of people would have no chance of learning anything of Spiritualism, as they could not get access to private circles. If a medium offered to give séances *without* pay, the evil to him would be all the greater, as so many would take advantage of the offer to satisfy what was merely a curiosity. Mr. Home, you said, used to faint sometimes after a séance. I think mediums should charge for their time, and for the waste of life energy, and also as a protection to themselves. But to protect the public, could there not be formed a committee, or something of that sort, who could judge of the reliability of mediums, and give their countenance to the genuine ones?

Mr. Husk ought to be sent to the seaside, or to the country, for a month, for rest. A delicate, hard-worked clergyman would be sent by his people to recuperate, but we Spiritualists, who *know* the mischief that is being done to our best mediums, do not seem to care; we prefer to employ our time in wearisome metaphysical discussions!—I am, sir, yours very truly,

Mount Howe, Topsham.

W. GLANVILLE.

August 19th, 1888.

#### A Traveller's Worry.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—There are many people who cannot sleep in a strange bed, a circumstance which does not add to the comfort of those who try to get a summer holiday. With the majority who suffer in this way the different surroundings, unusual sounds, and so on may be taken as sufficient reason for the annoyance, always supposing we know why these different surroundings, unusual noises, and so forth produce the discomfort, which we do not. Some of us, though, suffer in a more acute way; dreams of a character quite distinct from those to which we are accustomed torment us, or delight us, in our sleep, and the presence of agencies of a kind which we have possibly succeeded in driving from us at home seem to hover round us, in our new quarters, and make our *rest* an *unrest* as undeniable as it is unpleasant. This is my experience, and I shall be glad if some of your correspondents would tell us whether this kind of thing is common, and if so what explanation there may be of the phenomena.—Yours faithfully,

VIATOR.

#### Re-incarnation Problems.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The proper thing to do after returning from a holiday tour, from which the usual literary repast has been banished, is doubtless to read up the issues of "LIGHT" which have enlightened, or mystified, our friends while we have been climbing more physical altitudes. And much more invigorating have these been than are the conflicting emotions which attend a perusal of the interminable discussion on Re-incarnation. How the doctors differ on a theme which *must* belong to the region of speculation! One would innocently imagine that Spiritualists, of all others, professing as a cardinal basis the substitution of *fact* for faith, would lightly pass this matter over; but no, they wrangle over it as though psychic life and progress were really involved in the issue. With one breath they will tell you that creeds are secondary—or even say "banish them for ever and seek only spiritual life": with another they will clamour for a belief in this Buddhistically created doctrine and develop it into male and female re-incarnations until the sexes even get somewhat mixed! and one cannot but exclaim:—

"For woman is not undeveloped man,  
But diverse: could we make her as the man,  
Sweet love were slain: his dearest bond is this—  
Not like to like, but like in difference."

As Mrs. Britten tersely put it in her recent address to the London Spiritualist Alliance, "Spiritualism depends for its acceptance upon well proven facts. Re-incarnation has no fact to show—not one. Trace it back to its origin, and you find that it originates in the Eastern doctrine of Metempsychosis. . . . first it is a thought; then it becomes secularised among the people, until it grows from a belief into an accepted truth. It is not a fact. There is not a fact in justice or in truth which sanctions the belief in Re-incarnation."

One would have thought that that was explicit enough as a reply from her spirit-guides, but "1st M.B. (Lond.)" thinks not; and endeavours first to prove that it is no answer at all, and then that her spirits, being *moral ones*, know nothing about it! and he logically adds, "It matters not if they do deny it." Of course not; because another old Spiritualist points out that we get just such answers or teachings from the spirits as we seek. What then is the value of *any*?

"Three Students" are naturally perplexed, and with the greatest courtesy ask for more light. As courteously the perplexing light is added; but it does not seem to be reassuring to these three, of possibly mixed sexes! True, they are inexpressibly grateful, but, like all children crying for the light, it is still with no language but a cry!

The fact is just this. The doctrine of Re-incarnation is absolutely speculative. Not a shred of proof has been or can be advanced to uphold it. It may be true, of course, but it seems to be opposed to all the ideas of progress which are at the foundation of all Spiritualistic thought and teaching.

It is no answer to say that we put a child back in his class to re-learn his alphabet, and yet he is progressing. It would be better to say that God's methods of progress and teaching in the spirit world are boundless, and He need not re-enact a life which has proved impotent or a failure. Spiritualists can understand how, even if earth's experiences should be necessary to teach an advanced truth, our spirit friends could learn *through us*, and by means even of ministering to us, far better than by entering again into the drudgery of the flesh. That would be a sad, bungling kind of process, and utterly unlike, so it seems to me, the infinite fertility of resource which I attribute to a loving God.

