

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research*

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

The Madrid correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle* has telegraphed to his paper a notification of the forthcoming Congress of Spiritualists at Barcelona; and the evening papers copy in the following terms:—

"An International Spiritualist Congress will be held at Barcelona in September. The Congress promises to be an important one. A considerable number of well-known persons have announced their intention to attend. Among them (says the Madrid correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle*) are M. Flammarion, the French astronomer, Professor Crookes, and Signor Succi. Viscount Corres-Solanot will preside at the sittings of the Congress. Spiritualism is very popular in Spain. Three or four Spiritualist papers are published in the Peninsula, and curiously enough the largest number of adherents are to be found amongst the officers of the army. During the last Carlist war one of the best-known generals of the army used to consult the spirits of Caesar, Napoleon, and other famous conquerors before giving or accepting battle. On one occasion he was besieging an important fortress defended by very strong forces. One morning the spirits advised him to storm it. The action was against every military and common-sense rule as matters stood; but the General followed the advice of the spirits, and of course his losses were enormous, the fortress was not taken, and he was obliged to retreat."

Apart from the mild pleasantry, there is no cause for anything but satisfaction that wide advertisement should be secured for a very important conference. I believe it is intended to hold another congress in Paris next year, and it is to be hoped that the managers may secure a large attendance of representative leaders in the movement, and may be able to take some definite steps in the direction of permanent organisation. A conference that evaporates in emotion will be of no real use. Philosophical disquisitions and academical dissertations are not what people will care to assemble from all parts of the world to hear. It is necessary before all things to be practical.

The Barcelona Congress will meet on September 6th, and is projected in connection with the Exhibition now being held in that town. The Paris Congress, as intended, will assemble in the autumn of next year. I have received from M. Leymarie a letter requesting me to advise as to the programme which English Spiritualists would favour. M. Leymarie himself is inclined to breadth of view, believing truth to be one in essence, though multiple in manifestation. He is therefore prepared to be eclectic. I am heartily glad to hear this: for it is the only platform that is likely to unite us for the common good and gain. It will be well to avoid the very appearance of dogma, and to be as broad and comprehensive as possible in definition. For example, there is a tendency among English Spiritualists to import into their discussions matters purely theo-

logical. I trust that the congresses that are to meet may carefully avoid this pitfall. We must have some religious notions in connection with our Spiritualism, otherwise we shall miss much of its significance. But the simpler is our religious ideal, the freer it is from sectarianism, the better for us. Writing not long since in these columns, I found myself pausing to consider exactly what I meant by the word religion. It is a much abused term. It is used to cover the noblest aspirations of the most highly developed soul, equally with the most baleful superstitions of the most grovelling. It is in one man the loftiest communing with the Great Father of Spirits; and in another the self-interested worship of a fetish out of whom some gain may be got; or the most anthropomorphic conception of a glorified man-god, who can be propitiated by burnt sacrifices, and in whose nostrils the savour of blood is sweet. It seemed to me that man's creeds and dogmas must go the way of the inventions of the Scribes and Pharisees before we could get down to true religion. The surface rubbish must be shovelled away, as, when the Christ was manifested in the flesh, He swept away the traditions of the Jews, with which their authorised interpreters of the law had encumbered the word of the Most High.

These men had sacrificed truth to dogma: had busied themselves with minutiae of ritual, and had lost sight of the simple grandeur of God's revelation. And now that there is once more a spirit of reform among us, not unlike that to which I have referred, it is before all things desirable that we should not dispute about non-essentials, accidents of human origin, husks and shells that man may play with or leave alone as it pleases him. After I had tried to grasp what I meant by religion, I wrote: "A man's religion is his consciousness of a spiritual life, of duties entailed upon him by that consciousness, and of a present responsibility eventuating in accountability for his acts in a future existence." Not a perfect definition, by any means: and one to which we Spiritualists would add something expressive of our faith: but the breadth of it renders it a good foundation to build upon. That this world is not all: that the body may die and the man live on: that the man is what he makes himself by experience of earth-life: that he is now preparing his future home; and that the lusts of the flesh are only less harmful than selfishness in its protean forms:—these are truths that Spiritualists know and ought to heed in their lives.

From this basis we may go on to build, but no amount of attention to the superstructure will be of use if the foundation is unsound. The Congress will do well to put this in the forefront of their consideration. It may be otherwise with the Spiritists of the Continent; but selfishness in one or other of its forms is the bane of our Spiritualism. The mere curiosity of the hunter after phenomena is one phase of it. The willingness to take everything that can be had out of it, and pay in nothing in return, is another. The little petty cliques that seem to grow like mushrooms and die as soon, only to be succeeded

by other forms of narrowness of mind, is another. And so one might go on varying the indictment, but only repeating the accusation. The answer to it is the problem that presses. Till this plague-spot is eradicated we shall continue to be an incoherent mass, without the binding power that religion alone can furnish.

There was a suggestive article in the *Pall Mall Gazette* recently on the "Stinginess of the Sceptic." Mr. Bradlaugh, it seems, is crushed beneath a weight of pecuniary responsibility incurred in fighting the battles of those who have profited by his struggles to establish constitutional rights in the Courts of Law. It does not surprise me that this should be so, for I have observed that it needs the enthusiasm engendered by a living faith to make a man open his purse. There is no enthusiasm in Agnosticism, nothing inspiring in a negation.

"Does anyone suppose" (says the *Pall Mall*) "for a moment that if Mr. Bradlaugh had been a Jew, a Catholic, or a Nonconformist he would have been allowed by the men whose battle he was fighting to be crushed by the cost of the campaign? It would have been a point of honour with any religious sect to have discharged the financial liabilities of its man-at-arms. Yet the Jews, Catholics, or Nonconformists would have had their own places of worship to keep up in addition to subscribing for the support of their champion in the struggle against their civil disabilities. The men whose battle Mr. Bradlaugh has fought and won are free from such responsibilities. The affairs of the next world do not concern them. They have all their income available for use with sole reference to the existence which ends at the grave. But they do not display the liberality which religious sects regard as the most obvious and imperative of their obligations to their representatives."

That is so; but the "affairs of the next world *do* concern" us Spiritualists. We, at least, have it and its inhabitants in evidence. Yet what applies to the Agnostic and Mr. Bradlaugh applies to the average Spiritualist. It is a matter of no ordinary difficulty to beg money enough to carry on such crippled and maimed work as our paltry funds admit of. This is no new story. It has been so since the first, and if evidence were needed to prove that most Spiritualists have got no real good out of their faith, here it is ready to hand.

There is not wanting some indication that this selfish view of responsibility will in the near future work the ruin of public Spiritualism. It has been the fruitful parent of other causes of decay; for that which no organised effort has projected, has, almost necessarily, become the prey of the schemer, the adventurer, and the charlatan. These are superficial sores, and could be healed; but that which has eaten into the core threatens the very life. It is my very deliberate conviction that the future of Spiritualism—of public Spiritualism—is in the hands of Spiritualists, and that a radical change in method of management is urgently needed. I do not think that any appeals for funds will produce much result. The money will come when Spiritualists realise their responsibilities, and not before. Under existing circumstances the very life of the movement is at stake. *Non sine dis.* I do not imagine that this crisis is unforeseen by those beings, to us invisible, who govern and guide what we call Spiritualism. It is not the first time that man has been able to wreck that which was devised for his benefit. It may be, though I do not myself think so, that Spiritualism has done its work, and is passing into other forms. It has done much. It has leavened the lump of modern thought very appreciably. It has suggested to the philosopher problems that future generations may perhaps solve, and will certainly ponder. It has provided a buttress for failing faith which the orthodox believer has unwisely scorned. Its provocativeness to thought is manifest all round us. But a man, no matter how firm his conviction of the reality of intercommunion between this world and the next, may do better than repeat the proof on which he relies day by day while life slips by and leaves him stranded in his wonder. And he may do better work, too, than spend himself and his energy and time in offering to a heedless world that of which most men choose only "the husks that the swine do eat."

## PSYCHICAL ATTRACTION.

### No. II.

#### LANGUAGE IN THE PSYCHICAL STATE.

When one pays attention to the oral communications in the psychical state the idea that human beings are endowed each with his respective electric battery, capable of disseminating his ideas to any distance under the ordinary forms of speech, by means of what may be called a telephemic system, occurs to an unsophisticated mind. I by no means deny that such is the truth, indeed the best specimens and results of psychical attraction, as far as made known to me, consist in the tranquil interchange of thoughts with some seemingly interested individual, and it is my hope and endeavour that such will prove to be the ultimate and natural issue of this phase of things. In the meantime this is rather telepathic than telephemic. There is, indeed, a constant interchange of thoughts and feelings by means of words, but that generally seems to be the consequence of a prevailing external and common force, not that of the speaker's own sequestered power. Even in the highest form, however, of personal conversation in this order, some sort of telepathy must undoubtedly always underlie this amazing phenomenon. At present, with numerous exceptions, which leak out usually under the influence of practically instructive ideas, and of the consciousness of individuality, separated from a perceived but absent accompaniment of existences, the words that are heard are mere echoes and diverse prolongations of a percipient's own sensations, suggesting the almost incredible notion that some other person or persons are acquainted with his most secret thoughts and actions. As to this point it may be remarked that if there exist such a state as that under consideration, life must be somewhat different in its constitution from the common belief; it must be rather diffusive than internal; generic than individual. If the sensations which are felt are received from without there will be constant interaction amongst those who are media of that transmission. With such views it is a needless and impossible task to seek to know whether there are those who are ever conscious of the internal acts of the organic system of others. From my own experience I should say that there are persons who are sometimes made aware of the silent acts and feelings of others by means of certain figured phantasies which they see and words which they perceive, rather than hear, within them. But in a state like this it is nearly always impossible to distinguish between those who are conscious and those who are unconscious of it; between those who speak in accordance with the thoughts and intentions of an inquirer, and those who speak from some different standpoint than his; between those who speak their own thoughts and those who speak thoughts inspired by others; although often the former members of these alternatives seem the most probable explanation of the motive of speech.

