

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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"COLENZO'S" CRITICS.

My studies in arithmetic used to prove to me that the number three was distinct from the number seven. In "LIGHT" (July 20th) the Countess Wachtmeister thus writes of Madame Blavatsky: "Again and again has she repeated to me that she was only three years in Thibet." But in "LIGHT," August 9th, 1884, Madame Blavatsky herself writes thus: "I will tell him" (a correspondent) "also that I have lived at different periods in Little Thibet as in Great Thibet, and that these combined periods form more than seven years."

Without trespassing too much upon the columns of "LIGHT," I am afraid that I cannot do justice to the other correspondents that have commented on my paper, "The Perplexities of Theosophy." Mr. Clayton holds that the law of heredity is proved to be no law by the fact that children are often unlike their parents, both morally and physically. But this fact is often due to the law of heredity. I once knew a clever lady novelist who had quite a silly father and mother. This fact puzzled me until I learnt that her maternal grandfather was clever and original.

Mr. Bertram Keightley who indulges in an ornate style, in which such words as "infantile," "gross caricature," "feeble in the extreme," run riot a little too much, impugns some of my statements.

1. I said on the authority of Mr. Sinnett that there must be at least 1,500 years between each re-birth according to Theosophic teaching. Mr. Bertram Keightley carps at this, but Mr. Sinnett says that a less period is almost impossible.

2. Mr. Bertram Keightley finds fault with my gross misrepresentations in the matter of the "Shells." I said that this doctrine teaches that at the moment of death the individual becomes practically two individuals. The first of these goes off to a paradise called Devachan carrying with him all his good qualities. The second with all the evil qualities remains on the earth plane for a time, and is by and by annihilated.

1. In answer to this Mr. Bertram Keightley denies that the change takes place at death. But in *Esoteric Buddhism* (p. 91), we read that "at death" the good and bad halves of mortals separate. Also in the table of contents for chapter five, we have "Division of the principles at death." But Mr. Bertram Keightley rather sneers at Mr. Sinnett as an authority. I will give him another, Madame Blavatsky. In the *Theosophist* for October, 1881, that lady asserts that the change takes place "at death or before." This complicates matters woefully. Is my next door neighbour, Mr. Pickwick, the good half of Pickwick, the bad half of Pickwick, or both halves of Pickwick? How can I tell?

2. Mr. Bertram Keightley denies that an "executed criminal," according to the doctrine, "can awaken in fifteen

seconds in Devachan in a state of super-angelic purity." In answer to this I must point out that in *Esoteric Buddhism*, which professes to be inspired by Koot Hoomi, it is announced that at death all mortals (without reservation in the matter of executed criminals) go off "assuredly to Devachan" (p. 92), minus their evil qualities (p. 71). And I need not point out that a being absolutely without imperfection would be superior to any angel, for whom perfection has never been claimed.

3. Mr. Keightley denies that the bad half which remains on the earth plane can be called an "individual." When a man dies, he says, he leaves his physical body behind him, which can be made to move about by galvanism. Can this be called an individual? Again, Mr. Bertram Keightley confutes not me, but Mr. Sinnett and the old Theosophist newspaper. At death, says *Esoteric Buddhism* (p. 94), this bad half "recovers life for a time." This condition is "like the condition of a person carried into a strange room in a state of insensibility during illness." This "person," according to Mr. Sinnett and the *Theosophist* passim, goes about "delivering trance orations of no contemptible kind," "rapping tables on earth," and so on (pp. 96-97). Surely Mr. Keightley will admit that a person delivering powerful trance orations is more like an "individual" than a galvanised corpse.

4. A being completely without one good quality must be judged inconceivably wicked. Mr. Keightley finds fault with the word "Mephistopheles" as applied to the "Shells." It seems to me that the word understates the case. The Mephistopheles of Goethe is only half a fiend. Indeed, some sly critics, looking beyond the scarlet vestments and the blue fire, have thought they detected the Weinar Courtier himself, making use of his puppet to say things that in that courtly atmosphere could not otherwise be said.

