

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

Under the title of "Spiritualism and the Doctrine of Enlargement," Dr. Purdon has contributed a paper to the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*. He is now resident, I believe, in America, and his experience of mediumship has been enough to qualify him for offering an opinion regarding it. He saw a good deal of Florence Cook, and had some strange and perplexing experience of the puzzles of mediumship in his investigations with her. He seems to have arrived at a very poor opinion of the veracity of communicating spirits and of the value of the messages that they give to us. This is a portion of his severe strictures:—

"The unverifiable statements of the spirits themselves go for absolutely nothing; almost all of them are contradictory and absurd, and display the grossest ignorance or the wildest extravagance. Let anyone who wishes to traverse this statement produce a single instance of new truth given through a medium apart from his own possibilities as a rational thinker and worker. The new facts he exhibits may furnish the data for true or false judgments; but all the facts so produced are related to this life and the judgments passed upon them are essentially those of mortals. It is enough for us if the spirits actually do give us new facts; it is even enough for us if the new facts, however produced, are such as to compel us to believe that the conception of spiritual activity is essential to their apprehension. Those who attempt to make 'the other world' like this one in every conceivable respect are at least consistent, for they present a conscious realisation of a something higher and better than this, but not essentially different from it. As long as they avoid mathematics and do not enter into particulars they are all right, but then their other world or future state is only that world of future possibilities which one and all of us expect to enjoy under the name of to-morrow."

That would not be my judgment. Dr. Purdon has been unfortunate in his messages. But it is certainly not true that "almost all are contradictory and absurd, and display the grossest ignorance or the wildest extravagance." Doubtless this is sometimes the case, especially with messages given in promiscuous circles, where no care has been exercised in forming the circle and insisting on proper conditions. But to argue from such experiences, which all of us have had, to a sweeping statement such as Dr. Purdon makes, is about as reasonable as it would be for me to deny the existence of an accurate chronometer because my watch is out of order and will not keep time. Some very beautiful, noble, and elevating thoughts have been given to us through mediumship: and some very remarkable nonsense is often talked from what is claimed to be the spirits of persons who ought to know better. But then the same charge is applicable to human utterances on this as on other subjects. We get some pure and grand thoughts from men who, rightly or wrongly, claim the

merit of having originated them—a claim, by the way, that they would find it difficult to prove. And we get floods of raw rubbish which may well be of a mundane source.

Nor are we to set up our own standard of judgment as to what men of science call "facts." Dr. Purdon is insistent as to "facts." Now facts are just what a man makes of them, and it may well be that an inspiring thought that fructifies in a single mind may be, from the standpoint of spirit, seen as they see things, worth a whole bushel of what Dr. Purdon wants revealed to him. The "facts" of this world may be the fallacies of the next; and if they be ever so real here they may be worthless by the side of that ennobling thought which avails to raise and purify a life. Dr. Purdon is nearer the mark of truth when he writes:—

"The fact is, the condition of human enlargement to which men look forward under the name of the future state, is a changed relation between man and the universe that cannot be condensed into consciousness, which, as the psychic correlative of definite motions of our brain molecules, is the only condition under which we mortals can picture ourselves to ourselves as personally identical spirits. It is quite possible; that is to say, I know of nothing to the contrary, that my spirit may make an excursion during the life of the body and realise itself as an enlarged being in appropriate psychical language; but that is not the language of words, depending on the movements of muscles directed by a brain, which are the *sine qua non* for conscious thought.

"We want something more comprehensive than mere consciousness for the understanding of the other world. Spiritualists have hitherto made the survival of the conscious Ego equivalent to the continuance of the development of the individualised spirit after death. This is a great mistake, and it is here alone that rational Spiritualism finds itself vulnerable to the attacks of a critical psychology. The psychologist knows that with the destruction of the brain, consciousness must cease, and he argues that because there is no universal brain, there is, therefore, no universal mind. The Spiritualist and the psychologist are at loggerheads because they both confound consciousness which is a *state*, with mind which is *substance*. Neither up to the present has pointed out this error to the other in language sufficiently explicit, or even recognised it for himself. It is in the theory of human enlargement that they will find their reconciliation."

I have long been of opinion that Spiritualists do not interpret their facts aright because they do not define their terms. The popular idea among Spiritualists seems to be that death leaves a man just what he was in life on earth minus a body, which, being of the earth earthy, is naturally left off when earth is done with. On what ground does any such belief rest? Is it not mere haphazard guess that has, by a slovenly and loose process of thought, rushed to that conclusion? And do not some observed facts point to the conclusion that what we aptly call "dissolution" is not such a simple matter as most Spiritualists suppose? I do not now seek to formulate any definitions, nor do I express any personal opinion. But I will go so far as to say that abstract speculations as to Re-incarnation, which possess a fascination for readers of "LIGHT" that is inscrutable to me, might well give place to some correspondence interpretative of the facts that we too readily assume to be quite simple. Perhaps the contradictoriness and silliness of messages

which Dr. Purdon alleges may be explained by the fact that such messages do not after all come from the pretended source. Possibly they are the product of the collective silliness and frivolity of an ill-assorted circle. Perhaps when a man dies he is not the simple entity that Spiritualists think he is. Perhaps we may learn so to constitute our circles as to eliminate the element of human error, and really to get, as some of us have got, true messages from the beyond. These and such questions are eminently worth discussing. They would give us material for thought, and I hope that the many correspondents of "LIGHT" may give us their opinions on these and kindred subjects.

I have now been practically acquainted with Spiritualism for some sixteen years. I have enjoyed opportunities for studying it that are, perhaps, unique. I have no more doubt as to the "facts" of Spiritualism than I have as to the sun rising. (But then, you see, the sun does not rise.) The facts are there, and we have now got to a time when it is very desirable to interpret them. We seem to evolve plenty of heat by way of Re-incarnation friction. Can we not soberly discuss what we know, not what we believe: what we have found out, not what we imagine? Can we not take a new departure and put into shape and form all this mountain of facts and theories and speculations that goes to make up what we call Spiritualism? That is good work lying at our door. And though a very small proportion of "LIGHT" readers think the discussion of most questions, such as Re-incarnation, a sort of mild heresy, I venture very strongly to express my own opinion that those who study these questions that are involved in Spiritualism, with any sincere desire to arrive at truth, cannot afford to pass by any sane opinion that their fellow-students can formulate and defend. It is by such free ventilation of thought as we have recently had in these columns that life is kept alive. The Spiritualist of old days has been too much in the habit of sitting down with open mouth swallowing what he calls "facts," and never digesting them. There is very hopeful evidence that that bad time is passing.

The present meteorological monstrosity that people call a summer reminds one of my correspondents of an extract from the "Lyric of the Golden Age." We are to have three such trials, and then England is to be worse off than ever, as, indeed, might be expected.

"THE sentiment of order in some minds is very strong indeed, and it enters largely—very largely—into all customary virtue. Unfortunately, it easily allies itself with self-esteem, and when that alliance has been formed we have, at once, that peculiar and offensive product known as *épiciér* [grocer's] morality. I have an instance of this in my eye at the present moment, and will roughly describe him. He is an Englishman, well brought up, well fed, well housed, and of the most respectable connections; in fact, 'a full-fed ruffian' of the vulgarly blameless order. He has perfect health, and, as far as I can judge, never had an anxiety. He is usually good-tempered, and he is perfectly honest according to rule. On the other hand, he would be an exacting creditor; not cruel, but persistent. He strongly, though quietly, believes in the keeping up of order in society. He has severe feelings on matters of religion and morality, but of these the very essence is routine and conceit. He has not ten atoms of spontaneous reverence or modesty, but he treats with the utmost severity whatever violates the received maxims on these matters." . . . "He is by nature disposed to keep going on in any groove in which he is set, and once he is in motion there, it has immediately become *my* groove, and all his personal dignity and importance (as unconscious in him as a wolf's cruelty) is pledged to persistence. For another person to break the rule that he keeps is a personal affront—a breach of order, and above all, a breach of the order I live by."—HENRY HOLBEACH.

PSYCHICAL ATTRACTION.

No. IV.

BENEFITS AND DISORDERS OF PSYCHICAL ATTRACTION.