By what means can language, an arrangement of feeble vocal sounds, be made to traverse spaces of distance so great that the speakers seem all but annihilated when compared with those distances? If such a state of things as psychical attraction exists in our nature among the individuals who share its properties, the extreme velocity by which their sensations and thoughts operate may not unreasonably be supposed to acquire a power of extension proportioned to their velocity, within their allotted sphere of action. Light spreads over vaster areas than sound because of the greater rapidity of its vibrations; and although it is true that seeming sensations of sound sometimes accompany the perception of transmitted thoughts, these phantasms of sound are evidently not aerial vibrations, but rather those of electrical origin or belonging to some diffusion similar to nerve power. The area proper

to the transmission of energies of this kind may be termed psychological attraction. Further, the velocity by which thought is transmitted among human beings may be the reason why that transmission usually remains unknown among them, although in hours of sleep the slight difference which exists between those who are conscious and those who are unconscious of these transmissions is nearly wholly cancelled.

It is supremely difficult or rather impossible to give an exact view of the characteristics of a language remarkable chiefly for its volatility and the impressions of the moment, forgotten in spite of efforts to recall them as soon as some event occurs which obliterates them from the memory, or some other impression takes their place. I may notice two characteristics which distinguish the speech ordinarily heard in that state, numerical diffusiveness and personal precision—the former an inane cloudland of passing humours, in which every topic of serious importance and trivial whimsicality is involved, no doubt the source of regrettable delusions to many an unwary percipient, and the latter a rather abrupt, brief enunciation of thoughts as compactly and thoroughly expressed as possible. Both these forms denote the presence of a volatile urgent force, carrying on the former into the region of unlimited absurdities, because of the numbers of minds engaged in it, and compressing the latter into as sturdy and solid expressiveness of reality, actual or logical, as possible. In the first case the sensible impressions on the brain are all in all; in the latter the causes of these impressions are sedulously guarded against, and the happy opportunity of a few moments' perception of the attention of some hearer is seized. Besides these two common characteristics of psychological language, I should mention that perfection seems then to be reached, when one who is more active by nature than passive, addresses another who is rather more passive than active. I have often endeavoured, apparently with success, to prove the truth of these distant communications by reading a word or two in some volume in the hands of both persons, the passive percipient, afterwards testing the truth of the communication by referring to the volume in question. But on this point I cannot speak with any degree of certainty, as, though I can hear words uttered under the influence of instinct, there always occurs to me what seems like a retirement of the speaker when his thoughts are concentrated on some form of utterance simply articulative. As far as I know, as yet, the truth of these communications rests only on the authority of one of the senses; it must pass from the invisible into the visible order of things by some of the ordinary methods of evidence ere it become the undoubted property of the human mind. But, perhaps, to a percipient accustomed to the consecutive nature of many communications, to their occasional distinctness and loudness, in the midst of silence, quite as clear and human as could proceed from the mouth of any speaker, and to the constant recurrence of such unexpected particularities as seem to exclude mere cerebral action, his instinctive knowledge is nearly equivalent to that which is termed scientific. It is also certain that sometimes, when the mind is at a loss for an idea or word, each is instantly suggested to the perceptive or mnemonic faculty by a vocal communication belonging to this order, in a manner very happily adjusted to the need.

SCRUTATOR.

"A MAN may be aware of his want of almost everything but common-sense. Why? Because he needs common-sense to discern his want of it. It is this which gives us impregnable dogmatists, and infallible critics."—DR. JOHN KER.

"It hath bin a received opinion that the Laplanders are addicted to magic. They have teachers and professors in this science, and parents in their last will bequeath to their children as the greatest part of their estate those spirits and devils that have bin anywaies serviceable to them in their lifetime."—JOHN SCHEFFERUS, *Professor at Upsala*. 1674.

### A FAIRY MARKET.

The following most circumstantial account of a fairy market is given by Bovet in his *Pandemonium; or, the Devil's Cloister Opened*, 1684:—

"Reading once the eighteenth of Mr. Glanvil's *Relations*, p. 203, concerning an Irishman that had like to have been carried away by spirits, and of a banquet they had spread before them in the fields, &c., it called to mind a passage I had often heard of fairies or spirits so called by country people, which showed themselves in great companies at divers times, as sometimes they would seem to dance, at other times to keep a great fair or market. I made it my business to inquire among the neighbours what credit might be given to that which was reported of them; and by many of the neighbouring inhabitants I had this account confirmed. The place near which they most ordinarily showed themselves, was on the side of a hill named Blackdown, not many miles from Tanton. Those that have had occasion to travel that way have frequently seen them there, appearing like men and women of a stature generally next the smaller size of men; their habits used to be red, blue, green, according to the old way of country garb, with high-crowned hats.

"One time, about fifty years since, a person living at Court St. Nicholas, a parish lying on one side of the hill, near Chard, was riding towards his home that way, and saw just before him, on the side of the hill, a great company of people, that seemed to him like country folks assembled as at a fair. There was all sorts of commodities, to his appearance as at ordinary fairs, pewterers, shoemakers, pedlars, with all kinds of trinkets, fruit, and drinking booths. He could not remember anything he had ordinarily seen at fairs, but what he saw there. It was once in his thought that it might be some fair for Chesterford, there being a considerable one at some time of the year; but then, again, he considered that that was not the season for it; he was under very great surprise and admired what the meaning of what he saw should be; at length it came into his mind what he had heard concerning the fairies on the side of the hill; and it being near the road he was to take, he resolved to ride in amongst them, and see what they were. Accordingly he put on his horse that way, and though he saw perfectly all along as he came, yet when he was upon the place where all these had appeared to him he could discern nothing at all, only seemed to be crowded and thrust, as when one passes through a throng of people; all the rest became invisible to him until he came at a little distance, and then it appeared to him again, as at first. He found himself in pain, so hasted home, where being arrived, a lameness seized him all on one side, which continued on him as long as he lived, which was many years, for he was living in Comb, and gave an account to any that inquired of this accident, for more than twenty years afterwards. And this relation I have from a person of known honour, who had it from the man himself. There were some whose names I have now forgot, but they then lived at a gentleman's house near Court Farm, near the place before specified: both the man and his wife, and divers of the neighbours assured me that they had many times seen this fair keeping in the summer time, as they came from Tanton market; but that they durst not adventure in amongst them, for that everyone that had done so had received great damage by it."

DECEIVING SPIRITS.—"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 if they were permitted to relate what heaven is and how things are in the heavens, they would tell so many lies, and, indeed, with solemn affirmation, that man would be astonished; wherefore, when spirits were speaking, I was not permitted to have faith in the things which they related. For they are extremely fond of fabricating, and whenever any subject of discourse is proposed they think that they know it, and give their opinions one after another, one in one way and another 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 example, if they were permitted to tell about things to come, about things unknown in the universal heaven, about all things whatsoever that man desires, yet they would tell all the things falsely, while from themselves: wherefore let men beware lest they believe them. On this account the state of speaking with spirits on this earth is most perilous, unless it is in true faith. They induce so strong a persuasion that it is the Lord Himself Who speaks and Who commands, that man cannot but believe and obey."—SWEDENBORG'S *Spiritual Diary*, 1622, Vol. II.

## JOTTINGS.

Mr. George Redway is arranging to place his library of rare and expensive works on the Occult Sciences at the command of his customers on the principle of the circulating library. Books of this character are always expensive, and often not procurable except by purchase. The principal circulating libraries exclude most of them from their catalogues, partly because they are rarely asked for, and partly from the prejudice of the managers. Mr. Redway had a large collection of his own before he acquired the unique library of the late Mr. Walter Moseley.

The terms of subscription are arranged with due regard to the value of some of the books thus put into circulation. Many volumes, of insignificant size, are sold at several guineas each. It is, therefore, not unreasonable to arrange special terms for the use of such valuable works. As a broad rule, the value of the book desired is the measure of the subscription. For instance, a subscriber of five guineas would be entitled to borrow any single work the value of which does not exceed that sum, or any number of ordinary books not exceeding in value the number of guineas subscribed. Thus, £100 worth of books may be made available for perusal by a subscriber of £1 1s. in the course of a hundred days, or by a subscriber of £5 5s. in the course of twenty days; but, in the former case, no book of greater value than £1 1s. may be selected; in the latter, any book up to the value of £5 5s. is available. Books may be exchanged daily.

This plan meets a want. We cannot all of us afford to buy these rare books; but a genuine student can now feed himself as he pleases for the price of a single volume.

Mr. W. Emmette Coleman has been collecting for the *Carrier Dove* the opinions of men of mark on Spiritualism, a subject of which most of them know little or nothing. It is very amusing reading. Here it is with some additions. What is it?

Dr. W. B. Carpenter said it was Ideo-motor action + dominant idea + expectant attention.

Professor Faraday thought it was all involuntary muscular action.

Professor Thury, of Geneva, attributes it to psychode or ectenic force.

Professor Balfour Stewart thought it due to electro-biological power.

Sir William Hamilton put it all down to latent thought.

Charles Bray thinks the phenomena are due to an omnipresent thought-atmosphere.

Francis G. Fairfield called it the result of a nervous lesion, akin to epilepsy.

Dr. Zerffi regards it as caused by the action of the organ of dreams, intensified by animal magnetism.

Professor Gairdner thinks a diseased action of the faculty of wonder solves the mystery.

Professor John Fiske, of Harvard, says Spiritualism is Totemism.

Dr. Hammond says the phenomena are due to nervous derangements. (Query: on the part of the tables?)

Dr. Marvin says they are due to a species of lunacy which he dubs medio-mania.

Professor Zöllner thought it due to the action of unseen beings in four-dimensional space.