But what has chiefly distressed me in this prolonged controversy is the fear lest this doctrine of Re-incarnation, so repulsive to many, so speculative to all, should come to be considered as an integral part of Spiritualism.

Spiritualists may, of course, believe in it as they do in a thousand and one other curious speculations. But let it be acknowledged as a speculation by them—and certainly not proved, even if provable in the sweet by-and-bye—by what we all acknowledge as spirit communion.

Does not this storm in a tea-cup point further to the truth that as yet our spirit communion is not sufficiently reliable by reason of conditions, here and yonder, well known to Spiritualists, to enable us to formulate a philosophy on such data as are now presented? And when three (or thirty) students come to us, *as Spiritualists*, it will be as well for us to confess that we are as yet on the threshold of philosophical inquiry, and that our speculations, like those of other folks, are often somewhat mixed.—Yours, &c.,

VEGA.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have been a believer in Re-incarnation for nearly thirty years, but I have never been able to school myself to the idea that intelligent controls like those who dictate the eloquent oratory of Mrs. Britten, for instance, are what "Nizida" would call "astral entities, unable to teach deep or abstruse truths," mere shells and spooks, which would apply as much to the lectures of Mr. Colville, who is a Re-incarnationist, as to those of Mrs. Britten, who is not. No, I stick to the old belief of the Jew and the Christian, in opposition to the Hindû Mahatma, that those who address us in our own language are beings consisting of spirit, soul, and spiritual body; and as Modern Spiritualism and Spiritism have both shown unmistakably, I think, beings like ourselves who have gone before us, divested of the gross carnal body and with the loss of no other attribute whatever. It is perfectly paradoxical, in my mind, to relegate oratory that keeps intelligent men and women in wrapt admiration for hours to the limbo of the lore of "elementaries." Elementals I believe in, and I agree with "Nizida" entirely when she says: "If we are to believe things merely from what the spirits say, we have arrived at a condition of deplorable mental decrepitude." They are, like men among ourselves, often earnest and plausible, with a hundred different theories, in every nation, in every religion, throughout all ages, all of which it is impossible to believe. But they are, in one sense, superior to us; they are not only versed in our language, phraseology, and modes of thought in a way that none but deceased men and women *could* be, but their wits are sharpened by having sloughed their vile bodies. I would not for a moment question the sincerity of Mrs. Britten's eloquent controls; but are controls wiser or morally better than ourselves, for the most part? I think not. I bring no imputation against inspirational mediumship; difference of opinion does not constitute fraud. But, as regards physical mediumship, where frauds accrue, after years of anxious thought on the subject I have come to the conclusion that in at least ninety-nine cases out of every hundred the fraud is in the cognisance of the control, who might have prevented it, if it have not its direct origin from him.

No one can have the reputation of a good medium, unless he be a medium; but it is among these, and among these only, that the frauds occur or can occur.

I remember an ancient eloquent discourse of one of our greatest inspirational mediums, in which she spoke of "the larger liberty" enjoyed in the spheres than that we have here. One can but ask: Is not that liberty sometimes very much abused?

We are now asked, "If Re-incarnation be true, why, laden with the experience of so many lives, material and spiritual, is not the world strewn thicker with saints instead of sinners?" The answer seems to be: We have been, hitherto, narrowed down, in fluidic life as well as earth life, to the precincts of this planet of no high reputation, where, in our "larger liberty," we have been probably worse than we are here. The many deceitful acts and words that come to us from the spirit-world force me to this conclusion. Here men do not lie for the pleasure of the thing, but for gain.

An ancient sage has taught us that the Wisdom which cometh not down from above, is "earthly, of soul quality (*ψυχική*), devilish." It is a pity, I think, the right translation was avoided, but the substitute, "sensual," is not complimentary; and the word only occurs once more in the New Testament: "Sensual (*ψυχικοί*), not having the spirit," that is, the spirit of good. Now this means the soul in its concrete, not "the astral entity" only, of "Nizida," "the elementary," of Colonel Olcott, "the shell or spook," of Madame Blavatsky. It means spirit, soul, and spiritual body, no shams; the same as if we said "evil spirit," "lying spirit," "unclean spirit," "deaf and dumb spirit." We see here, bad though they be, the spirit has not left the soul.

Here comes in another old saw, this time from Kardec: "You mostly have your purgatories here"; though I am the last to believe that there is no weeping and gnashing of teeth among the inhabitants of the other world, for I have heard them.

But I hope for better things; not much, however, so long as we are attached to this planet, on it or over it. And I cry, heart and soul, with that eloquent lady, Mrs. Britten: "Oh, narrow not your thoughts to this little planet."