It is an old idea magnificently expatiated on by Socrates in the *Banquet* of Plato that human love or the natural inclination which all men possess to bless others of their species and to be blest by them is the principle of divination. What Socrates means by the term divination I am by no means certain; but if it be granted, as I have sought to show, that the state of psychical attraction is based on the nature of human instinct, it will easily be perceived that something like divination proceeds from it, in the interchange and discovery of the thought and feelings among those who live far separated from each other, and are yet conscious of a combinative influence. Socrates also points out the fact that love gradually leads up to high states of intelligence, which, unless I am mistaken, for I have not the work beside me, he names the knowledge of archetypal forms, which phrase may, I suppose, according to modern ideas, be expressed in Virgil's words: "*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.*" With an intellectual basis of this kind, there will, as may be supposed, follow a practical power of realising the true connection and harmony of things, and adapting one's life in accordance with it. Although, of course, many will smile at the idea of making what I have termed psychical attraction the basis of any kind of contemplation, I must own that it has completely purified my mind from esteeming as knowledge ideas of which I am really ignorant, because of the absence of actual knowledge in myself or others; it has led me to seek and to acquire clearer views of human nature; it has removed from me that gravitating power of words which makes many esteem them as "money" and not as "counters"; it has caused me to feel myself and to recognise in others that burden of this painful earth which makes men thoughtful, considerate, and fearless; in one word, it has made me inwardly a wiser and gentler man than I was before I became sensible of it. The assumption may be untrue, but the result I find to be very beneficial from a genuine human point of view. Other excellent results there are, such as formation of taste, power of resisting temptation to vanity and excessive gratifications, which all point to one origin—discipline under nature's living and ever active hand.

And yet this state appears to be brimful of disorders, gross, but very easily accounted for. I feel heartily thankful that the very nature of the subject-matter totally excludes the power, as one's own feelings exclude the wish, of attributing such to personal depravity. Certainly, the strange concatenation of individuals, restricted to the limitations of their ordinary existence, with powerful communicatory forces of extreme velocity, winging from individual to individual the thoughts of the isolated and the emotions of the aggregated, must necessarily produce symptoms of existence and activity corresponding to the signs of what are called evil spirits. I have had a thousand times, therefore, to congratulate myself that no such phenomenon as that known by the name of the "astral body" ever revealed itself to my perception; all the phenomena of psychical existence, as made known to me, occurring as though beyond ordinary space.

The disorders apparent in psychical attraction may be attributed to a few erroneous opinions and deceits. (1) Constant utterances of apparently weak-minded persons under certain impressions, no regard paid to the nature of the utterances. (2) A superstitious belief in the value of words and power, apart from the manner and purpose with which they are applied. (3) The belief that all inspirations and conditions induced by this state are in themselves laudable. (4) The maxim that theories and systems are alone of value, and that existence is of no value; and (5) that

of dealing with men morally as though they were pure spirits or ideas, and yet considering human nature as despicable because of its materiality. These and other views are probably fragments instinctively extracted from long prevailing religious systems; constituting traditional forms in certain ardent minds, in all epochs of modern history, and appearing from time to time under the garb of witchcraft and magic. Goldsmith, who lived in an age more familiarised with witchcraft than ours happily is, remarks in an essay on *Deception* how the poor people were deceived with strange notions about substance and reality; being told that the objects present to their senses were not really those objects; a doctrine by which simple-minded people might easily be beguiled into fancying themselves to be powers and spirits. The great remedy for such evils is to lead an ordinary unambitious life under the sense of psychical forces; to resist the encroachments of instinct on the domain of reason; and to seek to cultivate that bodily health and those salutary mental faculties which are our undoubted heritage by birth. Other endowments than these, mysterious, supernatural, or magisterial,* are to me unknown.

SCRUTATOR.

HYPNOTISM IN A ROMANCE BY GEORGE SAND.

Staying in Italy, I recently came across a copy of George Sand's charming pastoral story, *La Petite Fadette*, which, after many years, I read again with much pleasure. One part of it made a great impression upon me, as it seemed to accord with an idea which has frequently passed through my mind lately, when reading accounts of mesmerism—or "hypnotism," as it is now the fashion to call it; namely, that what has been so often denounced and punished as witchcraft may have been, and very probably was, nothing but the exercise of mesmeric powers, either consciously or unconsciously, by the so-called witches or wizards. Though this work is only a romance, as Madame Dudevant's descriptions of French peasant life were studies from nature, *La Petite Fadette* may be looked upon as an accurate description of the character and mode of life of the peasantry among whom she lived. The little Fadette, whose real name was Fanchon Fadet, was a young peasant girl, brought up by an old grandmother, who gained her living as a wise woman, by performing cures on human beings as well as on animals; and though her cures were chiefly effected by decoctions of herbs and simples, she was generally regarded as having magic powers, as was her grand-daughter, who aided her in her preparations, and knew all her secrets. This idea arose partly from Mother Fadet's mode of life and miserly habits, and partly from the somewhat wild and elfish way in which La Fadette conducted herself as a child, though she was really a good and religious girl. She sobers down as she gets older, and at the age of sixteen becomes engaged to Landry Barbeau, the hero of the story. Now Landry has a twin brother, of a morbid and self-tormenting nature, and this youth frequently suffered from attacks of fever, brought on by causeless jealousy of his beloved "besson" (twin brother), whom he could not bear to know as loving anyone but himself. It was after Fanchon's engagement to Landry had been approved of by his family, that poor Sylvinet was prostrated by a bad attack of fever, brought on by mental anguish, and the neighbours advised his mother to beg "*la petite Fadette*" to try and cure him, as the doctors seemed to do him no good. Fanchon consents, and it is the description of the way in which she effected his cure that struck me, and as it may be interesting to others I will translate the passage.

"Fanchon had more than once sought for an opportunity of speaking to him, as she had promised Landry to do, to try and

cure him of his jealousy, but she could never get him to listen to her. She, therefore, did not wait to be entreated, but hastened at once to the poor 'besson.' She found him asleep in a high fever, and begged his family to leave her alone with him, and as the 'remégieuses' (female healers) are accustomed to act with secrecy, no one opposed her wish and all left the room.

"First Fanchon laid her hand on that of the 'besson,' which was hanging over the edge of the bed, but she did it so gently that he never felt it, though he slept so lightly that a fly passing by would wake him. Sylvinet's hand was as hot as fire and grew still hotter when inclosed in that of la Fadette. He became agitated, but without attempting to withdraw his hand. Then la Fadette placed her other hand upon his forehead as gently as the first, and he got still more restless. But gradually he grew calmer, while she felt the hand and forehead of her patient become more and more refreshed, till he slept as calmly as a little child. She remained thus close to him till she saw he was about to wake, when she retired softly behind the curtain and left the room and the house, after saying to Mother Barbeau, 'Now go to your boy and give him something to eat, for the fever has left him; and, above all, don't speak to him of me if you hope for me to cure him. I will return in the evening at the time you say he gets worse, and will try again to get the better of this troublesome fever.'

"Mother Barbeau was greatly astonished to find Sylvinet free from fever and quickly gave him some food, which he ate with a little appetite, and as it was six days that the fever had never left him and that he would scarcely touch food, they were all overwhelmed with admiration at the skill of la petite Fadette, who, without waking him, or giving him anything to take, had already done him so much good *by virtue alone of her conjurations*, as they thought.

"In the evening the fever returned. . . . La Fadette came again, and, as in the morning, remained alone with him for nearly an hour, using no other magic but that of touching his hands and head very softly, and breathing refreshingly on his burning face. . . . I know not where la Fadette got this idea from. It came to her by chance and from her experience when nursing her little brother Johnny, whom she had cured of the fever ten times by no other remedy than the refreshing touch of her hands and her breath. She imagined that the affection and the will of one in sound health and the touch of a pure and healthy hand could chase away the evil, if the healer is gifted with a certain power of mind and has perfect confidence in the goodness of God. And so, all the time that she imposed her hands, she mentally offered up prayers to God—and what she had formerly done for her own little brother she now did for Landry's; she would not have attempted it for any other person less dear to her, and in whom she felt less interested, for she thought that the principal virtue of this remedy was the strong affection offered in her heart to the sick person, and without which God would give her no power over the malady. . . .

"Whether the remedy was of itself useless or sovereign, it is a fact that in three days she completely cured Sylvinet of his fever, and he would never have known how he was cured if, the last time she came, waking a little too quickly, he had not seen her leaning over him and gently withdrawing her hands."

Fanchon completes Sylvinet's cure by her wise remonstrances and counsels, proving to him how causeless was his jealousy, and how selfish his conduct in permitting his health to give way by brooding over his imagined wrongs.