Professor Mahan attributes the phenomena to odio or od force.

Professor Tyndall politely calls Spiritualism "intellectual whoredom."

Professor Ray Lankester calls a medium "an elusive wild beast."

Joseph Cook, of Boston, names it a "rat-hole revelation."

Thomas Carlyle called Spiritualism the "liturgy of Dead Sea Apes."

Lastly, plenty of wise men say it is "the Devil."

Respecting which opinions, we smile and are thankful that we are not philosophers, nor even wise men who can prophesy on an empty stomach.

Mr. Laurence Oliphant's marriage was announced in some of the London evening and in many of the provincial morning papers, and duly credited to "LIGHT," where alone the news was originally published.

Mr. J. J. Morse communicates to the *Banner of Light* an account of the great California Spiritualist Camp-meeting at Lake Merritt. It was very successful.

The *Boston Herald* has some notice of the exposure of a fraudulent medium of the name of Cowan; and incidentally complains that the Onset Bay Committee does not take sufficient pains to exclude persons of this character from its grounds. They flourish, the *Herald* complains, because they ply their trade under respectable patronage.

The *New York World* describes what it calls a "spook factory" and shows how "Sarah had a moustache." Sarah was a professed materialised spirit. Mrs. Stoddard Gray was the medium for this remarkable development.

Besides the camps above referred to there are Cassadaga Lake, Parkland Camp, Queen City Park, Sunapee Lake, Lake Pleasant, Ocean Grove, Look-out Mountain, &c., &c., all "in full blast."

The *Spiritualists' Examiner and Camp Reporter* (Des Moines: Iowa) has reached us. We can but wonder at its tone and temper and regret its publication.

The *World's Advance Thought* announces the first anniversary of its "whole world soul-communion." It boasts that this communion has been celebrated "from Reyjavik in Iceland to Kimberley in South Africa; from San Francisco to London; and on eastward till the circuit is closed with the seaports of China and Japan." Surely some good will come of such concentrated effort.

Mr. W. E. Coleman (*Carrier Dove*, July 22nd) quotes our correspondent "V." on Re-incarnation in the *London Spiritualist*—"LIGHT," we presume.

## MUSIC IN THE AIR HEARD ON THE DEATH OF GOETHE.

"When I was at Frankfort, in 1834, Charlotte Serviere told me, with apparent faith, that Madame (a blank in the MS.), a woman of great intelligence, was in Goethe's house at the time of his death, and that she and others heard sweet music in the air. No one could find out whence it came."—*Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson, Barrister-at-Law, F.S.A.* Macmillan, 1869.

"THE leading minds of the nation are supposed to be believers and they are not. Nay, not only are they presumed to hold the ordinary views, but it would be deemed uncourteous, if not insulting to presume otherwise, because to presume or to speak as if we presumed otherwise would be, in the current state of narrow intolerance which prevails everywhere but in the great centres of intelligence, to hold them out to the reprobation of men. In consequence, the leading intellects of whom we speak, partly out of unworthy deference to established prejudice, partly out of mistaken consideration for the weaker brethren, are apt to acquiesce in the tacit assumption of the outside world; and thus timidity is generated among the higher, and impertinence among the common-place orders of intelligence. The inferior minds rule over the superior by virtue of their numbers, and in no field is the tyranny of lower natures so pernicious as in that of mind."—W. R. GREG.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## Puritanism, Mysticism, and Ritualism.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have been minded to address you upon the matters of which this letter treats, for some time past, and I am now constrained to utter myself.

What I have to say has particular relation to an article on "Puritanism and Mysticism," in your periodical bearing date June 9th; to another article entitled "Teachings from the Over-Mind," in the number for July 14th; and to a letter in the same number on the "Sacramental System"; as well as a general relation to much of the teaching that is put forth in "LIGHT" and elsewhere, touching the Christian religion.

I have seen with surprise that the teaching I speak of is based upon the assumptions that Christianity, somewhat pruned and properly understood, is the Truth; that mysticism is equivalent to enlightenment; and that spiritual growth is to be promoted by the cultivation of the emotions that, in persons of a certain temperament, are produced by the practice of symbolical observances, and by the glamour of a splendid ritual. I am convinced that such teaching is a darkening of counsel. I am convinced that the influence of the theological part of Christianity is the greatest obstacle that the few people of this age and country who really desire to attain to absolute life have to encounter in the early part of their pilgrimage. I am convinced that mysticism is to man's intuition what (if I may use the figure) the budding poppy is to the blade of wheat it grows beside; and I am convinced that what is called Ritualism, wherever it exists, emasculates, in those who follow after it, the faculties by the development of which man may attain to the light, and infects the mortal soul with a subtle sensuousness that, since it flourishes in a superior part of the personality, is even more hostile to the divine germ in man than ordinary bodily sensuality is.

To him who seeks his pleasure in Mysticism and Ritualism, the Puritan spirit is naturally hateful; for in whom it wakes, to him it cries aloud—with a sound that drowns the voice of authority, and the loud braying of the dogmatic mystic, and the sleep-talk of the speculative mystic—that symbols cannot save a man, nor the understanding of symbols, nor raptures, nor sorrows, nor sufferings, nor the love of beauty, nor the knowledge of the universe's correspondences, nor anything at all but union with the Eternal. And, therefore, it was fitting that when one, "π," spoke in praise of Mysticism, he should, at the same time, lift up his voice against Puritanism.

It may well be that the cultivation of mystical devotion by means of symbolical ceremonies, and the stimulation of passion by means of impressive ceremonies, are really essential parts of the Christian religion. I, indeed, am not concerned to consider whether they be so or not; but this, at least, after long consideration, I see; namely, that well-nigh all that is evil in the Christian religion is of kin to them, as all that is good in the Christian religion has been produced by the spirit of what men call Puritanism; that is to say, by the spirit of renunciation and self-restraint, by the spirit of honesty and thoroughness, by the spirit of patient continuance in well-doing, by the spirit of strenuous conscientiousness and sweet reasonableness, of the single eye and of the clean hands, of virtue, of purity, of soberness, and of truth.

From the earliest times, the Christians have made an idol of the man of Galilee. Instead of their pattern he has been their fetish. The mystical allegories by which men of old endeavoured to typify the awakening of man's immortal *νοῦς*—foolishly endeavoured, I say (were they not human?); vainly endeavoured, for the process is inscrutable—have been taken in the literal sense, and out of them has been spun a story of the life of Jesus Christ.

The practice of the great puritanical rules of conduct which, in the West, are attributed to this teacher, is, indeed, able to bring men to the beginning of the path of salvation. But men do not like the rules, and, consequently, they do not practise them; for it is easier to profess a creed than to do righteousness; it is pleasanter to gratify the mystical and æsthetic feelings and the sense of wonder and the sentiment of devotion, than to renounce all things. Christian men do not, any more than other men, desire salvation, but only the joys of Heaven; they feel that, to use their own expression, they are weak, and they do not desire strength, but only the services of the strong; they are miserable sinners, they say (with singular truth), and they do not seek to become good, but only to be "accounted

righteous in Christ Jesus," in order that, as they trust, they may be admitted into Heaven. To gain Heaven the really true believer will, of course, do anything that he may consider to be necessary to that end; and the history of Europe declares nothing more certainly nor with more iteration than this, namely, that there is hardly any wickedness that the mind of man can conceive, or the muscles of man execute, that the hope of Heaven has not been made a bribe to induce the true believer to commit, by the high priests of mystical Christianity. From the worst abominations of that system; in other words, from the uttermost depth of imposture and from the last extremity of crime, the influence of the spirit of Puritanism—weakened, indeed, by the essential selfishness that is common to all Christian systems—contaminated, indeed, by a most immoral theology—has, at least, been able to keep the Protestant sects.

The cheap religious newspaper "is one of the most striking of the recent developments of Puritanism," says the writer of the article on "Puritanism and Mysticism." Truly, it is a beggarly development—of whatever it may truly be a development. But mystical Christianity has developed worse things than the cheap religious newspaper: it has developed churches militant, that is to say, elaborate systems for the suppression of mental and bodily freedom; it has developed the Ernulphus' curse of excommunication and the unique villainy of Jesuitism; it has developed the posthumous honour of canonisation for the more eminent of those who have committed perjury and theft and murder at the instigation of its devil's hierarchy; and a most horrible ingenuity in the devising of torments for the flesh of its enemies. In a word, it is established upon the fury and sensuality of the animal soul. From the gate of hell it has gathered its ministers,—

—"— et MALA MENTIS

GAUDIA, mortiferumque adverso in limine Bellum  
Ferreique Eumenidum thalami, et Discordia demens,  
Vipereum crinem vittis innexa cruentis."

In the long run, wherever it has fixed a foul footstep, it has defiled the mortal souls of men with a great defilement, and trampled their struggling virtues in the dust.

In "Teachings from the Over-Mind," and in the letter on the "Sacramental System," this mystical religion is categorically taught. The writer of the latter communication recommends the favourite rite of a particular school of Christianity as a pleasant and easy method of salvation; and, in the former communication, the suffering children of men are urged to pity the sorrows of the writer's Almighty God, and to seek salvation in their own artfully excited emotions. To this writer I would say, Is this teaching really from a region *above* thee? if so, thine own condition demands thine earnest attention, for thou art in a sad case.

I have now spoken conscientiously something of what I was minded to speak, trusting that there are some who will hear me conscientiously. I have done. R. N.

(For remainder of Correspondence see p. 436.)

## 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.

Several letters—some of which are already in type—are unavoidably held over until next week.