It is, happily, not only "Nizida's" "astral entities" that are looking up. Spiritualism is looking up also. Perhaps the most popular Bishop of the day alluded lately, at Oxford, to "the great sphere of Spiritualism"; the same who on Hospital Sunday of 1884, at his then church at Lancaster Gate, said, "It is anguish, when a man wakes up in the next world, and finds he has not a heart! So I am told." T. W.

#### To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Seeing the large number of letters you already have in hand on this subject, I should certainly not add another to them, were it not for the questions which Mr. Shee has addressed to me. I am perfectly willing to answer him, but he must excuse me when I say that he never could have asked them, if he had taken the trouble to find out what Re-incarnation means.

1. I am asked whether, when man first appeared, it was some animal spirit that was re-incarnated in him. Of course it was. That is of the essence of the doctrine. Then Mr. Shee wants to know how I account for man being "in a higher stage of perfection" (I suppose he means more advanced) than lower animals, seeing that they were the first to exist. Simply because he has been incarnated more times. I should have thought that was plain enough.

2. In this paragraph we get the key to the fundamental error of Mr. Shee. "If," he asks, "animals inferior were incarnated in man superior, what benefit would man receive from such incarnation?" Man is supposed to be existing, and then an animal spirit is somehow or other super-imposed on him. What sort of a being would this produce, I wonder? Perhaps Mr. Shee has formed a conception of it; I cannot. Of course, the *quoniam* animal is the man. They are not to be conceived as separate entities.

3. Mr. Shee simply repeats Mr. Haughton's argument about past lives being useless if the experience gained in them is forgotten. As I had already given what I consider a conclusive answer, it would have been more to the point if Mr. Shee had shown its insufficiency. I repeat that, while it is quite true that "by experience man is developed," it is not by remembered experience, but by that experience which has become part of

the soul's permanent endowment. This, expressed in materialistic phraseology, is part and parcel of that doctrine of Heredity which Mr. Haughton invoked to crush Re-incarnation. Our notions of morality, for instance, are organic—made so, it is true, by experience, but by experience unremembered, unrecorded even, save in our own feelings.

4. Mr. Shee wants to know whether the spirits of mammoths have become extinct, or what has become of them. A Re-incarnationist can give but one answer—an answer so obvious that Mr. Shee might well have anticipated it. They have been re-incarnated in higher forms. I can extract no meaning from the sentence beginning:—"If so, I do not see," &c.

5. Mr. Shee says that "statistics prove that there are more births than deaths," and that, as a consequence, inferior spirits will be incarnated and then all will retrogress. So far as I am aware, the alleged statistics have no existence. It is no use producing English or French statistics. None are of any use unless they embrace the whole world; and even these would not be of much value, for this earth is not to be regarded as an isolated unit, but part of a larger whole. But how does all this affect the question of inferior spirits being incarnated? Inferior spirits are always being incarnated, whether births or deaths predominate, and the result of their incarnation is to raise them to a higher level. This is far from the retrogression which Mr. Shee fears.

I have put my answers in a dogmatic form for the sake of convenience. It will be understood that all I mean is that those answers are involved in the doctrine of Re-incarnation, as I understand it.—Yours truly, F. W. READ.

#### To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In reply to Mr. E. Maitland's letter, which I suppose was intended as an answer to my question, put recently in the columns of your journal, I have to say that it is not to my satisfaction.

I was fully aware what was intended by Jesus, when He told Nicodemus of the necessity of being born again; and although it was to be of water and the Spirit, He did not say that it was not possible in one earth life, and Swedenborg nowhere teaches the necessity of more than one life upon the earth in order that man may become regenerated. I simply used the question put by Nicodemus to Christ, "How can a man be born again?" This is still my question, and it still remains unanswered, at least to my satisfaction.

Our friend says my short letter affords striking proof of the backwardness of Spiritualists generally to master the points of the doctrine in question, even after all that has been published concerning it, in perfectly simple and practical language. To the foregoing, I have to say that Spiritualists, as a rule, are not those who receive all they read, without proof. It is of no use to formulate a new doctrine, without giving particular and precise evidence showing the why and the wherefore for everything advanced. Our friend also says that I speak of my hypothetical son in terms which might have come from the pen of the merest materialist, so entirely do I ignore all but the physical nature of the entity specified. I am not aware that I did ignore all but the physical nature of my son. If I did so then, I will not do so now, for I look upon my son as being my issue, body, soul, and spirit; that is, through my act, the natural body, the spiritual body, and the soul are evolved.