It is impossible to know how far disembodied spirits are mixed up in works of healing such as this; but I imagine that few Spiritualists will not agree with me in thinking that when hypnotism is practised with so good a purpose and in such a pious spirit as little Fadette exhibited, good and benevolent spirits do frequently assist in the good work: and on the other hand, that when hypnotism is an agent in the hands of wicked and unprincipled persons to be used for some vile purpose—as in the case of Margrave in Bulwer Lytton's *Strange Story*—evil and malignant spirits do aid in a work so congenial to them; and, therefore, I imagine that the witchcraft of former ages may not have been entirely an effect of imagination or superstition, but was probably often a result of hypnotism,

* Such as that of "Mawollam" in Mr. L. Oliphant's work of that name.

practised, perhaps, without the victim's knowledge, and assisted by evil spirits, who only too readily are attracted by bad thoughts and designs; and where one case of hypnotism used for a bad purpose was successful, it is little to be wondered at if the panic spread, and cruel reprisals were taken for supposed wrongs, hundreds of innocent clairvoyants or mediums being killed or punished when, perhaps, but one so-called witch or magician really deserved his fate.

"V."

A GROUP OF GHOST STORIES.

The following records were contributed by the late Mrs. Howitt Watts to the *Spiritual Times* of June 3rd, 1865. They are reproduced as worthy of preservation, the journal in which they originally appeared not being now generally accessible.

The following three ghost tales were given me by an old friend of mine, Mrs. O.,* residing near Stroud. The first was copied by her for me out of a common-place book, left to her by a near relative, who was herself the subject of much supernatural experience. The narrator, Dr. L., was related to this last named lady:—

Dr. L.'s Ghost Story.

"Dr. L., of Staffordshire, was a man of talent, learning, and fortune, and what is more, he was a Christian. He was considered one of the best readers of his day, both in prose and verse. He was a father to his flock and a friend to the poor, who, for his amiable qualities, generally styled him 'the Good Old Doctor!' It was a well-known fact that he had many wonderful visions and revelations from the other world, two of which I shall mention.

"When at school at Eton, he dreamed that his father's head servant came to him dressed in deep mourning, and presenting a letter sealed with black, said to him, 'Sir, your father is dead.' He awoke, and whilst relating the circumstance at breakfast next morning, the identical person entered, dressed as he described, and giving him a black-sealed letter, made use of the very words he had dreamed.

"His father was indeed dead, and he, being a minor, was left under the guardianship of an uncle who was a worthless, extravagant man, and through him he lost several very valuable estates, situated in Ireland, which he never afterwards regained. It was several years after the death of his father that one beautiful moonlight night he was awakened out of his sleep by a noise resembling the clanking of chains. It seemed to approach nearer until it entered his room; he rose up in bed and throwing aside the curtains, beheld with astonishment his uncle stand before him! He inquired what had brought him there, and why he came in that manner. His uncle, with the greatest sorrow depicted in his countenance, replied: 'Pity, pity, pity me! as I in some sort pity thee!' and then smiting on his breast, left the room. A few days after this he received a letter, informing him that his uncle died on such a night, at such an hour, which proved to be the very time the apparition came to him."

Apparition of Mrs. W.

The following was related by the Mr. W., mentioned in the narrative to Mrs. O. herself:—

"When Mr. and Mrs. W. lived at Clifton near Bristol they had for next door neighbours a family of the name of S. Mr. S. was a feeble, elderly man, a paralytic, who was frequently wheeled about in a bath chair. One morning, finding Mrs. W.'s garden door open, he desired the man to wheel him in, saying he would call on Mrs. W., her garden looked so pleasant, &c. Mrs. W. was much surprised to see him, as the two families were not on terms of intimacy; but she politely asked him into the house, and placed him in a chair in the dining-room, where she had been busy picking gooseberries. 'You are very industrious, I see, ma'am,' was his observation, on observing the tray of fruit. 'Yes,' was the reply, 'industrious and idle, for you see I have had the gooseberries brought upstairs to me.' 'May I help you?' he asked; and to humour him, for he was almost childish, she found him a pair of scissors, and allowed him to assist her. Some other civilities passed between them, and it seems when he arrived at home that he talked much of Mrs. W.'s kindness, and even sent for the recipe of some medicine which Mrs. W. was taking at the time. Mrs. W. thought no more of these circum-

stances; but it appeared afterwards that Mrs. S. was displeased and entertained an absurd feeling of jealousy against Mrs. W.

"A month or two had passed, and one night Mr. W. had sat up later than usual, reading. It struck twelve as he and his wife went upstairs, and Mrs. W. said jokingly, 'It is just ghost time!' While they were undressing, Mrs. W. heard a deep groan, as of some one dying. 'Do you hear that?' she asked of her husband. He listened, and soon the sound was repeated. Then Mrs. W. became aware of a figure standing on the other side of the bed—the figure of a woman completely dressed, and looking at her earnestly, with one finger raised and pointing towards her, as if in warning. She did not feel alarmed, but said to her husband, 'Look round this way, there is some one in the room.' He looked but saw nothing. For some time the figure stood in the same attitude, Mrs. W. repeatedly exclaiming, 'Oh, I wish I knew who this is! The figure is like somebody I know, but I cannot remember who.' She knelt down to say her prayers, but lying down in bed, saw it still there. Shutting her eyes and drawing the clothes round her, in awhile she fell asleep, and saw and heard nothing more.

"In the morning her husband joked her about the ghost and her nervous fancies. As they went down stairs, the servant man, who was carrying in breakfast, asked Mrs. W. whether they had heard the news. 'What news?' 'The sad news next door, ma'am.' 'What? Is Mr. S. dead?' 'No, ma'am, Mrs. S. She died last night, a little before one o'clock. Mr. S. was taken in a fit, and the servant ran into her mistress's room, telling her the master was dying. Mrs. S. was so alarmed that she died immediately.'

"At once Mrs. W. remembered that the figure which had appeared to her the night before resembled Mrs. S. But wherefore she should visit her in dying she could not imagine, until some months afterwards, when she was told by one of the servants of the unaccountable jealousy which the deceased lady had entertained towards her ever since her husband's *impromptu* visit."

Another Apparition.

The following incident occurred to a friend of Mrs. O.'s husband, and was either related to Mrs. G., the lady herself, or by their mutual friend, Mr. Samuel Jackson, the translator of *Stilling's Life*, &c. :—

"Miss O. was residing at Hamburg, with her brother and sister, about the year 1820. She and her sister were one day seated in a first floor drawing-room, sewing and talking together, when the sister rose up suddenly, put her hand to her head, saying, 'Oh! my head, my head!' and directly afterwards, as if in a fit of delirium, threw herself out of the window, fell upon the flags beneath, and was killed.

"Miss O. was much distressed at her sudden and sad death, and was for some time afterwards almost constantly weeping. One day as she was fretting thus alone the door opened, and her sister walked in. The apparition was of grey colour, and approaching her, told her that she had seen her crying herself to sleep the other night and was now come to comfort her; that she was not unhappy, and that therefore her sister ought not to weep. Then she went away. A short time afterwards she again appeared—this time being of a brighter hue—and assured Miss O. that she was now truly happy, and that she had passed from her former state to a higher one. At the third and last interview she appeared beautifully bright and radiant. Miss O. was much comforted by these appearances of her sister."

A Consoling Apparition.

So much for ghost-stories given me in manuscript by friends. I will now write down a singular narrative or two, which I have heard within the last few weeks, from acquaintances upon whose statements I can rely. The other evening, conversing with the wife of a barrister about the Davenport Brothers, this lady observed that both she and her husband were the more readily inclined to believe that the marvels exhibited by these young men proceeded from a spiritual source, owing to their knowledge of the spiritual experiences of a young woman, a nurse living in their service, and in whom they had every reason to place reliance. This young woman, whom I have seen, is evidently a remarkable seeress, and not only perceives spirits with her wide open eyes, but possesses the gift of "second sight," examples of which the lady related to me. A younger sister of this young woman also for a short time lived in the service of our friend, the barrister, and his lady. Unlike her sister, she appeared to possess no occult peculiarities. Both sisters are active, lively, and cheerful, but the death of their mother preyed greatly upon the mind of the younger one. Returning home to her father,

* This lady is still alive.—ED. "LIGHT."

who is a tailor living in a county town in one of the Midland counties, no sooner had this young woman seated herself in the train which was to carry her homeward, than all the other passengers who had entered with her appeared to vanish, and seated in the carriage, she beheld her mother, dressed as during her life upon earth—even her shawl, the daughter noticed, was pinned in exactly the same precise manner which had always characterised her mother when in the flesh. To all appearance she was exactly as she had been before her death. The spirit conversed with her daughter in an affectionate and lively manner regarding family affairs, and appeared especially desirous to impress upon her daughter the necessity of their ceasing to grieve over her removal to another world, assuring her that it was the best possible thing, not only for herself, but also for her whole family, as they all would in due time confess—even her younger daughter; and which, indeed, has proved to be the case. The apparition of the mother remained in conversation with the daughter until the train stopped at the town of L., the daughter's destination; when suddenly her mother's spirit vanished, and the earthly passengers by the train reappeared to the young woman's astonished gaze. She was greatly and joyfully excited by what she had witnessed, and her father remarked that she talked to him about what she had seen, without intermission, for two or three hours—a very unusual circumstance for her. After the occurrence, she ceased to mourn so bitterly as hitherto the loss of her mother.