GARDEN HALL, 309, ESSEX-ROAD, ISLINGTON, N.—On Sunday last Mr. J. R. Lees delivered an excellent address of a theological character to the satisfaction of those present. Next Sunday evening at 6.30 Mr. W. E. Walker, Trance and Clairvoyance. Séance on Friday evening at 7.30 by Mrs. Wilkinson.—J. H. J., Hon. Sec., August 27th, 1888.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday last the discussion on "Spiritualism and Swedenborgianism" was continued at the morning meeting by "A. V. B." Mr. T. A. Major delivered a good address on "Spirit Influence" in the evening. Mr. John Hopcroft on Sunday next at eleven and seven.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

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

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## Light:

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

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1st, 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. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

#### GUIDES AND GUARDIANS.

"Three Students" expressed themselves as being perplexed on the subject of Guides and Guardians. It seems that some bewilderment has come upon them from a failure to understand certain statements in "M.A. (Oxon's)" *Visions*. That compact block of experience, which, he was careful to state, was unique so far as he was concerned, was concerned with communications from a being who had never been incarnated on this earth. The Angel Harmony, who communicated then and then only, was an absolute exception to the rule that those who entered into relations with him professed with one accord to be the spirits of deceased men and women. *Many* of these—those who read the published records of "M.A. (Oxon's)" experience will see that it is right to say that *most* of these—had given such evidence of their identity as is possible under the circumstances. It is a question for each investigator to decide for himself what exact amount of evidence, possible under the circumstances, avails to establish the contention. In any given case it should be very exact. To exclude known possibilities, *e.g.*, of thought-reading, personation, and the like, very stringent proof should be reasonably required.

In certain published cases, and in more that have not been made public, this requirement has been satisfied. In the majority of cases it has not. But when once a clear and definite case has been established there is a considerable presumption of truth extending to other less perfect pieces of evidence. So the character of the proof is cumulative. That which is *prima facie* unbelievable becomes possible on a single demonstration; probable on a few more pieces of evidence; and the balance of proof is completely shifted when a certain number of good cases is thoroughly proven. It is now for the sceptic to demolish the evidence at its best, and not for the Spiritualist to go on proving his case when no fair answer has been made to his accumulated pieces of evidence.

This, then, is the case so far as our personal knowledge goes. They who communicate with us profess to be departed spirits. The exceptions, such as the Angel Harmony, are so few as to serve only to prove the rule. We do not disguise the fact that there are others whose experience is of another kind. Mr. Edward Maitland has told us of another order of illumination, and of spirits who make no profession of earth-incarnation. It is conceivable that different natures may attract and receive instruction

from various orders of spirit. It is conceivable also that to some may come direct messages of instruction *ab extra*, while to others the illumination may proceed from the stimulation and excitation of the dormant powers of their own spiritual being. We believe that this is the case. It is not given to many, so far as we know, to be in communication with a Guardian sufficiently wise, powerful, and elevated to guide in difficulty and to protect from harm.

It must be admitted that any attempt to penetrate the region of spirit is beset with risk. Especially is this the case when the latent powers of spirit, which we call mediumship, are sought to be stirred into activity. It is then a very vital question to the medium whether he is in relations with a spirit whose moral consciousness, power, and wisdom are so established that he can trust them. So far as we know, very few attempts are made to test the foundation in these respects. It is too much the habit among Spiritualists to think that every spirit is above the level of ordinary humanity. A communication made abnormally has a weight far beyond its intrinsic merits. It comes from the world of spirit, therefore it is to be heeded.

Now, a very little consideration will show how illogical is this conclusion. The world of spirit, assuming that these messages do really come therefrom, is a very mixed assemblage, recruited day by day from this world of ours, and the recruits are a very motley group. Those who are least desirable as communicating spirits are, so far as our knowledge shows, nearest to us and most ready to enter into relations with us. Those who are purest and highest, as the result of their incarnation, are furthest from us, and least capable of being reached. It seems that a voluntary effort on their part alone places us in communication with such. They have a work to do in which we may share; they have a motive of their own which we cannot call into operation; at any rate the choice is theirs, not ours.

So it comes to pass that many or most of the guides that the public hear of are not the wisest or the most elevated that could be desired. It is so natural to imagine that a spirit must be wiser, holier, better than we that it is important to insist upon the plain fact that this is not the case. It may well be that the thousand and one communications that profess to come from the world of spirit may be genuine—and quite worthless so far as the matter of them is concerned. It will be for Spiritualists, when they have got over the stage of mere wonder-hunting, to try the spirits and seek after something higher.

Meantime it remains that, in a vast preponderance of cases, Guides and Guardians are, on their own showing, beings who have once lived on this earth. And therein the contention of the Spiritualists is, as it seems to us, not only not controverted, but not seriously impugned. We do not now offer an opinion as to the common belief among Spiritualists that each of us has his own Guardian, whose duty it is to educate and protect him. We understand our correspondents to inquire as to points on which we have endeavoured, from our own experience, to answer them. An even slight knowledge would point to caution in following the advice of unknown intelligences, when no sufficient care has been taken to test their capabilities. The wisest and purest spirits make no demand on unquestioning acceptance. They do not seek to control the reason—the final court of appeal to which every such question must eventually be referred.

COLONEL OLCOTT.—The many friends of Colonel H. S. Olcott will be glad to learn that official business of the Theosophical Society has brought him on a flying visit to Europe, after four years' absence in India. He will return to Madras in a few weeks. Meanwhile he will be glad to see, at 17, Lansdowne-road, Holland Park, W., all personal friends and others who may be interested in Theosophical matters.—F. T. S.

## KARMA.

One of the most valuable of the results of the modern scientific method is the reduction under a few large laws of a vast number of observed facts which early ignorance attributed to imaginary laws or to the special interpositions of God and His subordinate agents. Of these large laws one is now receiving special attention with thinkers like Galton and Paul Bourget, namely, the law of heredity. Quite startling are some of the conclusions that moralists abroad are now formulating upon this particular basis. It is asserted that man is practically an automaton, whose conduct depends on his ancestors. Few will deny this when they are in the presence of the son of a drunkard or a spendthrift, though they might be more chary in attributing the good deeds of an acquaintance to the influence of a grandmother who has been many years in a coffin. There may be exaggeration in the conclusions of the prominent writers on heredity, but few can read a book like Galton's *Hereditary Genius* without coming to the conclusion that the law is wide and potent.

These remarks have been suggested by a letter of Mr. G. D. Haughton, which appeared in "LIGHT" a few weeks ago, or rather by the little impression that that letter seems to have made upon certain of your correspondents who write upon re-births. Is heredity a law? Because, if so, the doctrine of re-births must be given up, at least by those who derive their theories from observed facts.

In Dublin in the middle of last century was a Miss Frances Chamberlaine, authoress of one or two comedies and novels. She married an actor, and had for descendants more sparkling and witty people than any other mother in the world. This lady, as it seems to me, is a considerable obstacle in the pathway of the re-birth theorists. For supposing that we take "Nizida" as a guide and admit that it was the Karma of Richard Brinsley Sheridan in, say, thirty-five previous existences that made him give us the *School for Scandal* and the great Begum speech, and that Thomas Sheridan and his talented wife had nothing to do with these achievements, what about Lady Dufferin and Mrs. Norton? Here again the Sheridan sparkle seems to emerge, but this must be set down to the actions of these ladies in previous existences; and the Sheridan blood has, moreover, had nothing to do with the talent and wit of the author of *Letters from High Latitudes*. Karma or blind causation brought about this fortuitous appearance of family talent. Let us consider this word Karma, and go to the authentic literature of Brahmins and Buddhists on the subject, and not to the "occult Eastern teaching" of the Buddhists of Tibet.

Buddha and his early disciples took over from the Brahmins an eschatology which was in fact two contradictory eschatologies superimposed the one on the top of the other. This was a just and complete system of rewards and punishments in certain heavens and hells, and a just and complete system of rewards and punishments by re-births on earth. The first and earliest system was based on the phenomena of nature incorrectly observed. It was known that this earth has much subterranean fire. It was patent to the naked eye that it was a vast flat plane. In this way the idea got abroad that the wicked went to the fiery region which the Hebrew, ignorant of Australia, called the "bottomless pit." By-and-bye the Brahmins in India waxed strong. They formed themselves into an exclusive caste and family. They devised an ingenious system for mulcting the rest of mankind by pilgrimages, sacrifices, feasts, charms. Sheep-shearing is never done without some bleating in the fold. The laity urged that it was on the face of it unjust that this spiritual life, with its concomitant honours and idleness, and fat gifts, should be confined (as in the house of Aaron) to one race and one family. If it came from a just God it ought to be attainable by all

mankind. To this a subtle answer was imagined. The Brahmins cultivated the spiritual life in comfort and luxury because they had been on earth in many previous lives, and had by slow degrees become spiritual. The toilers were slaves because they had also been on earth many times before, and in each of these lives they had been wicked. "But we don't remember these past lives," said the toilers. "No," said the Brahmins; "only the twice-born get that happy memory." It will be seen by this that the system of Kardec and the system of the Brahmins are diametrically opposed. One is reformatory, disciplinarian, spiritual, and is based on a memory of past lives after each earth experience. The other is gross, material, retrograde, and is based on a complete oblivion of previous existences. Esoteric Buddhism, by hashing together Manu and Kardec, betrayed at once its Western origin.