Our friend further says—that which a parent procreates is not the soul, but only the body of his child, and that the true person has a prior and independent existence, and all that parents do is to supply conditions for his incarnation. If he will turn to the *Arcana Celestia* (Swedenborg) Index, Vol. II., p. 1162, paragraph 3, he will find there stated that all spirits and angels have been men; that is to say, are the souls of men living after the death of the body. And Swedenborg further says at p. 1163, paragraph 5, that spirits and angels are organical substances; very different from what the phantasms of the learned would lead one to suppose; and that spirits are organically formed like men, and composed of substance more real, though not visible to the eye of the body; thus, the good may be said to exist in that very body, purified, which many believe they shall have at the Last Judgment. Our friend refers to my question, What would my son become after having had seventeen or eighteen fathers and mothers? as only becoming what the actor becomes who has played so many parts. That is, he himself remains one and the same through

all, saving only for his advance in knowledge and skill through the multiplication of his experiences. This is so with the actor, we have no hesitation in admitting, because he can remember his experiences, but not so the re-incarnated soul, he retains no knowledge of past experiences. Therefore, of what use can a myriad of lives be to him who forgets all and must begin afresh? It is an old saying that like produces like; therefore man must produce his like in every respect.

There are other aspects of the subject which present themselves to my mind, especially the process of the multiplication of souls, which I should like to go into, but bearing your request for brevity in mind, I desist.—Yours, &c.

97, New Park-road, Salford.

T. H. LOWE.

August 13th, 1888.

*To the Editor of "LIGHT."*

SIR,—Your correspondent, Mr. G. D. Haughton, does not appear to be aware that that very desideratum, viz., a record on Ante-natal Experiences, in book-form, actually exists.

*Recits de l'Infini*, by Camille Flammarion, deals with the subject of Soul-life and Re-incarnation from an Astronomer's point of view. "Lumen," a dis-incarnated spirit, gives a record of his experiences, and describes *the scenes and incidents of his past lives on this and other worlds*.

To those who delight in fatiguing their minds by trying to solve the most impenetrable of all mysteries, this little book must be exceedingly interesting.

If not already on the shelves of the library of the London Spiritualist Alliance I shall be happy if the President will accept my own copy of this curious little work.

J. G. K.

*To the Editor of "LIGHT."*

SIR,—The following passage from Swedenborg is too important to be lost sight of in any discussion of this question:—

"It is not lawful for any angel or spirit to converse with a man from his own memory, but only from that of the man. For angels and spirits have memory as well as men; and if a spirit were to speak with a man from his own memory, the man would not know but that the things which then became the objects of his thoughts belonged to himself, although they belonged to the spirit. This case is like remembering a thing, which, nevertheless, the man had never heard of or seen. That such is the fact, has been given me to know by experience. This is the origin of the opinion held by some of the ancients, that after some thousands of years they should return into their former life, and into all its transactions, and that they actually had so returned. They drew this conclusion from the circumstance that there sometimes occurred to them what seemed to be a remembrance of things, which, nevertheless, they had never seen or heard. This appearance was produced by an influx of spirits from their own memory into their ideas of thought."—H. H. 256.

It follows from this that recollection of a previous life is a delusion and a disorderly experience, affording no evidence of the claim, which can only be made on other grounds. Such are chiefly spirit communications, which would of course be specially unreliable if connected with the disorderly recollection; but which, in any case, receive illustration from "Nizida's" judicious remark (August 11th), that "if we are to believe a thing merely after consulting the spirits as to its truth, and to accept or reject it merely from what they say, we have arrived at a condition of deplorable mental decrepitude, which would relegate us back to the crawling period of infancy, when our nurses decided for us the moot points of life's uncertainties." Moreover Swedenborg says:—

"When spirits begin to speak with man, he must beware lest he believe them in anything; for they say almost anything; things are fabricated by them, and they lie. . . . For they are extremely fond of fabricating; and whenever any subject of discourse is proposed, they think they know it, and give their opinions upon it, one in one way and one in another, altogether as if they knew; and if man then listens and believes, they press on, and deceive and seduce in divers ways; for if they were permitted to tell about things to come, about things unknown in the universal heaven, about all things whatsoever that a man desires, they would tell all things falsely; wherefore let men beware lest they believe him."—S.D. 1622. Cf. 1902, 2860.

And in D.P. 134, it is stated that no dogma of religion is ever thus taught by any good spirit, still less by any angel of Heaven.

To those familiar with these reiterated views of the greatest expert of any age, it is really incredible that he himself should now throw all this experience over, and come to dictate information, which is surely within the province of "astral entities" to

supply. *Nec deus intersit* rules in principle. Other evidence may be forthcoming for the abstract dogma; but these grounds are so incredible as to weaken the position of its supporters in their attempt to maintain it. It is not usual for advanced teachers to undermine the principles of elementary instruction, and if learners repudiate the effort and reject the novelties suggested, it is the teaching which is at fault, and not the disinclination to accept it. If this ancient theory of many bodies to one soul is to be discussed, the court of reason is open, disputants are present, and inquiry can be made in a regular assembly. But if reason is dethroned by spirit-dictation, where is our reason for believing?