Visual and Auditory Signs.

Now for my second narration. We have a near neighbour, a great invalid, upon whom we occasionally call. As he is a believer in Spiritualism, our conversation naturally turns very frequently upon spiritual experiences. This gentleman has always been not only what is termed a "professing Christian," but an active and consistent one—a much rarer character. Many years ago, in a season of deep affliction, he became, through the appearance of the spirit of his first wife, convinced of the palpable and beneficent proximity of the spirits of the departed.

During the progress of his present painful illness, he has experienced various noteworthy spiritual manifestations. It is usually through the combination of the senses of sight and hearing that he becomes cognisant of the presence of his spiritual friends. He has again recognised the presence of the spirit of his wife. He describes her as always appearing in a flowing robe of white, of an exquisite shining texture. He compares the material of her garments to satin, but infinitely more brilliant and beautiful. The spirit also of a brother, some years previously removed to the spiritual world, he occasionally sees. He, also, wears a peculiar flowing robe of a brilliant texture, but its colour is crimson, and its brilliancy less striking. Our friend, in attempting to describe the spirit-ropes—well-known to all spirit-seers, and denoting the removal of the spirit who wears them into a more interior or higher condition than those spirits who still appear clothed in their earthly garments—appeared to find it difficult to convey to me an idea of their character. The next day I showed him several drawings in colour of spirits and angels, surrounded by their brilliant aureoles, which had been drawn spiritually through my hand. He recognised in them instantly a character identical with that of the spirits whom he had seen. He pointed out one especial robe which resembled the one worn by his brother. Nor was this the first time that these drawings had been recognised by a seer as being an exact resemblance to spiritual beings beheld by him. Nothing is more interesting than the testimony which one branch of mediumship bears to the truth of some other branch.

But to return. Our friend says that he perceives the spirits with him in the room as palpably as though they were human beings. Frequently they appear dressed as when upon earth. Occasionally he beholds spirits entirely unknown to him. Sometimes they appear as though they did not observe him. Sometimes they will address him; and sometimes they will not do so. He appears to prefer those who converse with him.

Not infrequently does he perceive—as is the case with most seers—the spirits of persons still upon earth. Two striking instances of this occurred lately to him. Twice in the middle of the night, being perfectly awake and mentally composed, although enduring his ceaseless bodily anguish, he perceived the presence of a person in the room, and aroused his son, who was sleeping in the same chamber, in order that he also might see the figure. In the first instance, the figure beheld was that of a son living at some miles' distance. The father believed—and could scarcely be convinced to the contrary—that his son, being anxious about him, had suddenly come over to see him. And so,

unquestionably, *in thought* he had done. Upon subsequent inquiry, it was found that at that precise time the son was lying awake, thinking about his father with extreme anxiety. The father particularly noted the exceedingly anxious expression of his son's countenance.

The other figure perceived upon the second occasion was that of a daughter away on the south coast for the benefit of her health, she being also an invalid. Upon inquiry as to what she was doing or thinking of at that particular hour, when thus beheld by her father, she could give no account of herself, beyond the impression that she had been asleep at the time specified. She could not even recollect whether she had dreamed of seeing her father. Most probably, however, she had been dreaming of him—possibly in so interior a condition of sleep as to preclude upon waking the recollection of her experiences in dream-land or spirit-land, as is the case invariably when the person wakes up into the external life out of the mesmeric trance. The young lady being in delicate health, and also a highly developed spirit-medium, doubtless presented conditions peculiarly conducive to the power of projection of the spirit into distant places.

A Celestial Vision.

I must now conclude with a reference to a vision of a celestial character, beheld by this same gentleman, in an earlier stage of his illness, and which has left behind it an unusual sense of joy and consolation. The spirit of his brother already referred to appeared one day to our friend, and, after conversing some time with him, told him that if he would go into the adjoining apartment he would behold a glorious sight. Thus advised, he entered the room, which appeared to him very large, formed in the shape of a cross, and filled with the seats of an orchestra, where he beheld and heard various choirs of glorified spirits, practising a grand anthem, all being led by one commanding spirit, who waved his bâton aloft above the assembly. Their blended voices, although very low at first, were so exquisitely attuned that they sounded like one vast, harmonious whisper. Suddenly the various choirs burst forth with strains so grand that mortal ears could scarcely endure their glorious sweetness and melody. All the spiritual beings present were clothed in the most exquisitely shining robes. Our friend knew that he beheld a company of the Blessed. He has ever since recollected this vision with a deep sense of peace and consolation.—I remain, sir, yours sincerely,

A. M. H. W.

HABITATIONS OF THE ANGELS.

"The angels have their own habitations where they dwell, which are magnificent. I have been there and have seen them at times, and that with wonder, so manifest and conspicuous are they; nothing, in fact, can be more so. The habitations which are on the earth, or of man, are comparatively scarcely anything. They call those which are on the earth dead and not real, but their own true as if alive and real, for they enjoy them with all sense. The architecture is such that the art itself is thence, so that they can never be described; they exist, too, in vast variety.

"Like other men, I wondered that such things exist in the other world, since it is contrary to our conception of the life of spirits, as also from whence they were; but the reason is, that the Lord appears to them as a sun, whence is their *lumen* and light, which many times exceeds the light of the sun on the earth; and as they have light, so also the variegation of light, which causes colour; without such variegation light does not exist, for it is to them shade; whence they have colours which I have often seen so splendid and beautiful they cannot be described. Everything which exists in the other life is not, as some suppose, empty and void, but is the substantial itself, because it is the origin of all that is substantial in nature. There the substantial is living on a most pure ethereal principle, which is formed by the Lord into things of this kind, so wonderful that they can scarcely be described. It is enough that I have seen them, and that often; I have been there; I have spoken with them, and they have said that those things were real, while the things on earth were not, being comparatively dead, and such they despise."—SWEDENBORG'S *Spiritual Diary*, Nos. 4,292 and 4,293.

"AN adult man with a marked character is, consciously or unconsciously, his character's victim or sport; it is his whole system of impulses, ideas, pre-occupations, that make those critical situations ready, into which he too hastily supposes that an accident has drawn him. And this inner system not only prepares the situation for him—it forces his interpretation."—JOHN MORLEY'S *Life of Rousseau*, Vol. II., p. 20.

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Light :

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

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th, 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.

ANSWERS TO PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

BY HUDSON TUTTLE.

FROM THE *Neue Spiritualistische Blätter*.

(TRANSLATED BY "V.")

In the many letters I receive from correspondents, I find questions arising from the study of Spiritualism which are of some general interest, being such as almost every inquirer on this subject has often put to himself.

T. S. writes that they sit with a medium, who had given very satisfactory communications in writing till one occasion, when a message was written for a gentleman present, presuming to come from his mother, who, however, unfortunately did not sign her name. The gentleman being a sceptic, it was considered very desirable to convince him, and another séance was arranged, at which none of those present were to be acquainted with his mother's name. The mother's spirit claimed to be present and at the end of a long message gave her name, which, in order that there should be no mistake, she repeated, spelling it slowly, and asked Mr. T. S. to send the message to her son. "This I did," writes Mr. S., "and then learnt that the name was totally wrong. Since this time we mistrust every communicating spirit, and believe no one to be the person who he says he is."

Almost every inquirer has met with similar experiences, and various explanations may be given. We know as yet so little about the conditions through which we may obtain certainty as to the controls, that we ought to proceed with the greatest caution. We have but set our foot upon the threshold of the great temple of the world of spirit, and possess but little knowledge to guide us. The repetition of a communication is no proof of its truthfulness. We have learnt that ideas are much more easily conveyed through a medium than dates and names, and that to give the latter is one of the most difficult tasks a sensitive can encounter.