Buddha's missionaries proclaimed in many lands the crucial truth of humanity. This was that there is a plane of matter and a plane of spirit, and that the first means misery and the second happiness. He is not responsible for the errors of his times; in fact, he took the sting out of the Brahmin metempsychosis by opening up the spiritual life to all. "Theosophy" has clung chiefly to these errors. I would recommend these thinkers to read *A Modern Buddhist*, by Mr. Alabaster. In that work a genuine Buddhist announces that Karma is "unintelligent causation," and that after death this Karma settles whether an evildoer shall accurately atone for his sins, by being boiled, let us say, in hot oil for 1,700 years in the Rowra hell, or receive the lighter punishment of 200 years in a pitchy cauldron in Hell No. 4. This may be called "unintelligent causation," but it is difficult quite to see how it is unintelligent, and still more difficult to see how it is causation at all. And if the hells, as is asserted, completely lap up the evil Karma, why should the same malefactor afterwards undergo 200 years, say, as a cab-horse in London? But Theosophists will answer that their theories of Re-incarnation are not affected by any Buddhism but Esoteric Buddhism. That, as Mr. Sinnett tells us, is "absolute truth," revealed, as it has been, by the great Mahatma, Koot Hoomi. And "Nizida" ("LIGHT," August 11th) informs us that each Theosophist has an inner light, the "Himself," which is not to be confused for a moment with the inner light of Spiritualists, who are the sport of misleading, astral spirits. This may be so, but supposing that I, a Spiritualist, and "Nizida," a Theosophist, each hear the inner voice to-night. How can I be quite certain that mine is not the great "Himself" pretending to be an astral spirit? How can she be certain that hers is not an astral spirit pretending to be the great "Himself"? The Theosophists will answer that there is an infallible test, namely, proper views on the subject of Re-incarnation. But this conjures up a dilemma with two cruel horns. If I listen to the great "Himself" I culpably reject the revelation of "absolute truth." And if I go to Koot Hoomi for my ideas, I dethrone the great "Himself" altogether.

EOTHEN.

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS.—"Here we would again intimate to our modern evangelical propagandists to consider what they are about in attempting to, so to speak, convert Persia, India, and China to Christianity. The secret of their success must be in the *manifestation of the truth*, not from popular conventional principles, but from its deep eternal ground as comprised in the expression of St. Paul, 'the mystery of God and the Father and Christ,' and Nature and all things. And in demonstration of their principles they must also, if needs be, be able to do the works which those principles will enable them to perform if carried out to their proper Theosophical development; even to indicate from an intellectual perception the good and evil in all natural things, and the several relations and proportions thereof, with the qualifications needful to harmonise the wrathful disordered properties in bodies; yea, to heal the sick by a touch, to take up any deadly thing, and nothing of all the powers of darkness to be able in anywise to show forth its nature upon them, but to be instantly transmuted into heavenly pomp and sanity."—WALTON'S *Memorial of W. Law*.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

(Continued from p. 433.)

"Scientific Religion."  
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I should always treat with deference any criticism by Mr. Oxley, either of my own opinions, or of those of an author whose book he had himself read and studied. But in the case of *Scientific Religion*, Mr. Oxley appears not to have fulfilled this condition, but strangely to suppose that criticism can fairly and conveniently be based on my review, on the presumption that the very independent, and rather too discursive, account therein is in substantial accord with the author's views. I hope it is, as far as it goes; but over-long as it is, and elaborate as it may seem, it has not even the value of the chapter headings, as a synopsis of Mr. Oliphant's own treatment of his subject.

But I must doubt that Mr. Oxley has read even the review with much attention. For, if he had, he would surely not have urged an objection to the title of the book, without betraying the least consciousness of the considerations by which I had carefully and expressly endeavoured to meet that very objection. Nor does he refer to the explanatory clause of the title, by which the author indicates in what sense he wishes the phrase, "Scientific Religion," to be understood. No doubt there is a great deal in the book that may be called "speculative," though I should prefer the term, interpretative, since it concerns a rendering of Scripture and tradition. But Mr. Oxley first overlooks the distinction (which I, following my author, had carefully insisted upon) between scientific *conception* and scientific *verification*; and then fails to observe that the claim to a scientific character is limited to the conception and exposition of the "Higher Possibilities of Life and Practice by the Operation of Natural Forces." In the first instalment of my review, which appeared in "LIGHT" of June 23rd, I tried to show that it was by an extension of the sphere of nature, by a legitimate phenomenalisation of convertive and regenerative forces in consciousness, that the whole subject matter of religion was brought potentially within the cognisance of scientific thought, at least as hypothesis fulfilling the condition of objective representation. Scientific thinking is concerned with nature as objective, not with ontology, not with "spirit" as the noumenal subjectivity of nature. In recent years there have been several attempts to familiarise the scientific mind with a distinction it has hitherto neglected, that is, between the ontological and the transcendental. It was taken for granted—the question not being raised—that whatever was transcendental, *i.e.*, beyond relation to our present senses, must be regarded as *absolutely* supersensuous, and therefore as not belonging to nature, unless in some purely spiritual intent which could not be at all accommodated to scientific conceptions. That is just the prejudice against which the phenomena, miscalled "spiritualistic," have had to contend. The conception of transcendental physics is becoming easier now, partly through the revival of metaphysical culture, and the consequent influence of Kant's *Æsthetic*, but, perhaps, chiefly through the growing, though still very deficient, apprehension of the immense significance of the philosophy of evolution in this direction.\* But the supernatural, driven back by the hypothesis of transcendental physics, retreating behind the widening horizon, or below the profounder depths of nature, suggested by that hypothesis, seemed to take refuge in the domain of man's ethical and religious life. Mr. Oliphant has tried to reclaim that domain also: to find substance, figured objectively and structurally, in the deepest depths of human subjectivity, and to represent as a veritable process of organic connection, those mysteries of atonement and Divine union, which cannot otherwise be naturally conceived. He has perceived that what we now call subjective is not absolutely and finally, but only relatively and provisionally such; that we can in imagination, and therefore potentially by sense, *get behind* any stage or stratum of consciousness, and represent its objective aspect, which is just to phenomenalise it, to include it in nature, and at the same time to naturalise the modifying and reconstructive forces we call inspirational and Divine.

Mr. Oxley objects to my phrase (which, by-the-by, is not Mr. Oliphant's), "the design of nature," in the passage wherein I speak of the separation of the sexes as not in accordance with

that design. "It seems only reasonable," he says, "to think that if nature had the power to design, nature has the power to carry out, or ultimate, such design," &c. And again, "If separate sexuality is not natural to human beings, as embodied on this planet, who or what made it unnatural?" To answer this question first, I say, simply, that I never alleged or suggested that separate sexuality is not natural to human beings, *as embodied on this planet*. I said exactly the contrary in the very passage which Mr. Oxley actually quotes immediately after his question, in which I speak of the division of the sexes on earth *as nature's device* for maintaining bisexuality. The contention was that man's present embodiment is the result of a lapse into a materialistic condition for which he was not intended, and to which his complete human constitution was not adapted. *Having* thus lapsed, the division of the sexes was represented as *naturally* inevitable for the preservation of the race. The objection that nature should be able to carry out her design thus altogether misconceives the argument, which was not that nature designed the organic union of the sexes in *our present embodiment*, but that by man's default, leading to a false embodiment, she has been obliged to maintain bisexuality in separation instead of in union. If Mr. Oxley means, however, that nature, "the out-working of the Great Designer," could not have been thus thwarted by human perversity, or that it is unscientific to suppose that this would happen, I would merely ask, what, then, does he think of the unquestionable violations of the laws of physiological health which we daily witness, and of the patient and indefatigable efforts of poor nature to do the best she can for the offender? Now what I maintain is thoroughly unscientific and unphilosophical is to judge of what is naturally possible or the reverse by the mere *scale* of the occurrence, to admit as of course, the fact being familiar to us, the thwarting of nature's design by individual man in his individual lifetime, and yet to pronounce inconceivable, or to conceive with difficulty, an analogous perversity of the race, carried on through ages, and resulting in consequences of corresponding magnitude and importance. Mr. Oxley's objection is not merely to Mr. Oliphant's account of the "fall" of man, but to the whole conception of a "fall," as a defeat of the design of nature, or of God in nature. But as individual man does indisputably "fall" from his ideal, that is, from the design, with every occasion of moral degeneracy, the paradox, if it is one, belongs as much to present experience as to the Biblical conception of historical catastrophe. There is not the smallest imperfection in man or nature which does not present the same difficulty as that of the "fall" in regard to Divine omnipotence.

The conception of the "fall" is that of a moral catastrophe, very gradual in its process and effects, but eventually resulting in the physical degradation of man. This physical degradation is described as consequent on the loss of the higher quality of life which manifests itself objectively, and, in the ultimate degree, by a subtler, more mobile, and more permeable quality of matter. The natural correspondence of body and soul, that the former must in its state be an appropriate vehicle and instrument of the latter, will not, I imagine, be disputed by Mr. Oxley. If the soul becomes gross and lethargic, losing illumination and power, it will animate an exterior vehicle of quality, in that degree, analogous to its own. Permeability is an attribute of the subtler forms of matter, even as we know matter, as solidity is of the grosser. Physical union is therefore possible in one case in a mode in which it is impossible in the other. Now it is certain that the tendency of the sexes to unite would in any state be carried as far as it could. Given a more permeable physical condition, and you will have sexual biunity as certainly as you will have a chemical combination from the synthesis of combinable elements. So that the question of the separation of the sexes is really the question of the incarnation of man-woman into a physical ultimate other than that which was original to them. Mr. Oxley finds it "an astounding statement" that "the externalisation of woman was unnatural to her," and that this happened by a great and prolonged process of nature, tersely expressed in the Bible narrative by God taking woman out of the body of man. Now I quite admit, and would insist, that the epitomised account of the origin of woman in this world, given in one of the most ancient of the sacred traditions, is so far "astounding," that it is extremely unlikely to have suggested itself to the child-like imagination from which primitive traditions are supposed to have arisen. It is astounding, if we are expected to regard the account in Genesis as of no higher

\* See, especially, du Prel's *Philosophie der Mystik*, of which my translation is at length in the press.

significance or authority than fables which mount the world on an elephant and the elephant on a tortoise. But read by the light of an intelligible interpretation of the fall of man—his descent into an animal and physical condition which was not for him normal and original—the statement is so far from being astounding that it is an inevitable inference from the hypothetical data. “The universality of sexual differentiation in every form of organic life, even from the lowest to the highest on this earth,” says Mr. Oxley, “is proof that it is normal, *i.e.*, according to established rule or principle.” “Universality” is rather too broad a term, since there are bisexual plants, and, I believe, bisexual animals, but upon that I lay no stress now. Mr. Oxley is again arguing wide of the hypothesis, which is not that sexual differentiation is not normal to the organic life on this earth, but that man does not normally belong to that organic life; that he has sunk into it. That sinking was his original incarnation here, a gradual taking on of a nature by assimilation to it, but which assimilation was inconsistent with the maintenance of his biune constitution. Mr. Oxley asks for proof that the externalisation of woman was unnatural to her, and refers to the absence of such proof “in the organical structure of the male form of man.” Well, I should hardly look for organic proof of the abnormality of woman in the male form; but I do find some evidence of it in physiological facts of woman’s own life—peculiar to her among all females—as well as in the suffering and danger of parturition, from which also, I believe, the animals of the female sex are exempt. The generally inferior physical strength, also, of woman, her inaptitude for the severer forms of labour, is not common to her with females of other species; and the general sentiment that she should not be exposed to the ruder contacts of nature may testify to an obscure sense that her externality, her immediate relation to a physical environment, is not entirely as it should be.