W. W. F.

*To the Editor of "LIGHT."*

SIR,—Let us hope that the dogmatic assertions of inspiration, although the highest possible for any particular individual and therefore unquestioningly accepted by such an one, will never be taken as the solution of a problem which for the vast majority of mankind must rest solely on an intellectual basis. If the *ipse dixit* of communicating intelligences is religiously accepted, we shall have a band of slaves and not an army of citizens fighting for their birthright—liberty. When Lucifer, the first-born, preferred liberty to servitude, and plunging into the darkness, left the track of his glory, that by struggling with death he might conquer life, God loved the child of His thought and smiling said that "light" was very fair.\* In the books of the East, the evolution of a "monad" from one kingdom of nature to another is said to be impossible in one Manvantara. A Manvantara is a day of Brahmâ, the deity in manifestation or creation. So that an animal cannot become a man until the enormous period, if we can call that a period where time exists not, of a Pralaya or night of Brahmâ has intervened. Again, the "monad" does not retrograde; a man cannot become an animal; exoteric teachings being mere allegories and adapted to the materialistic faith of unspiritual minds. Many people take Re-incarnation to mean necessarily a return to bodily existence on this small earth of ours; but there are countless millions of other planets, and Re-incarnation should therefore mean the re-descent of the soul into matter—that is, existence on the material plane.

One of the commonest arguments brought against this glorious ray of light, which shines upon the mysteries of our being, is the inability to recollect past experiences. It is indeed strange that that memory which is generally too weak to retain even important facts of a present incarnation should be expected to record those of 2,000 years ago, say; and that, too, when this same physical memory has, owing to our present ignorance of higher laws, entirely disappeared together with the disintegration of its material vehicle. The spiritual and higher intellectual principles alone re-incarnate, so that the facts of a life must have either a highly intellectual or a spiritual effect on the individual to be retained, and this seldom happens, for the spiritual is not the emotional.

When a student finds this doctrine maintained by the greatest minds of the splendid civilisations of the past, as far as we have record, then—if he is not plague-stricken by the curse of the nineteenth century, which imagines her civilisation the greatest the world has ever seen, and is not so drunk with the wine of Delusion as to stagger arm in arm with Prejudice—he will recognise therein a strong inducement to take the responsibility of his nature upon him, and strive to be a man.—Yours, &c.,

TABRIS.

*To the Editor of "LIGHT."*

SIR,—Your correspondent "T. W." appears to me to entirely misinterpret two passages of the Old Testament, which he conceives to favour the doctrine of Re-incarnation. When I say "appears to me," I speak too modestly; it is certain that they bear no such meaning. All the critics are agreed upon that. The first is Job xix. 25-27.

It runs thus—"I know that my Redeemer liveth," &c., to "not another." Job was not a Hebrew, and he knew nothing of any expected Redeemer. It was the fashion of the translators to twist every passage into the service of Christianity, often most dishonestly, as they do here. The Septuagint gives altogether a different rendering. It is no credit to the Church of England that it retains to this day a version which has been amply disproved by all the best and most independent critics.

\* *The Genesis of Light from a Gnostic Gospel*.—Levi Rituel, p. 9.

It thus makes itself responsible for that childish error that Christ will return to live again upon the earth.

Job knew nothing of Christ. It is a complete anachronism. What is translated "Redeemer" ought to be rendered "Avenger." The sense is as follows: "I know that the living God is my avenger, and that He will see me righted even in this world. And though I am in such a dreadful plight just now, yet I feel assured that I shall live to see my vindication complete, and that I shall be restored to health and prosperity, and that I shall have the satisfaction of seeing all this myself, and not merely my posterity." How well this agrees with chap. xlii. 10-17!

Such is the meaning—it has been doctored to suit a purpose. The other passage is Psalm xc. 1 and 3.

Your correspondent fancies that "come again" means "come again to be re-incarnated." It is just the reverse. If he turns to the Bible version he will find these words: "Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest Return, ye children of men." This refers to Genesis iii. 19., where God said, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." These words are recalled. Thus disappear these two naïve criticisms of "T. W."

There is yet a third case, that of Elijah. "T. W." says that the Jews understood by the prophecy of Malachi "the coming of Elias in person." Very likely many of them did, but their belief counts for little; they were always wrong. If they were wrong about Christ, how much more were they likely to be wrong in this lesser instance. But what says John the Baptist himself? 1 John v. 19: "This is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And they asked him, Art thou Elias? And he saith *I am not.*" We see, then, the Baptist contradicts it point black. Does "T. W." know better than the Baptist himself? Malachi used the name of the prophet typically; he meant one with like fiery energy and indomitable courage; just as a famous admiral might be called the Nelson of his age.