Since a medium, influenced by the controlling spirit, writes and speaks much in the same way and according to the same magnetic laws, as if this spirit were still in the body, it may be easily seen that the most refined influences may be acted upon. In the case under notice it is evident that a spirit other than the mother wrote the message. The

members of the circle believed at once that it was Mr. S.'s mother, and, therefore, that the name consequently must be the right one, and as their positive magnetic influence was stronger than that of the spirit, thus it became impossible for a correct communication to be obtained.

If we expect the needle of a magnet to tell us the truth, that is, to point direct to the north, we take care to remove anything of iron which could attract it, and to protect it from any current of air which might move it. The condition of a sensitive medium is much more impressionable even than that of the magnetic needle, and the positive thoughts of those who sit near him influence him more and with greater effect than iron does the magnet. Such experiences as the above are often necessary as a corrective of the too great credulity which accepts everything as true, because they prove that spirits are not infallible and are not in all cases to be looked upon as guides worthy of confidence.

E. A. asks, "Are there evil spirits?"

If there exist in this world bad and evil-disposed men, then without doubt in the spirit world there are evil-disposed spirits. It is a fundamental teaching of Spiritualism that death works no change in the spirit of man, but that the liberated spirit retains all its faculties, education, development, and even in great measure its vices, just as before death. The liar remains a liar still, the slanderer a slanderer, and vulgarity or vicious tendencies are not changed. We might discuss the question whether wickedness or evil is nothing but a lesser degree of goodness or completeness, but I do not care to cavil about terms. If it signifies imperfection or incompleteness, the same exists in the next world as in this. How many communications which, through imperfect control or on account of disharmony in the circle, become confused or discrepant are ascribed to evil spirits, while they really are attempts made on the part of those dear to us to communicate, which are distorted or spoilt by the conditions being defective. Such mistakes should be avoided as much as possible by great precautions being taken, and if those who take part in the circle are actuated by an earnest desire for truth, and approach the spirit world with feelings and wishes suitable to such occasions, evil or malicious spirits will never come near, except to seek for help or instruction.

P. S. E. writes: "They (the spirits) advise me to give up everything and only to write, and not to return to my relations! I do not know what to do!"

Spirit messages should be respected and obeyed when they are reasonable but not otherwise. We must keep our own individuality, unless we would run great risks by placing unconditional confidence in any power which seems outside of our own personality. I must confess I have little belief in any "mission" which sends the individual wandering aimlessly, and then leaves him to find out for himself in what this so-called mission consists. Ordinary common-sense should teach P. S. E. to return to her friends and not "to give up everything in order to sit for writing"! Such an unhealthy state of mind is just the very worst condition for obtaining desirable, reasonable, spiritual guidance, and if persisted in may lead to serious mental disturbance. The best remedy for such a condition is an occupation demanding energy, which must for a considerable time employ the thoughts exclusively, and thus the disturbed mental faculties will gain time to recover their normal equilibrium.*

T. S., from distant Idaho, a strong atheist, says that after reading Hudson Tuttle's *History of the God-Idea*, he took him to be an atheist also, and is now much vexed to find he is a Spiritualist. He puts the following questions:—

* We will permit ourselves here to remark, that unfortunately there are many medially endowed persons, who at the advice of their guides have given up the business they were engaged in for the support of their families, being falsely told that they had a higher mission to fulfil and that their daily labour was a hindrance. First do your duty as men and members of families and then will be time enough to occupy yourselves with the other world.—ED. N. S. B.

"1. Do the so-called spirit manifestations contradict the doctrine that Heaven and Hell are to be regarded as localities? 2. Are good and evil intermixed in the other life? 3. Are not all spirit messages trivial and childish? 4. Have you ever read any communications from Daniel Webster, Theodore Parker, Thomas Paine, or any other high spirit, which would not have caused you to blush for their reputation as authors? 5. Does consciousness outlive the shock of death, and if so, what compensation has the spirit for his earthly sufferings? I have arrived at the conviction that we can have no knowledge whatever of what has passed in earth-life. What I ask is that you should lay before me your views by reasonable arguments and confute mine."

To this Hudson Tuttle answers: "That this gentleman does me the honour to think me an atheist is very flattering to me, as living in the remote mountains of Idaho, he is, so he says, a clear and incisive thinker, and I cannot but regret that he is so aggrieved at my belief in Spiritualism; yet I can assure my correspondent that he is not the only person who has accused me of Atheism, for the entire Press of this country, in criticising this book, has vented the spleen of religious intolerance upon me, and one religious journal has gone so far as to say: 'It is a good thing for the author of this book that he did not live fifty years earlier, for if he had, the stake would certainly have been his portion,' in saying which, the religious editor evidently expresses his Christian sorrow that the world during the last fifty years has deteriorated. No, the conclusions we have arrived at are not Atheism, but we say that God is of necessity infinite, and as man is finite he can neither understand nor comprehend God. All his reasonings, based as they must be upon his finite knowledge, *must* be defective. In this inquiry the wisest as well as the most ignorant will alike be in error, and the speculations of a Hottentot have as much value as those of a Descartes. We can only get as far as principles; what arises from them is unknown. But in spite of this, every so-called learned divine considers himself quite capable of explaining the attributes of an infinite God, although he is not even able to understand how a blade of grass grows, and the more ignorant he is, the more is he ready to solve this difficult task."

To the questions, Hudson Tuttle answers as follows:—

1. Spiritualism rejects the idea of a local Heaven or Hell, of a *personal* God or devil.

2. Death works no change in spirits; and good and evil communicate with one another among spirits just as among men, and are subject to similar attractions and impulses, so that they form themselves into groups, as they find congenial companions, and avoid uncongenial or unpleasant associations.

3 and 4. It is true that medial communications are often trivial and unreliable, but is not a great part of our literature childish, wanting in taste, and even vulgar and injurious? This does not prove, however, that there are no good authors. As there are frivolous and immoral spirits, so there are likewise silly and unimportant communications from them, but at the same time we receive messages of wonderful beauty and high value. The book referred to, *The History of the God-Idea*, which our correspondent so much admires, is a pure spirit communication, and the only honour I can lay claim to is that of being selected as the medium for its production.

5. All the faculties, and therefore those of consciousness and memory, survive death, and the spirit progresses towards complete harmony of his being in the other world as well as on earth.

How does man receive compensation for his earthly sufferings? By the attainment of perfect harmony. How is a child indemnified for the pain caused by burning his hand in the fire? By becoming acquainted with the

knowledge of its powers. Spiritualism rests upon facts and no speculation can set these aside. If materialism can explain these facts, then the conclusions it arrives at will be unavoidable. It is only by personal inquiry and research that anyone can become perfectly satisfied.

KARMA.

No. II.

According to that acute thinker Victor Cherbuliez, one of the most rare of treasures in modern times is a clear idea. This strikes me in reading over again the recent Re-incarnation controversy. Mr. Haughton has shown that we must choose between two laws, namely, a just and complete law of the amelioration of the race by heredity and a just and complete law of the amelioration of the individual by rebirths. His arguments have plainly struck some of the Re-incarnationists, but with a very whimsical result. They accept the two laws.

This is a manifest absurdity, for if heredity is allowed in *any way* to disturb the just and complete law of amelioration by rebirths, the latter at once loses its justice and completeness. The mother of a Mr. Peace might give us a burglar Lord Shaftesbury; and if Mr. Peace were re-incarnated in the womb of a mother of Lord Shaftesbury's we might have a Mr. Peace taking the chair at many philanthropic meetings and baptising avenues after death. If the two laws are at work together all evidence shows that heredity has been too strong for its rival. Carracis and Bellinis beget painters, Kembles actors, Sheridans wits, Coustous sculptors, Picarts engravers. The Coleridges are subtle, the Wilberforces eloquent, the Bourbons, according to Napoleon, "hereditary asses." From the walls of many a palace and castle long lines of ancestors look down from their picture frames, and announce that they have sent down hereditary courage and quick honour or pride and sensuality along with their shapely noses or heavy jowls. And when we pass from individuals to races the evidence is stronger. The French do us the great compliment to call absolute integrity, *foi d'Anglais*; and a hero of Balzac says "Yes, sir," in English, when an extra solemn assurance is demanded of him. An English cynic might pronounce this compliment to be due to imperfect experience; but if fifty individuals were selected at hap hazard in Sydney, Boston, or Torquay, they would certainly give a far higher average of courage, honesty, and truthfulness than fifty inhabitants of Moscow or Peking. Let us suppose that Colonel Newcome had been reborn of native parents in Orissa or on the Yellow River. Would it not be an absolute certainty that he would tell lies? It may be said that Anglo-Saxon integrity has been due to environment as well as heredity. This is true and the growth has been gradual.