Mr. Oxley also objects that “the psychical or astral form, when it becomes apparent, is equally destitute of the void which would follow such a process, however long or short.” So it seems that he would expect to find in man’s body some cavity, which woman’s body had occupied! If he at length reads, as I hope he will, the book which he is criticising, I think he will be the first to laugh himself at such a misconception. I should have thought there was enough, even in my review, to have warned him off that; but really it never occurred to me that it was necessary to guard against the supposition that woman was taken out in a lump, *teres atque rotunda*, leaving a capacious “void” in the physical body of her mate! And as to the astral form, that of course is the representation of man’s existing structure.

Mr. Oxley is displeased at what he calls a “continuation of the libel on the better half of humanity,” contained in the interpretative rendering by Mr. Oliphant (which he has not read) of the Biblical story of the “fall” through Eve. Has he never heard of the maxim that the corruption of the best is the worst? And is it not notorious, even to our present experience, that woman’s influence, when perverted, is as potent to degrade man as it is, when pure, to elevate him? Woman, according to Mr. Oliphant, represents externally the inward principle of the human metaphysical constitution, and the “fall into matter” (our matter), beginning morally, and ultimating physically, can only be ascribed in its inception to a perversion of that principle. In proportion to the magnitude of the catastrophe must be the depth or centrality of the cause. No modern writer, except the writers of *The Perfect Way*, has so dignified and exalted woman as Mr. Oliphant has.

The alleged fact of the incarnation of Christ without the instrumentality of an earthly father, Mr. Oxley considers “may be taken on faith,” but is unverifiable, and thus not in harmony with “scientific” religion. If by unverifiable, he means that the direct historical evidence is and must be insufficient of itself to establish such a fact, of course I agree with him. But if he means by his alternative (that it can only be taken on faith) that belief in it cannot have a rational and intelligible foundation, I entirely dissent. My own belief in it would depend on the clearness with which I could perceive its natural and necessary connection with a plan or scheme of human restoration and reintegration in which I already believed. I conceive that insight confers knowledge as certain as experimental verification, although it is knowledge which cannot so easily be made common property. That, when sufficiently deep, comprehensive, clear, and unperturbed by prejudice, is the highest science of all—it is Wisdom. But for my own part, I must confess that I

have as yet no settled belief on the point in question, and only do not now so utterly disbelieve the fact as formerly I did.

And then Mr. Oxley goes off into the Re-incarnation question, as to which he appears to have no dispute with Mr. Oliphant, though he has with me. What I believe to be the true doctrine on that subject has been so luminously expounded, especially by Mr. Edward Maitland and “Nizida” in “LIGHT,” within the last few weeks, that I had hoped that at least one current misconception, and a favourite objection founded thereon, had been finally disposed of. But here is Mr. Oxley coming out with it again, with as much apparent unconsciousness of Mr. Maitland’s explicit and lucid correction, as he has betrayed of some of Mr. Oliphant’s positions. No evidence forthcoming in support of Re-incarnation from “the other side.” Of course not; because *ex hypothesi* the communicators from the other side are temporary survivals of the recent incarnation, with no knowledge and no memory but what are derived from that experience—decaying and perishable consciousnesses, leaves of one season, dropped in autumn by the twigs which will presently put forth fresh ones. The philosophy of Re-incarnation is a denial of the immortality of the earthly personality, constituted, as that is, of unessential ingredients, or of which the essential ingredients are taken up into the larger life, the transcendental individuality, and contribute to its growth. Survival in *kama loca* is the unrest of a bad sleeper; but usually, good and faithful work done in this world, as in our day-time, is rewarded by the quick and deep sleep, or oblivion to external concerns, which is the individual consciousness of the spiritual life, according to the growth of that in the true individual. It is in the latter that we should expect to find stored the memories of former personal lives, if, indeed, the husks of outward relation and circumstance, without interest for the spiritual consciousness, can be retained at all; and I do not think that any stress should be laid, as evidence, upon the supposed memories of past lives by the personal consciousness which is not lineally, but only, as it were, collaterally, connected therewith. For in saying that “I” have had former incarnations, the reference is not to the “I” of daily consciousness, the “I” of earthly relation, but to the transcendental subject, the root Ego.

I would also submit that we should be careful not to mix up questions of evolution from lower forms of life with the question of successive incarnations of one degree of vital attainment. The bearing of some of the latter part of Mr. Oxley’s letter on the question of Re-incarnation is not quite apparent to me.—Your obedient servant,

August 23rd, 1888.

C. C. M.

To the Editor of “LIGHT.”

SIR,—In your issue of June 16th, there appears a letter from “W. W. F.” commenting upon certain expressions of which I have made use in the Appendix which I have written to Mr. Laurence Oliphant’s *Scientific Religion*. Owing to my being at present abroad, I have only just seen his letter, but I feel grateful to him for it as it affords me an opportunity for availing myself of the columns of your valuable paper to discuss a matter of great importance to which “W. W. F.” has referred, and which I regret that I did not dwell upon more fully in the pages of the Appendix.

No one who has studied the Bible carefully can have failed to notice the frequency of the expression “Son of God,” though, probably, few have realised the full significance of the term. A due comprehension of its meaning will, however, help to clear up many spiritual difficulties, and will especially remove much misunderstanding as to the nature and person of Christ.

As Mr. Oliphant has very clearly explained, in pp. 220-230 of *Scientific Religion*, our present world is an emanation from a former universe, the creation of which is described in the first chapter of Genesis. The inhabitants of this former universe, which is the bisexual parent of our present universe, were, as recorded in Gen. i. 27, bisexual human beings, Elohistic in their nature, created “in the image of God.” During the period of their innocence and integrity they drew all the elements of their existence from “Shaddai,” the Maternal Divine Feminine principle of the Godhead. When “Adam Cadmon,” the head of this primal universe, in the insane unbridled licence of his free will, assumed to himself the prerogatives of God, and thus became “Satan,” the embodiment of the Great Inversion (see pp. 226 and 451), the inhabitants of the primal universe became split up into two great antagonistic

factions, consisting, on the one hand, of those who remained true to Shaddai, and on the other hand of those who followed Satan. The former are known to us as "Seraphim," the latter as "Siddim." Both classes, however, being bisexual and Elohist in their origin, are denominated in the Bible "sons of God." This has been briefly touched upon in my note P, in the Appendix, "On the word Shaddai," which I would particularly request your readers to study, as being, in my opinion, the most important note of all. I did not, however, perhaps make it sufficiently clear, as I desire now to do, that wherever the expression "Son of God," appears in the Bible, it always has reference to "bisexual Elohist humanity," either in its original form as an inhabitant of the primal bisexual universe, or else in its regenerated form, as a member of the sympneumatic humanity, re-united through Christ to God.

The following are instances in which the term "sons of God" is applied to the Siddim, the fallen portion of the primal universe:—

"The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all that they chose." (Gen. vi. 2.)

"The sons of God came to present themselves before Jehovah, and Satan came also among them." (Job i. 6.)

"Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before Jehovah, and Satan came also among them to present himself before Jehovah." (Job ii. 1.)

The Seraphim, or unfallen creatures of the primal bisexual humanity, are clearly referred to in Job xxviii. 7, "And all the sons of God shouted for joy." Again, in Dan. iii. 25, "The aspect of the fourth is like a son of God." The Authorised Version here, as in so many other places, incorrectly inserts the definite article, but the Revised Version has rightly rendered the expression "a son of the gods." The word translated "God" in all the passages quoted above is "Elohim"; and it would be better, perhaps, always to speak of "sons of Elohim" instead of "sons of God."

When the fulness of time had come, and Christ was to be born into the world, a female organism was prepared, in the person of the Virgin Mary, "endowed with atomic sensitiveness and receptivity to vital forces directed from the beings to whom it owed its origin in the invisible world, and with whom an interior atomic combination would be effected." All this has been fully explained in p. 303 of *Scientific Religion*. This human female organism was overshadowed by a force of one of the most high beings of the unfallen primal bisexual universe, and the offspring, Christ, was in consequence an unfallen bisexual being, in other words, a "son of God." This is the exact meaning of the angel Gabriel's annunciation to the Virgin Mary, and upon it hinges the whole plan of man's salvation, that is to say, of the regeneration of the human race, and its restoration, through atomic union with Christ, to sympneumatic, bisexual likeness to the nature of God.

My friend "W. W. F." seems to discern "a bias to Arianism" in this interpretation of the angelic announcement to Mary. I desire distinctly to disclaim any such tendency. I care no more for the opinions of Arius than I do for those of Athanasius. Neither the one nor the other, so far as I have been able to gather, had any conception of the true bisexual nature of Christ.—I am, yours truly,

THE AUTHOR OF THE APPENDIX TO  
August 4th, 1888. "SCIENTIFIC RELIGION."