As to the pessimism of Gautama Buddha, which he admits, I would remark that he is the latest incarnation. Does the Inspiration then go backwards, and favour, or rather introduce, errors unknown to former and wiser revelations? One would think that the latest revelation was also the wisest and the most complete.

And now a word in answer to "1st M.B." He asks me to explain Mr. Oliphant's phrase, "the interlocking of the atomic particles of parents, &c." I certainly cannot do so, but I easily understand the idea conveyed by this phrase, viz., that both parents exercise a great influence over not only the bodily but also over the mental and moral characteristics of their offspring. This has been the immemorial persuasion of mankind, and it is amply confirmed not only by the observation of families but no less of nations and races. Just consider the Greeks, the Romans, the Gauls, and the Germans of the ancient world, and the French, the Germans, the Dutch, the English, the Spaniards. We may observe strong mental distinctions which can only be accounted for on the principle of heredity. How strikingly does this appear if we compare the Scotch and the Irish—a complete contrast!

I must return once more to Mr. Read. I had said that Re-incarnation involved a "special intervention" at every birth in order to secure the exact parentage, country, religion, &c., which would best suit the individual case. If you reject heredity there is no alternative. In answer, Mr. Read writes:—"Surely you can understand that the soul, under a fixed system of things, gravitates to those persons best fitted to become its parents." I certainly can understand nothing of the kind, and I must take leave to doubt that Mr. Read can understand it any more than I can. Now, if he understands his own phrase, and if there is an idea under it, he can expand that idea, and explain to us the steps by which this gravitation is effected. He cannot mean "gravitation" in the scientific sense—that by which a stone falls to the ground. This is a most complex question of moral affinities, of moral deserts, and of spiritual aspirations. The spirit to be re-incarnated has to choose a certain couple out of hundreds of millions of human beings from whom a re-birth is possible. I said nothing short of Infinite Wisdom was competent to the task. The poor, disembodied spirit, if it has to make the choice, is indeed sent on a strange and perplexing errand. The sheer perplexity would be quite enough to drive him mad.

As if this was not enough, "1st M.B." writes: "On earth the re-births of an entity depend entirely on himself. There is no compulsion, and no monad returns to earth-life except of its

own free will." I am exceedingly rejoiced to hear of this. I had always thought that our consent to be born was never asked. But I now own my error. One can choose one's own future papa and mamma. This is certainly a comfort.—He further writes, "He is free to choose the state into which he may be born, and also the sex he will assume. This is often unwisely done." I can well believe it—the stress is too great for any soul to bear. It seems the acme of folly, unkindness, and cruelty to place the perils of such an awful decision on mortal shoulders.

These explanations leave the question darker than ever. I still ask who decides the awful question, *where* and from whom we shall be re-incarnated. In this case, there are two parties to be consulted—the destined parents no less than the re-born stranger. It would seem unjust to pitchfork a stranger—perhaps a criminal stranger—into a family and not allow that family to have any say in the matter.

There is a further difficulty; by what means is the re-birth to be effected, and how can the stranger ensure that he shall be re-born from the exact woman whom he desires to be his parent?

I pause for a reply, and for a solution of this perplexing problem. My own solution is that it is a wild conception altogether, and that the theory irretrievably collapses, the more you consider it.

G. D. HAUGHTON.

*To the Editor of "LIGHT."*

SIR,—As one of your ordinary readers I am getting rather puzzled. This Re-incarnation business is very perplexing. Spiritualists used to tell us that we should not stand still in the Beyond; that spirits develop there; nay, that very little ones grow up to be quite young men and women. But the light which has been lately streaming from your journal into these deep matters shows this to be a mistake. "To deny Re-incarnation is to deny the means of regeneration, and, therefore, of salvation," says one of your correspondents. John Smith may have no end of time for development in the spirit-land—a thousand years, or ten thousand for that matter—and yet at the end of it he will have to come back to learn his remaining lessons, or some of them, in the shape of Tom Brown. He was a pugnacious sort of fellow when he was John Smith, and it seems there are no facilities for taking his pugnacity out of him in the land of ghosts and shadows, consequently he has to be transported back to earth again for that purpose. Well, this proves to us, at least, that this little planet of ours is a place of some importance after all. It is not only a house of correction, a training school, and a university all in one, but it appears to be the only one of the kind in our part of the universe. Sixty or seventy years in it can do more for a man than a thousand or indeed fifty thousand can do for him in what people sometimes call the Better Land. And yet it does seem a pity that all those centuries should be wasted, and that poor Smith should have to carry his pugnacity about with him all that time, without a chance of either exercising it, or getting rid of it. But, to be sure, there is good reason for his being kept in a sort of suspended animation till his turn comes to be called back. Where else could all the souls come from that are wanted, if the old ones were not carefully stored up and kept in reserve for emergencies? It is not to be supposed that God, or Nature, or whatever the word ought to be, could go on creating new souls every day. That would imply importing new stuff into existence, and would quite upset the balance of things; and the balance being lost, we can easily imagine what a catastrophe would follow. Your correspondents, I observe, have no difficulties about new bodies, and don't seem to think that it is necessary to use up old ones in their construction. I suppose it is because there is plenty of material at hand for that purpose, whilst the stuff out of which souls are made seems to be a very limited quantity—only just enough to start with.