"Under this stone lies Richard Mather,
Who had a son greater than his father,
And eke a grandson greater than either."

But although it is quite easy to multiply evidence in favour of the great law of amelioration of the race by the principle of heredity, it is very difficult to get any evidence in favour of the law of Re-incarnation. What does the so called evidence amount to? The fancies of a few "Theosophists." Is this verifiable evidence?

Let us suppose that a lady of natural psychic tendencies reads two or three Theosophical treatises. Soon her mind becomes impressed with the idea that the teachings of the "Himself," the "Higher Soul," are "Absolute Truth," and that the Spiritualists are a prey to astral spirits. Her psychic powers develop, and by-and-bye she gets visions and impressions. To her great joy, one morning the inner voice affirms that it is the Higher Soul. Then come visions of previous existences. She was a priestess in the temple of On, in Egypt, a cavalier

lady with long curls, a chela under an adept in one of those Buddhist temples in Thibet where, as *Isis Unveiled* tells us, the great magicians of the world have taken refuge. Extasia at once supervenes. She herself has attained the great inner light without any disturbances from astral spirits, "shells," or "spooks." This proves that she is now an adept. She commands the elementals instead of being a prey to them. This is due to her penultimate life. In point of fact, this good lady, instead of being for ever free from the influence of the lower spirits, runs a risk of being for ever in their thrall. For the craziest victim of planchette there is hope; for she will find her crude conceptions and dogmatisms rudely traversed by spirits who do not come to inflate a great idol of self-hood, but to pierce it. She will get nigger slang when she expects star music, puns, improprieties, false facts about buying and selling and marrying and giving in marriage, together with as much light as from time to time she is able to receive. For as in the days of Christ the name of the spirits is Legion. Some are on the plane of spirit, some still on the plane of matter, and it is difficult for the novice to detect which is which. A spirit, for instance, who tells me wrong things about a money investment may be a higher spirit than one who tells me that I am the Messiah of this dispensation. And whether the spirits are on the higher or the lower plane, the great movement, I feel convinced, is under control. It has one great object, to lead us to the Divine portal. It has one great obstacle, the dogmatism of creeds and "Theosophies."

EOTHEN.

AN INSTANCE OF SPECTRAL ILLUSION.

The subjoined article we reproduce, not as containing anything new, but because it is accurately written, and because the phenomena detailed in it are observed and recorded with care. It is an open secret that it is from the pen of Sir John Risdon Bennett, F.R.S., now, we believe, President of the Royal College of Physicians. It is not necessary to speculate, but it is well that the facts should be recorded in "LIGHT":—

An Instance of Spectral Illusion.

We have received the following from an eminent and well-known London physician. The facts may not seem themselves important or unusual, but it is not usual to have such phenomena described and commented on with the clearness and care of this statement.

A few days ago I was the subject of a spectral illusion, the details of which may interest your readers. The occurrence took place in the daytime, when sitting in my library, and I must therefore briefly describe the room. It is about twenty-two feet square, and the two windows look to the north. When sitting in my arm-chair, in which I generally read, my back is to one window, and the fireplace is on my right hand. Against the opposite wall there is a small bookcase, the top of which is about on a level with my eye when seated on the chair. The side of the room to my left is occupied by large bookcases, placed against a wainscot partition that separates the room from the passage leading to the front door of the house. Raps and rings at the front door and noises in the passage are therefore heard distinctly, much more so than is desirable.

Between eleven and twelve a.m. I was reading in my accustomed seat, when, albeit, not "as a thing of custom" at that hour, "an exposition of sleep came upon me," as Bottom says, to which I ignominiously gave way. It was no mere drowsy disposition, for I was immediately "fast locked up in sleep," and unconscious. How long this may have lasted I cannot say with certainty, but it was assuredly a very brief period, when the postman's well-known decisive and characteristic double knock at the street door awoke me with a sudden start and the feeling of annoyance so commonly experienced when one is suddenly balked of Nature's sweet restorer on her first advent.

On opening my eyes I saw standing before me, on the hearth-rug, the figure of a man looking at me. He appeared to be about thirty or thirty-two years of age, of slight form, and of

Jewish aspect. He was clad in a dark-brown frock-coat, loosely fitting, and of a foreign cut. He wore a black chimney-pot hat of pyramidal form—something like the Welsh hat. His complexion was dark, the features long, and the nose aquiline. The eyebrows were not thick, but well arched and black, corresponding with his moustache and thin beard.

I continued looking at him full in the face, and saying to myself, mentally, "He is a Jew!" and, after doubting somewhat, concluded that he really was a Jew, though not of the most typical character. I then said to myself, "Who are you, and what are you come here for?" Coincident with these mental questionings, an amused smile passed over the lips of the spectre, and the form became hazy, so that I saw instinctively the bookcase through and behind the figure. In another moment my visitor had vanished, and I found myself looking at the familiar row of books on the top shelf of the case.

Now I will not discuss any theories of spectral illusions, nor attempt any explanation of this particular instance, for I have none to give. I will, however, supplement the simple statement of facts by a few observations that may help anyone who may desire to reason or theorise on the subject.

In the first place, let me say that I was not in the least degree perturbed by the vision. I did not awake with any of those signs of mental or physical disturbance with which one awakes out of a dream or nightmare of an unpleasant kind. Beyond the sudden start produced by the postman's rap I was not conscious of any emotion. I was neither frightened, nor astonished, nor annoyed, but simply interested, and puzzled to know who my visitor was and how he came there. His appearance was an isolated circumstance, unconnected with any precedent imaginations, or fragment of any dream. Immediately on the disappearance of the spectre my mind was clear. I had no headache, or abnormal sensation of any kind. I immediately recognised that I had been the subject of a spectral illusion, which, for a few moments, I reasoned about with myself, but, finding my book on my knee, I deferred any further consideration of the matter, and proceeded with my reading, without finding the least indication of any derangement of my organ of sight. Nor was the subject on which I was reading at all likely to lead me into the regions of imagination or fairyland: it was the Duke of Argyle's article on Herbert Spencer, in the current number of the *Nineteenth Century*.

In the next place, I was not in any way out of my usual health, that I am aware of; no stomach derangement, headache, or irritability of nervous system. I may not, perhaps, have had my full amount of sleep the previous night, but my mind had not been occupied with any special subject of either interest or anxiety, nor had my attention been specially directed to Jews, their dealings or history. And certainly I never remember to have seen any person resembling this unbidden spectre.

It is true that dreams are not always distinctly remembered on awaking; but if the appearance of my visitor formed part of any dream, inasmuch as my memory is quite clear regarding the figure presented to my mind, had it formed part or been the end of any dream, it seems probable that I should have connected it, in some way or other, with what had gone before. But such was not the case. The vision still stands isolated from any previous event or circumstance, either during sleep or awake. Nor has anything since occurred that can throw light on the subject.

I did not look at my watch before going off to sleep, and cannot therefore do more than guess the time occupied by the whole affair. I do not myself think it was ten minutes, if so much.

If any one is disposed to describe the whole story as a dream, I can only say that I do not think so. I was awake by the rap at the door, and, conscious that it was the knock of the postman, I opened my eyes, and it was on doing so that I saw the figure before me. It was not at all events a "vision of the night." The whole subject of dreams and mental visions is still involved in mystery, and is among the "many things in heaven and earth" that are neither explicable nor "dreamt of in our philosophy." But inasmuch as every well-authenticated fact may help towards solving a mystery, I have thought it worth while thus to record my experience.—J. R. B., in the *Leisure Hour*.

MANY of our readers will regret to learn of the decease of Mr. Alexander Tod, of Edinburgh, which took place on Sunday last. Mr. Tod was a warm-hearted Spiritualist and a liberal supporter of the cause.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Paid Medlums.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I was very pleased to read in your issue of August 25th, a letter from W. Glanville on the above subject, but much surprised that no one has responded to it. During my experience as a Spiritualist I have come to the conclusion that we give absolutely nothing in return for all that we receive from the spirits. I quite agree with everything W. Glanville says with respect to Mr. Husk, who has sat with me in my own house on many occasions extending over a long period, and he is, without doubt, one of the best available mediums we have at the present time. If you will kindly start a subscription list for his benefit in your valuable paper, I shall be very pleased to send you £5, and I sincerely trust that others who are in a better position than myself will come forward and subscribe accordingly.—Yours very truly,
18, Albion-road,
South Hampstead.