### An American Medium for Materialisation.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The Excelsior spirit-band (my guides) impress me that a short account of a séance which I recently attended would be of interest to the friends over the big waters. The medium was Mrs. C. B. Bliss, one of the finest in America for the phase of materialisation. The séance was strictly private and under absolute test conditions. The sitters, besides myself, were two gentlemen of good social position in Boston, Mr. W. and Mr. N., whose full names I withhold, not having asked their permission to use them publicly, but who, I doubt not, would if requested confirm what I am about to state. The séance was held on Sunday afternoon, June 24th, 1888. The room having been suitably darkened so as to exclude the bright sunshine of the outer world, Mrs. Bliss stepped into the cabinet, which consists of a recess or passage-way between the séance-room and that at the rear, the door between the two being double-locked by one of the gentlemen present and the keys retained

by him during the sitting. Scarcely had the medium's dress vanished behind the curtain drawn across the entrance to the cabinet than "Billy, the Bootblack," her chief control, told us that a gentleman, of whom we had been conversing for a few moments before sitting, was trying to materialise, and, indeed, in less than one minute appeared at the entrance to the cabinet the well-known face and figure of that poet of immortal fame, "Henry Wadsworth Longfellow." He remained for about the space of half a minute, then retired, presumably to gather more strength, then reappeared and saluted us without speaking, not having the power of speech, but replied afterwards by raps from within the cabinet to questions which we put to him. He is one of my guides, and also belongs to the spirit-band of one of the gentlemen, Mr. W. One of the next to appear was an elderly Quakeress, who came to Mr. N. and was recognised by him, he being of Quaker birth. I should have stated that both gentlemen were strangers to Mrs. Bliss. Mr. W. was requested to strike a few chords on the organ. He agreed, saying in a half joke, "I will play if you come out to me and give me strength." No sooner had he played a few notes than a lovely white-robed form, tall and slight, and of totally different appearance to the medium, advanced towards him and standing behind him at his left placed her left hand on his shoulder, and held her right hand over his head, a beautiful, transparent, gauzy drapery flowing from her arm and shoulder. She remained in that position for fully one minute and then retired. Afterwards another female form advanced and knelt at the feet of Mr. N., and was recognised by him. Also one appeared between the curtains holding a baby in her arms; she was recognised by Mr. W. One male form came and gave his name as "Charlie," and was recognised by both gentlemen. "Gen. Grant" also materialised in very good semblance of his earthly features. "Billy" stated that he ("General Grant") was attracted to the circle, and hence his presence. He was not personally known to the sitters. Two more female spirits came and were recognised. Besides these the usual cabinet spirits materialised, each and all bearing the stamp of a separate individuality, and of absolutely different physique from the medium. "Alice Brooks" is 6ft. lin. in height, "Blueflower" and "Daisy" are 4½ft., "Lucille Western," 5½ft., and the medium 5ft. 0½in. This by accurate, personal measurement, in presence of witnesses at a subsequent séance.

"Alice Goodwin" appeared, as she always does, in a beautifully-illuminated robe. When she came the light was lessened in order that we might have the full benefit of her radiance, but for the other materialisations the light I might compare to a strong twilight. I have only given the most salient points of this most remarkable séance, fearing that I have already unduly trespassed on your space, and I would say, in conclusion, that I have rather understated, than overstated, the facts as they occurred.

Onset, Mass., U.S.A.

EXCELSIOR.

August 1st, 1888.

[The writer is known to us, and writes, we are sure, in good faith. She does not tell us what the "absolute test conditions" were, and her narrative is decidedly startling.—Ed.]

### Re-incarnation Problems.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—As one to whom a life other than this, but which in some way is constantly mixed up with this, is a reality, may I say a few words on the subject of Re-incarnation, or, perhaps I should rather say, on the way in which the discussion of it strikes one who may in some respects be considered an outsider?

That which one notices at once in this and in all discussions and correspondence about Re-incarnation, spirit identity, and cognate matters, is that the whole is carried on in terms which are the outcome of the present conditional of things, and, being such terms, can only represent things which are similarly conditioned. Take for example the letter of "1st M.B. (Lond.)" in a recent issue of "LIGHT." All the people, angels, geniuses, and the rest, are as much human beings as we are. The writer, indeed, talks of them as such; for instance, we have the "guide who is responsible for the personal training in morality." Now, unless I have gone very wrong, morality is a human product, the morality of Japan, for example, being a different thing from the morality of Denmark, and this being so, the "guide" is also human, as we might very well expect. The real state of things seems to be indicated by Madame de Steiger in her reference to St. Martin, of whom she says: "He was a man whose illumina-

tion far exceeded his power of imparting it, as it would seem he had no (known) pupils as advanced as himself," and this being so, as might also have been expected, he did not teach Re-incarnation.

Another point is that the information on which the theory of Re-incarnation is founded is generally, if not always, given by external means. In the face of the experiments at Salpêtrière and elsewhere, it is difficult to accept any such information without very considerable doubt. A certain person wishes that Re-incarnation may be true, because to him it is the *only* way in which he can explain the mystery of life. Straightway, the evidence is forthcoming, as evidence of any kind would be forthcoming to satisfy any theory the operator might wish to be satisfied. We know how readily Shakespeare comes when he is asked for, and so do apostles, prophets, and, indeed, all sorts and conditions of ghosts. Before anything can be definitely settled as to such evidence, which appears to be the kind mainly depended on by "1st. M.B.," we must know a very great deal more about our own identity and personality than we do at present. Were the instruction given intuitive, it would be different, and that was, if I mistake not, the kind of instruction received by St. Martin. As an illustration, though in another direction, of what I mean, that singularly able book, *Scientific Religion*, was written on Mount Carmel, and all the external influences of Carmel and the Palestinian East were there ready to be reflected in the passive agent, who was just as ready to receive them.

It has been my lot to read a good deal of French literature in connection with this Re-incarnation question, and that reading has led me to the conclusion that there is no more evidence in its favour than there is that the old moons are chopped up to make stars of. It is a cardinal principle of the French Spiritist's creed, and, of course, at all séances the assertion of its truth is made, as its denial would just as assuredly be made under like conditions, if that denial were as constantly wished for.

I apprehend that the conditions of any state whatever cannot be fully expressed in language which is not the product of the conditions of that state, and that all attempts to explain the conditions of another state in terms of this must end in serious errors, of which errors, it is exceedingly likely, the doctrine of Re-incarnation is one.

May I say one word more? Is it not possible to get on sometimes without using the terms atoms, molecules, and so forth? Would "1st M.B." kindly ask his "guides" to relieve us from the monad? π.

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

SIR,—Allow me to recount my experience and opinion upon the subject of the new, or as they tell me, the old doctrine of Re-incarnation. Before proceeding further, I wish to state that, up to a few weeks since, I knew absolutely nothing of the subject, not having any occultist friends, nor possessing any books upon either Spiritualism or Occultism, and the names of "Karma" and "Nirvana" were unknown to me. I belonged to that mournful school of saddest Pessimism whose dolorous song is a perpetual lament and self-outpouring—a lament at the unutterable cruelty in all creation; whose keynote is *pain*, and the outpourings of utter selfishness and—ignorance. Yet without books and without friends the spirit struggling within me upwards to the light *dimly* yet imperatively proclaimed Re-incarnation as the destiny of human souls. The following lines were written in a moment of illumination. The lines, imperfect as they are, give proof positive of some spiritual communication on a subject then totally unknown to me.\*

One of your correspondents, Mr. Haughton, views Re-incarnation differently from occultists themselves, when he speaks of it as ultimately leading to "extinction"; on the contrary, occultists regard it as in the highest sense *progressive*, and finally leading to Heaven and peace. Mr. Oliphant, in his *Scientific Religion*, does not teach it as such; in his marvellous book all is made clear to those who have the will to see. It is hard for orthodoxy to shake off old myths, to step forth from the night of mediæval superstition into the clear keen noontide of *Truth*, yet that is what some of us have done, and other some of us are striving to do. Surely, no sane person would advocate a cause, and *such* a cause, if he did not believe in it. As to those of us who are taking up this question, and studying it honestly, what are we doing it for?

\* The lines we have not space for: and, indeed, apart from the method of their production, they are commonplace in substance and very faulty in form.—ED. "LIGHT."

To see ourselves in print? For the pleasure of entering into a windy controversy, airing our knowledge before the theological world, dissentient or otherwise? I hope not. Some of us are seeking the light in much tribulation of spirit—our forty-days being long years of bitter suffering, of doubt, of agonising fear—and some of us have found the light and are striving to make others see it too. We are not coquetting with it. Our soul's happiness is at stake. We know that life is short, but eternity is long. By prayer, by self-abnegation, we may escape Re-incarnation, and know joy at last—and peace. Through pain only may we become perfected. GEORGE WINTER.

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

SIR,—Were I to follow my own judgment and preference I should refrain from taking notice of Mr. G. D. Haughton's letter of August 18th, believing that for the great majority of your readers it will carry its own condemnation with it. I have been assured, however, that some reply at least is expected, if only to point out his perversion of my letter of July 28th, and show that so far from his boast of having "turned the tables upon me" having any foundation, he has but confirmed my position to the detriment of his own. As nothing is further from my purpose or desire than to engage in a polemic with him, I wish it to be understood that though making his remarks my text, my discourse thereon is addressed only to such of your readers as are sufficiently free from invincible prejudice to consider the subject dispassionately. If they will take the trouble to number the paragraphs in Mr. Haughton's letter, they will be able to follow my reply with ease.

Par. 1 makes it appear as if I had spoken of myself as one of those "advanced souls" whom I described as having recollection of their past lives, and who have, therefore, no need to rely upon "controls"; whereas, as a reference to my letter will show, I made no allusion whatever to my experiences as bearing on my own case, but only to a certain order of souls of which I indicated my lamented colleague as one. Mr. Haughton, therefore, has made a false citation, and this of a peculiarly odious kind.