Then there is "*Karma*" and "*The Astral*," and such brave words. John Smith, who lived a thousand years ago, was, as we have seen, a pugnacious individual; and Tom Brown, who is now my next neighbour, has been driven from pillar to post all his life on account of Smith's pugnacity. True he is Smith, Smith redivivus. But this *inter nos*, for poor Brown has no suspicion whatever of anything of the sort, and keeps hoping that all his knocking about will stand him in good stead some day. "Shan't I enjoy a quiet life when it comes?" he keeps saying. "Your thirsty man finds a heaven in a glass of cold water, but what is a glass of water to the man who has no appetite for it? I am getting up a splendid appetite for good things in consequence of all this knocking about, and shan't I

just revel in the banquet when it comes? I pity the poor fellows who have had no knocking about. They can never know what real enjoyment is"—with other wise saws for which you would have no room. Of course poor Brown is mistaken, though in his case undoubtedly ignorance is bliss. If he knew the whole case, he would be more inclined to join in the sad strain of the melancholy lover from the sister isle :—

"I'm not myself, at all, Molly, dear."

Here, then, it would seem that the thing is proved "down to the ground." Brown has been driven from pillar to post—no one can deny that—and there is no conceivable reason for his having been so driven except the fact that he was a sad scamp in some former existence.

In a poem published by you some time ago, and purporting to have come from the Beyond, there is this line—

"This world hath answer for all riddles dark."

Poor spirit! She did not know that all riddles had been unriddled long ago by the teachings of "Karma." The mollusc, or whatever the first development of life is that can suffer pain, falls into the fire or is crushed under foot, and suffers. We, in our ignorance, are ready to exclaim, How very mysterious! What can this poor thing have done that it should be burnt alive or crushed to death? But then the light of Theosophy streams down upon us, and the mystery is cleared away as the shadows before the rising sun. The "monad" as it was "making its way upward from the lowest incarnations in dense matter upon the mineral plane to the highest," did something that it ought not to have done, or left undone something that it ought to have done. It was so foolish or unfortunate as to "make bad Karma." Then in the process of the suns and by the great law of development through "re-incarnations" it became a sentient thing, capable of suffering; and, as soon as it became capable of suffering, its bad Karma, like a hungry creditor, pounced upon it, and it suffered.

Such, I think, is the teaching of Theosophy. Perhaps some of your correspondents who know so much about these things will have the goodness to inform us *what* the monad could have done to entail suffering on the mollusc.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

GEORGE HARPER.

**Tertullian's Kids.**

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am not aware that divination by *kids* and tables (*capre et mensæ*), quoted in your impression of August 11th from Tertullian's Apology, has ever been explained. Is it not a clerical error in the original? By altering one letter and reading *capse* instead of *capre*, we get *coffers* and tables, a much more likely combination than furniture and she goats.

W. W. F.

**TO CORRESPONDENTS.**

The Editor begs respectfully to intimate that he cannot undertake to return rejected MSS. If accompanied by stamps to pay postage in case of its being deemed unsuitable for publication, he will use reasonable care in re-posting any MS.

It will ensure despatch if all matter offered for publication is addressed to the Editor of "LIGHT," 16, Craven-street, Charing Cross, and not to any other name or address. Communications for the Manager should be sent separately.

Letters for publication should be as brief as is consistent with clearness, and be written on one side of the paper only. Those over a column in length are in danger of being crowded out by their length.

A. PEACOCK.—Will be attended to on the Editor's return in September.

J. ROBINSON.—We do not desire to open a question so nearly verging on the theological. Private reply sent.

CORRECTION.—In the fifth paragraph of a letter which appeared in last week's "LIGHT" from "1st M.B. (Lond.)," the words "The human soul is not *dead*" should read "The human soul is not *dual*."

GARDEN HALL, 309, ESSEX-ROAD, ISLINGTON, N.—We had an open meeting on Sunday, when Mr. Corduroy made a few remarks on the subject of Spiritualism, after which the controls of Mr. Harris gave an eloquent address. Mr. Paine then gave a few Psychometric readings which afforded great satisfaction. Next Sunday, Mr. J. R. Lees will deliver an Inspirational address.—J. W., Hon. Sec., *pro tem*.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday last a discussion on "Spiritualism and Swedenborgianism," was opened by Mr. J. Humphries, and will be continued on Sunday morning next. At the evening meeting, Mr. R. J. Lees addressed a good audience on "The Media of the Bible." Next Sunday, Mr. T. A. Major on "Spirit Influence" at 7 p.m.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

**MR. ROBERT HARPER.**

We have been asked to give publicity to the following :—  
We desire to bring under the favourable notice of Spiritualists the case of Mr. Robert Harper, one of the earliest and most active pioneers of the Spiritual movement.