C. H. BRADLEY.

The True Story of an Apparition.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The following true story has just been told me by our friend, Baron —. Some years ago, when the Baron was in the Italian diplomatic service, everybody in a certain town in Italy was going wild over apparitions that were said to be seen by many persons at night in a certain old palatial residence there, ghosts of the well-known Count—and of the young and lovely wife of an Austrian General, whom the wicked but fascinating Count had persuaded to elope with him. Now, our friend being a big, brave Englishman, repudiating all these extraordinary statements, engaged to take up his post there for the night in order to explode the fallacy, providing himself with a brace of revolvers, coffee-making apparatus, cigars, and a novel, to be waited on by his more credulous and less courageous confrères at six o'clock next morning. Accordingly, they left him at eleven at night, seated at the far end of the ball-room of the haunted mansion, that, and two other apartments which led out (in the last of which the forsaken General had his revenge in taking the lives of both), being brilliantly lighted for the occasion. "As I expected," said the Baron, "noises soon commenced, and I smiled to think how men in the Corps could mistake bats and moths for ghosts." So he lit a fresh cigar, replenished his cup, and went on with his novel.

Presently, however, other sounds occurred (the Baron, who knows nothing of Spiritualistic phenomena, giving us illustrations which any Spiritualist would recognise at once as raps), and while occupied in trying to find a solution for these, and looking round, he beheld the forms of Count—and the wife of the Austrian General, both of whom he knew in earth-life, advancing from the other end of the room, so natural that for the moment he forgot they were dead, and arose. Slowly, they came towards him, the Count's eyes bent on the floor, the lady's full upon our friend, then passed out by the door leading into an ante-room, he (the Baron) pursuing, and with pistol pointed saying, "Speak! or I fire!" thrice repeated.

In the third room, whose ceiling still bears the stain of the unhappy Count's brains, he fired. The Count fell, but the lady, regarding our friend fixedly, glided through the opposite doorway, the door slamming to as he (the Baron) came up to the spot where the Count appeared to fall; but though the bullet was there in the floor (as it remains to this day) the Count or his visible ghost was not.

Next morning, when his friends came, they found their confrère of the Service in an insensible condition by the open window of the ball-room. For three days he was ill in bed, and the Italian papers had much to say about the adventure of our big, brave Englishman, who, by the way, is still the last person to "give in to ghosts," though he knows and admits those apparitions were not of ordinary flesh and blood. He gave us dates and names, which of course I suppress.

Ventnor, Isle of Wight.

CAROLINE CORNER.

Bible Allegories.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I should be extremely obliged by your insertion of the following inquiry in your paper:—Will Mr. Maitland kindly recommend the best works enunciatory of the true spiritual interpretation of the allegories of the Bible?
MYSTIC.

A New Light of Mysticism.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Though the interest in mysticism, and the consequent study of the mystics, is rapidly reviving both here and in America, it is still viewed with no inconsiderable amount of suspicion and hostility by Spiritualists as a body—perhaps on the ground that it promises so much and appears to perform so little. It would probably astonish them to learn that every Spiritualist is, in effect, a mystic. The science of mysticism is simply the totality of those methods and processes by which we are brought into relation with all that is spiritual around us, and by which the "highest fact in man" is enabled to establish a union with the "highest fact in the universe." This definition is not of my own invention, and it is in the existence of those methods, and in the possibility of their success, that the belief of the Spiritualist is centred beyond transference. All students of psychology who have followed the lines of research a distance sufficient to convince them that the phenomena called psychic are founded in fact and not in delusion, may be said to have an actually personal interest in the claim of the mystics, because the mystics were occupied in the past with precisely the same investigation that has been undertaken at the present day by ourselves, and because the barriers which prohibit our advance along the strait and narrow avenues which communicate between the seen and the unseen, seem to have been removed or transcended by the early explorers, though they still exist for us. Beyond these barriers they claim to have entered a broader path; the horizon of spiritual possibilities opened illimitably before them, and they became possessed of a grand secret of psychic power and knowledge which they glorified under such titles as the *Sanctum Regnum*, the *Secretum Secretorum Omnium*, &c.

This supreme arcanum was never publicly revealed, and the reasons for such reticence will be found in their writings; but each of the true mystics, after his own fashion, has given in allegorical language, and sometimes in pictorial symbols, a key to its nature. When the extent of the typological literature which thus came into existence is once realised, it is almost an irresistible conclusion that it will ultimately surrender its treasures to special, sympathetic, and prolonged research—assuming the good faith of the writers—for the smallest particle of light derived from each treatise would produce in the aggregate a large result, and it, may be hoped, a complete illumination.*

This in itself is sufficient to warrant me in appealing for a serious investigation of the old mystics on the part of those persons who are honestly interested in the grand and supreme problems of the soul.

Whether this investigation is likely to be barren of result, as is commonly supposed, or fruitful, as I venture to affirm, may be best shown if, by your courtesy and by your forbearance, I am permitted to enumerate the results of my own conscientious study in a certain branch of esoteric lore. Those of your readers who are acquainted with my books on the Rosicrucians and the Mysteries of Magic will absolve me from the charge of adopting rash and inadequate theories, and from enriching the domain of verified facts with the fabulous creations of romantic hypotheses. I trust that the statements which follow will be received with the more confidence on this account.

The branch of esoteric inquiry to which I have alluded, and which has been the subject of my particular attention, is the neglected science of alchemy, approached, it is needless to observe, on its philosophical side alone. The discoveries which I have made, and the convictions at which I have arrived, will be fully developed in a work entitled *Azoth, or the Star in the East*, which I hope will be ready for publication early in next year, and the furthest limit of space which I can expect to command in your columns will only permit of a bald and meagre sketch, which I will present as unpretentiously as possible in the form of brief, numbered headings.

I. The alchemists, in common with other mystics, were in possession of a secret theory of universal development, or evolution, which they believed to be capable of application in every kingdom of nature.

II. They applied it in the mineral kingdom, and claim to have done so with such success that they discovered a method of

* I must make an exception in the case of physical alchemy. The fundamental secret of that science is, I believe, irrecoverable; at any rate it is hopeless to seek it in the writings of the adepts, who have never revealed the true nature of their "first matter" though they propagated an infinite number of wilful deceptions concerning it.

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Puritanism, Mysticism, and Ritualism.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—On re-reading my short article of June 9th, I find it is just possible that I may be understood as asserting that Christianity and truth are convertible terms. But if "R. N." will be good enough to examine that article again he will, I hope, see that my intention was to point out that whatever good there may have been in Christianity has been lost through what "E. M." very properly calls *materialism*, in other words, *Puritanism*. The quotations I made from a so-called religious paper were in no sense made as representing my own views, but as showing how utterly this Puritanism by its mundane and *common-sense* methods has destroyed all hope of that union with the Eternal which, "R. N.," presumably yearns for, and which, also presumably, he can explain without using what he calls *Mysticism*.

As to the effect of this puritanic or materialistic way of looking at things, I need do little more than quote "R. N.'s" own letter. Says he:—

"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."

Here we have a spirit waking in a man. If this *spirit* is a symbolic term, then we have some form of *Mysticism*, and "R. N." condemns himself; if it is not symbolic, then we have a certain something which does not always wake in a man, and we are uncommonly near that choice product of the Puritanic creed,—*predestined election!* Moreover, this spirit, real or symbolic, "drowns the voice of authority," that is, as it would seem, one authority drowns the voice of another,—whence come these authorities? The rest of the passage, I regret to say, I do not understand, the connection between symbols, raptures, and salvation being difficult to trace. As to union with the Eternal, to that I have already referred.

With his attack on the Christianity of the Churches, I mainly agree with your correspondent, but whether that particular form of Christianity is "*Mystical Christianity*," is quite another question.

I am not about to enter into the meaning of the so-called Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; my main object in what I said was to call attention to the constant effort made by *Puritanism*, or *Materialism*, to destroy anything like spiritual meaning in all things where a spiritual meaning may be hoped for. The "mystery of the Cross" is not necessarily Christian, but that mystery must be in some way understood before one can get the salvation—not the hope of Heaven—which "R. N." so ardently desires.

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Spirit Identity.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Allow me to give the following instance of what appeared to me to fairly accentuate the claim I ventured to assert for identity in a previous communication published in "LIGHT" some weeks ago, as I think it removes farther from probability the theory of "thought transference," which is rather a stumbling block against the acceptance of such communications from the other side being considered what they profess to be—genuine. I was told that a youth, who said his name was "Willie," was beside me, holding a lily in his hand, and with the figures 2½ over his head. He said he was my son, and gave a short message, specially a private family matter, known only to myself and wife, and to which I will not further allude than to say that it showed a very intimate acquaintance with family matters that had recently transpired.