This piece of controversial immorality is, in par. 2, followed by a challenge, expressed in a manner painfully out of keeping with the circumstances concerned, to submit my evidences to a test which from the very nature of the case would be no test at all, as any one with very limited vision can see. For, if the statements made concerning past events upon the strength of interior recollection could be proved true by existing records, they would be open to the charge of having been derived from such records, instead of coming from the source claimed for them. And if there were no records of such events, there would be no means of verification, and the statements would be open to the charge of being purely imaginary. But this is the sort of thing that comes of being in such haste to "turn the tables" on one's opponent as to allow oneself no time to think before making the attempt. And were such a publication contemplated, I can conceive of nothing so likely to restrain it as the prospect of the treatment it would receive at the hands of a Mr. Haughton. And this, not because I fear criticism, but because I abhor irreverence, especially where the honoured dead are concerned.

Par. 3 does not refer to me or my letter, but to the subject itself; but as it involves an important point I will briefly allude to it. This par. is based upon and permeated by a fallacy which is observable in every series of objections taken to the doctrine under discussion. It consists in the ambiguous use of the personal pronoun *I* or *we*. For the questions on which all depends are (1) To which *I*, the inner or the outer, does the memory of past lives appertain? and (2) Which *I* is it, the inner or the outer, that affirms or denies such memory? The outer Ego, which consists of the material and astral, cannot by any possibility have it, since it has but one existence, being renewed at each fresh re-birth of the soul. The fact can be learnt only from the inner Ego, the soul, which alone becomes re-incarnate. If Mr. Haughton were in a position to affirm that his inner Ego, or that of some one in affinity with him, denies the doctrine, he would have a claim to be heeded. But thus far he has, judging from his contributions to "LIGHT," given no indication of his being in that position. The fallacy and the objection founded on it have been so frequently exposed and refuted, that in reiterating it heedless of the confutation, Mr. Haughton makes it impossible to regard him as a serious controversialist.

In reply to the latter part of par. 3, it is sufficient to point

to the Hindoo doctrine of "Karma." The subsequent assertion, in par. 6, that "Re-incarnation really means extinction at death," is about as monstrous an inversion of the fact as a man could well wish to see his worst enemy committed to.

In par. 7, Mr. Haughton proceeds in effect to inform us that he has never known any woman who was brave, intellectual, and strong—that is, *manly*, without being that very disagreeable thing, *mannish*; nor any man that was patient, intuitional, and tender—that is, *feminine*, without being that equally objectionable thing, *effeminate*. But this does not prove the non-existence or impossibility of such characters. It shows only that Mr. Haughton has been unfortunate in his acquaintance, or else deficient in power of appreciation. Whereas, when I wrote what he finds so incredible, I had in view actual persons who combined in such exquisite proportions and so harmoniously toned, the essential qualities of both sexes, as to have won passionate admiration, affection, and almost worship from both sexes, so possible did they prove it to be to be masculine without ceasing to be feminine, and to be feminine without ceasing to be masculine, and therein to be epitomes of humanity in both its modes, made "in the image of God, male and female," and, therefore, "Biune" in the truly spiritual, not the "Scientific Religion," sense of that term. Persons such as these are persons to know whom is in itself an education, and whom it is impossible to know without recognising them as "advanced souls," ripe for their final emancipation from material conditions, having become so through their experience of many earth-lives in both sexes.

To come to par. 8. Mr. Haughton may indeed be an accomplished "turner of tables," but how he can claim to have "turned the tables upon" me by the mere telling me that he has done so, passes my comprehension, saying and doing not being by any means one and the same thing even for so redoubtable a practitioner. Let us look and see what it really is that Mr. Haughton affirms in this par. It must be something that has great weight with his co-believers, since it is maintained also by "Marie Gifford" in your previous number, and is frequently repeated in the same connection. It is urged that Re-incarnation is impossible on the ground of the "soul-defiling" character of the physical organism and its earthly conditions, which would effectually operate to prevent the spiritual development and ascent of the individual, if repeatedly subjected to them. Not to dwell on the reproach implied against the Creator for putting us into such conditions at all—supposing this to be a true account of the body—I will ask which is the higher of the two following states of the soul—the state in which it is so ignorant and weak as to be liable to yield to the first temptation, and owing its escape from falling, if it do escape, to the happy chance that no inducement is put in its way; or, the state in which it has knowledge and strength to enable it to resist and overcome temptation, and accordingly succeeds in doing so, whatever the inducement to evil set before it? Heartily welcome are my opponents to the nerveless, limp, timid innocence that comes of ignorance and falls at the first opportunity, if I may be allowed the strong, robust, courageous virtue that comes alone of experience, and is incapable of falling. Fortified with a sufficiency of this, by means of a multiplicity of earth-lives, no mere enduement with a "coat of skins," or exposure to material environment, will be able to imperil my salvation; but the body itself shall be my servant and minister, and each successive incarnation shall be a rung in the ladder of my ascent. So shall my "dead selves" be "stepping-stones to higher things" in a sense transcending that contemplated by the poet. Such, in my view, is the Divinely ordained method, as exhibited alike in Bible and in nature, and as discerned by every illumined soul of whom history tells, that has attained to self-knowledge. In the expression, "perfected through suffering," and in the Parable of the Prodigal, I read the same truth. Only by ample experience of the insufficing character of the "husks" of materiality, does man at length come to his true self, and long to return to the Father's house. Surely "stunted" and "dwarfed" and "low" and "meagre" are terms which, if they fail at all, fail only through their weakness to describe the conception of those whose sole idea of perfection is an escape to a place where they are good only because there is no inducement to be otherwise, instead of the attainment of a condition in which they are good, because they are strong enough to resist all inducements to be otherwise! Scarcely for those whose motto is thus "Flight, not Conquest," can the saying have been intended, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." The

body is to be made responsible for all the evil committed, while the *man inside* complacently exonerates himself! and an involuntary "peep into this world," to borrow Miss Gifford's phrase, is to be followed by an eternity of bliss! Of the strong probability that the body may be less a cause than a consequence of materiality in its possessor; of its value as affording to the immature soul indispensable shelter and nourishment, and being to it at once a nursery, a school, an exercising ground, a house of correction, and a chamber of ordeal, wherein to develop and to test the graces and virtues which redeem; of the necessity of exercise to vigour, of labour to knowledge, of discipline to self-government, Mr. Haughton says not one word, although the argument from them was pressed upon him in your pages so recently as the spring of last year, (March 5th) in a letter signed "E.M.," written in reply to the very same objections made by him then, and which he now repeats as if they had never been answered!

I cannot finish my say without suggesting the possibility that Mr. Haughton may after all but be exercising a valuable function in respect of this great question. For he has certainly done much by his opposition to elicit fuller and clearer statements of the merits of the doctrine, and of the weakness of the case against it, than might otherwise have seen the light.

And there is yet another way in which he has served the cause, and one for which we owe him thanks. This is by the striking illustration he has afforded both of the probability and of the necessity of Re-incarnation. For, as the characteristics exhibited by him could not, on his own showing, have been contracted apart from the body, they can only be the result of tendencies encouraged in the body, namely, in his past earth-lives. And of the nature of those lives, or at least of the more recent of them, it is not difficult to form an opinion. Concerning his status or avocation in the present life I am entirely uninformed. But when I see such inveterate positiveness of assertion, combined with such total indifference to logic and such unconsciousness of responsibility; and find, moreover, that the possessor of these characteristics is fated never to take pen in hand without laying himself open to severe castigation, and generally getting it, I find it difficult not to suppose that he is the victim of a Karma acquired in the character of a schoolmaster, in times when schoolmasters were wont to lord it arrogantly over their pupils, snubbing them, and repressing instead of educating their capacities, and abusing unsparingly their right of inflicting punishment. On the hypothesis that Mr. Haughton is now undergoing a penance thus incurred in a past existence, I can understand, and even sympathise with, and have hope of him. But on any other I cannot. And now that he has seen the result of his ill-advised attempt to "turn the tables" upon me, I trust that in future, for every one's sake, he will *leave the furniture alone!*

And now, if so "second-class" a person, as Miss Gifford pronounces me to be, may offer a suggestion to so "first-class" a person as she claims to be herself, I should like just to point out one little flaw (out of many) in the argument which she builds upon the exclamation of Mrs. Britten's controls, "Oh, narrow not down your thoughts to this little planet!" by asking her what can size have to do with a matter which is purely spiritual? Surely it is arrant materialism to import physical dimensions into the question at all, seeing that it is a question of moral and spiritual development, and of the soul's fitness to dispense with the lessons of the earth-life before entering permanently on other conditions. It is told of a certain American that he declared himself to have quite lost his respect for Christianity after visiting the Holy Land and seeing what a little place it is. To the intensity and loftiness of the spiritual life there lived, and the demonstration thereby of man's Divine potentialities, he was absolutely blind; he saw but the meagreness of the physical dimensions of the country, and so he proved himself to be no Spiritualist, but only a materialist. And if the truth could be ascertained I think it exceedingly likely that, although dead, he continues to be of the same opinion, and that he it was who inspired Mrs. Britten with the sentiment Miss Gifford quotes with so much approval.

In reply to a remark made by Mr. Lowe in his letter to-day, I would remind him that all that is necessary for development is the retention of the faculties, qualities, and tendencies acquired through our past experiences, not the recollection of the particular experiences themselves; just as the actor may retain the skill acquired by playing many parts, long after he has forgotten those parts. I think, also, that Mr. Lowe is mistaken in assuming that a re-incarnated soul retains no knowledge of past experiences, simply because it does not impart such knowledge to its exterior personality. The body exists for the sake of the soul, not the soul for the sake of the body, and the body is to it but a medium through which to obtain experience for itself.

August 25th.

EDWARD MAITLAND.