For more than a quarter of a century Mr. Harper has been an active worker, both by tongue and pen, in our great cause. His occupation of a commercial traveller has carried him periodically to most of the large towns of the United Kingdom, and he has freely given his services in lecturing for many of the provincial societies, and in London occasionally.

Mr. Harper was a prominent official of the "British Association of Progressive Spiritualists," and was one of the committee which created the "British Association of Spiritualists," out of which the present "London Spiritualist Alliance" grew. He was for about twenty years President of the "Birmingham Spiritualists' Society," and was never missing when financial deficiencies had to be made up.

After serving one firm in Birmingham for twenty-seven years, he came to London to take what seemed a better position, but which unfortunately proved a failure, and for the last fifteen months he has been unable to obtain a re-engagement.

Under these circumstances his friends think it advisable to appeal to Spiritualists generally to raise a fund to pay off some small debts he has been obliged to contract, and to assist in the removal of his family to the United States, where there appears to be better prospects of remunerative employment for himself and family.

The Glasgow Society has given Mr. Harper a high-class testimonial to take to America, and has subscribed £5 to the Fund.

Contributions to this Fund will be received, and acknowledged in the Spiritualist Journals, by Mr. B. D. Godfrey, as below.—Yours faithfully,

- G. B. CLARK, M.P., House of Commons.
- E. DAWSON ROGERS, Rose Villa, Hendon Lane, Church End, Finchley, London, N.
- THOMAS SHORTER, 70, Lady Margaret-road, London.
- JAMES ROBERTSON, 19, Carlton-place, Glasgow.
- E. W. WALLIS, 61, George-street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester.
- A. PHELPS, 23, Augustus-road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.
- B. D. GODFREY, 16, Craven-street, London, W.C.

	£	s.	d.
Subscriptions previously acknowledged ...	25	4	0
T. Grant, Esq. ... ..	2	2	0
Friends at Walsall ... ..	1	1	0
W. Glendinning, Esq. ... ..	1	0	0
"R. B." ... ..	1	0	0
A Friend (Bacup) ... ..	0	10	0
Mr. J. Catlow ... ..	0	10	0
Mr. J. Lingford ... ..	0	10	0
Mr. D. Brown ... ..	0	5	0
Séance (Mr. E. W. Wallis) ... ..	0	5	0

It is found to be necessary to close the subscription list of this Fund by the end of the month.

OPEN-AIR WORK.—On Sunday next, August 26th, Messrs. Goddard, Cannon, and other friends will commence service in Battersea Park, near the band stand, at 11 a.m. punctually; on Clapham Common, near the keeper's lodge, at 3 p.m.; and on Wandsworth Common, near Three Island Pond, at 6 p.m. These meetings will be continued till further notice. The usual meetings will be held at 6, Strath-terrace, St. John's Hill, on Wednesdays and Sundays at 8 p.m. It is hoped that friends who can help us in any way will do so; assistance is greatly needed.—U. W. GODDARD, Clapham Junction.

"IN our era of the world these same church clothes have gone sorrowfully out at elbows; nay, far worse, many of them have become mere hollow shapes, or masks, under which no living figure or spirit any longer dwells; but only spiders and unclean beetles in horrid accumulation drive their trade; and the mask still glares at you with its glass eyes, in ghastly affectation of life,—some generation and a-half after religion has quite withdrawn from it, and in unnoticed nooks is weaving for herself new vestures wherewith to reappear and bless our sons or grandsons."—T. CARLYLE.

"THE clergy have often done great damage to the truth: they have sought more to fit in what has been proposed as truth to them, to a system of theology given them in the Divinity Hall, than to see it in the light of God Himself. . . . I think we shall all be *smashed* as respects churches and systems, and this as a negative preparation for the second coming of Christ—not an objective coming, but one through the spirit as Christ in us, the whole life of Christ, uniting all who know Him as the one hope of glory. . . . Where is the germ of the Church of the future? In what Church? in what creed? in what forms of Government? It may come from India as the first came from the East. But all our old forms are effete, as old oaks, although young oaks may grow out of them. Neither Calvinism, nor Presbyterianism, nor Thirty-nine Articles, nor High Churchism, nor Low Churchism, nor any existing organisation can be the Church of the future. May God give us patience to wait."—DR. NORMAN MACLEOD'S *Journal* in 1872.