I may state that my son Willie died two and a-half years previously and that the message specially suited circumstances that had subsequently occurred. I was puzzled to understand what the "lily" in his hand could mean, and thought it might indicate that such an emblem might have been placed there at the time of his burial, which took place during my absence in the East. I could get no confirmation of this, however, at home, and only discovered some time afterwards, when visiting his grave, that on the simple monument that had been erected, the only ornament on the marble cross which surmounted the grave was a lily carved in bold relief, probably added at the discretion of the person who put up the tomb, or it might

be chosen by the relative (since dead) who superintended the funeral during my absence; and about this ornament I had not heard. This fact, therefore, could not be accounted for by "thought transference," and I confess I was much impressed with the genuineness of the message, as well as of the appearance of the deceased, by this apparent identification of personality which the lily afforded.—Yours, &c.,

London, September 10th, 1888.

W. H.

"Nizida."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I hope you can afford me a small corner in which to thank "Nizida" for her courteous reply to my letter. In common, I am sure, with most of your readers, I always read "Nizida's" letters in "LIGHT" with great pleasure. She may not always succeed in taking our reason captive, but she invariably succeeds in doing something better—she "conquers our hearts."—Yours, &c.,

GEORGE HARPUR.

Mr. Edward Maitland.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I should take it as a favour if any of your readers can inform me whether a photograph (cabinet preferred) of Mr. Edward Maitland can be obtained; and, if so, the name of the publisher.—Sincerely yours,

ZANONI.

SONNET.

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those, whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poor Death; nor yet can'st thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy picture be,
Much pleasure, then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
Thou'rt slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell;
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well,
And better than thy stroke. Why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally;
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

—JOHN DONNE.

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.

THOS. H. L.—We are sorry even to appear discourteous in withholding your letter, but the reason you assign for its insertion would apply equally well to a score of others.

PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, LONDON.—On Sunday last, Mr. Dale gave an admirable address under control. Meetings are held every Sunday at 3.30.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—Questions on Spiritualism and kindred objects were replied to at the morning meeting on Sunday last. In the evening Mr. R. J. Lees delivered an able address on "Spiritualism and its Relation to Christianity," to a crowded meeting. Sunday next, at eleven, Experience meeting. At seven Miss Blenman will give an Inspirational Address.—W. E. L.

"WHATEVER there is in the phantasy of man comes also into the phantasy of spirits, and they are persuaded that the fact is so and so; as now I have learned by experience, namely, when I only supposed that I had a fur cap upon my head, by which they were prevented from seeing the interior of the brain, or its thoughts. They immediately said that there was nothing apparent, thus that vision was impeded. Presently after, however, good spirits, from thinking that they were shut in between the fur hat and the head, and that they then grew warm, said that they did, as it were, perceive what was within, but still saying that phantasy thus bore sway; so also in very many other things whence they were persuaded from external concerning internal things."—SWEDENBORG'S *Spiritual Diary*.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SPIRITUALISM.

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

[The books herein enumerated represent the chief forms of thought respecting Spiritualism and kindred subjects. In recommending them for perusal I do not necessarily endorse the views set forth in them, as is apparent, indeed, from the obvious fact that these are heterogeneous and in some cases inconsistent. I say only that it is well to hear all sides, and that these books present the opinions of thoughtful persons in various times on various phases of a great subject. It is needless to add that I have attempted no classification. The order in which works are mentioned is purely arbitrary, nor do I pretend that my list is complete.]

July, 1888. "M.A. (OXON.)"

- Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World.* R. DALE OWEN, 1860.
The Debateable Land between this World and the Next. R. DALE OWEN, 1871.
 [Two charming books, many years old, but always fresh and new.]
Spiritualism in the Light of Modern Science. W. CROOKES, F.R.S.
 [Science on Spiritualism: facts and no theories.]
Miracles and Modern Spiritualism. A. RUSSEL WALLACE.
A Defence of Spiritualism. A. RUSSEL WALLACE.
 [Able and very cogent treatises, suitable for those who are making acquaintance with Spiritualism.]
Experimental Investigations of the Spiritual Manifestations. PROFESSOR HARE.
 [One of the earliest scientific works by the celebrated American Chemist.]
On Spiritualism. JUDGE EDMONDS and DEXTER.
 [A record of personal experience. 2 Vols.]
Zöllner's Transcendental Physics. Translated by C. C. MASSEY.
 [A record of personal investigation adapted to the scientific mind that is not afraid of metaphysics.]
From Matter to Spirit. MRS. DE MORGAN.
 [An early work strongly to be recommended: with a most valuable preface by the late PROFESSOR DE MORGAN.]
Planchette. EPES SARGENT.
 [Perhaps the best book to read first of all by a student.]
Proof Palpable of Immortality. EPES SARGENT.
 [On Materialisations. Perhaps a little out of date.]
Scientific Basis of Spiritualism. EPES SARGENT.
 [Sargent's last and most elaborate work. All he says is worth attention.]
Startling Facts in Modern Spiritualism. N. B. WOLFE, M.D.
 [A record of phenomena of a very startling character, chiefly through the mediumship of Mrs. Hollis Billing.]
Spirit Teachings. "M.A. (OXON.)"
 [Personal evidence through automatic writing; bearing on identity, and an argument.]
Spirit Identity. "M.A. (OXON.)"
 [An attempt to prove that the claim made by communicating spirits that they have once lived on this earth is borne out by facts.]
Psychography (2nd Edition). "M.A. (OXON.)"
 [A record of phenomena of what is sometimes called "independent writing," occurring in the presence of Slade, Eglinton, &c.]
Higher Aspects of Spiritualism. "M.A. (OXON.)"
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Identity of Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism. EUGENE CROWELL, M.D.
 [From a religious standpoint: compare with *Higher Aspects of Spiritualism.*]
Spirit Workers in the Home Circle. MORELL THEOBALD.
 [A record of home experiences during many years with several mediums, some being children of the family, and all non-professional.]
Phantasms of the Living. (Society for Psychical Research.) E. GURNEY, F. W. H. MYERS, and F. PODMORE.
 [Discussions and evidence respecting thought-transference, telepathy, &c., and much evidence of apparitions at or about the time of death. Not written from the Spiritualist point of view.]
Hints for the "Evidences of Spiritualism." "M.P."
 [A brief logical argument. "An application to Spiritualism of the arguments vulgarly held to be conclusive in the case of dogmatic Christianity."]
Incidents in my Life. (2 Vols.) D. D. HOME.
 [Vol. I. contains facts in the life of a remarkable medium.]
D. D. Home: His Life and Mission. By his WIDOW.
 [An account of a very strange life, with records of facts, and abundant testimony from well-known persons.]
Modern American Spiritualism. MRS. EMMA HARDINGE-BRITTEN.
 [A history of Spiritualism in its earliest home and during its first two decades.]
Nineteenth Century Miracles. MRS. EMMA HARDINGE-BRITTEN.
 [A record of the phenomena of Spiritualism in modern days.]
Art Magic; or Mundane, Sub-Mundane, and Super-Mundane Spiritism. Edited by MRS. EMMA HARDINGE-BRITTEN.
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 [Two weird books dealing with Occultism and Magic.]
Pioneers of the Spiritual Reformation. MRS. HOWITT WATTS.
 [Dr. Justinus Kerner and William Howitt. By one of the best writers on Spiritualism.]
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 [Mystical, and very suggestive from the standpoint of the Christian Mystic: Edited by the late Dr. Anna Kingsford and Mr. Ed. Maitland.]
Old Truths in a New Light. COUNTESS OF CAITHNESS.
 [From a Theosophical plane of thought. Worth attention.]
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 [A study of Theosophy: the secret doctrine of all religions.]
Theosophy and the Higher Life. DR. G. WYLD.
 [A study of Theosophy as a religion by a former President of the London Theosophical Society.]
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 [Mystical: for advanced thinkers and students.]
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- Nightside of Nature.* MRS. CROWE.
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 [Works of a robust thinker, whose personal experience as a psychic is great. From a free-thought plane.]
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 [An early treatise from a scientific point of view.]
What am I? SERJEANT COX.
 [Psychological: an inquiry into the constitution of man in relation to manifestations of spirit. A little out of date now.]
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The Soul of Things. W. DENTON.
 [Psychometry and Clairvoyance: very interesting.]
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 [Mr. Howitt's chief work on Spiritualism, a subject on which he was one of our best authorities.]
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 [A historical treatise.]
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Man: Fragments of Forgotten History. By two Chelas.
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