5. Finally, Mr. Keightley finds fault with me for confining my studies in Theosophy to one book and one phase of the subject. I do this advisedly, because if the doctrine of "Shells" be true it sweeps away Re-incarnation, the flights of the celebrated Fifth Rounder, and, indeed, the the whole apparatus of the "inner circle." By one theory a murderer can obtain absolute perfection in three seconds. By the other St. Paul will be seventy millions of years obtaining the same spiritual advantage. Mr. Sinnett told Dr. Wyld (See "LIGHT," July 21st, 1883) that at least seventy millions of years must be passed in re-births before that final culmination.

COLENZO.

THE *Christian* has found out that "Spiritualism is a dread reality." Reality it is, and perhaps such writers as "Homo" in that journal have reason to dread its onward progress. The letter is full of the usual shrieks about Canaan and witchcraft, demoniacal possession, peepings, mutterings, and the like. It is well that such diatribes should be published: they are enough to discredit any cause, and do us more good in forty lines than a whole volume of advocacy. But this kind of critic must be quick about his work. The rising tide will soon sweep him away. His occupation will be gone in a new and enlightened age.

A GRAND LADY'S LETTERS.*

Charlotte Elizabeth, Princess Palatine of the Rhine, great granddaughter of King James I., wife of Philip, Duke of Orleans, brother of Louis XIV. and mother of the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France, during the minority of Louis XV., was a very grand lady indeed, and very much aware that she was so. She was, however, aware also of the limitations of her greatness. When on her death-bed, to a lady, desiring to be allowed to kiss her hand, she replied, "You may embrace me if you will! I shall now soon be in a world in which all are equal." In matters of religion she was of a large and liberal spirit.

"It is a very unfortunate thing (she says) that the clergy try to set Christians against each other. If they followed my advice, the three Christian religions should join together and become one, and not trouble us as to what each thought, individually, and only care as to whether all lived according to the law of the Gospel—those who led evil lives would alone be rebuked by the clergy."

Again:—

"If my advice were followed there should be laws made against Christians ever speaking ill of one another. All religious differences would then be abolished, and people would live together according to the Gospel. To speak of one's neighbour as certainly damned, is to commit an act against charity, and shows hatred instead of love. . . . To-day is my Bible day. I have already read four Psalms, four chapters of the Old Testament, and three of the New. I never wished to be a queen. It means belonging to a sad confraternity who spend their lives in unreal vanities; nothing true or solid reaches them."

Further:—

"A sovereign ought to understand that for him true piety consists in wisely governing his people and being honourable and just. Monsieur (her husband) once said to a worthy but severe priest, 'I am very thirsty, would it be breaking the fast to take the juice of an orange.' M. Fenillet, so was the Abbé called, answered, 'Oh, Monsieur, eat a whole ox if you like, but be a good Christian and pay your debts.'" "The King (Louis XIV.) had a horrible fear of hell, and he believed that anyone not in favour with the Jesuits would surely be damned. My son once wished to take a gentleman into his service. His Majesty sent for my son and said 'What is this I hear? You are thinking of taking a Jansenist into your service.' 'I,' answered my son, 'never thought of such a thing. Far from being a Jansenist he does not even believe in a God.' 'Oh,' said the King, much relieved, 'if that is all, take him and welcome.' 'Madame,' so was she called, had no belief in ghosts, 'I have often walked during night time,' she says, 'in the great gallery of Fontainebleau, said to be haunted by Francis I., but that worthy king never did me the honour of appearing to me. Here people no longer believe in witches. You would not show yourself our Father's daughter if you believed in such things. If you know any more tales about witches I should be glad to hear them."

We are unfortunately without Madame's correspondent's tales, but here are some of her own:—

"Everyone here is talking of the woman who had her husband assassinated. She was called Madame Tiquet and had her fortune told some years ago. It predicted that she should live to an extraordinary old age and would lead a happy life if she avoided a man bearing her own name. Her maiden name was Cartier, and it happened that the executioner who beheaded her had the same name."

"Something happened to M. de Louvois which has given him an active faith in fortune tellers. He was told of a child who could see and foresee in a glass of water. At that time he was in love with Madame Dufrenoy, and that very morning being alone with her, he had taken an emerald bracelet of hers, and caused her to search everywhere for it. No one having seen him take it the matter was quite unknown excepting to himself. The child, who was gazing into the glass of water, and whom M. de Louvois had told to ask the spirit of what he was thinking, replied, that he was, doubtless, thinking of a very beautiful lady,

wearing such and such a gown, and just now searching for an object with great anguish. 'Ask him for what she is searching,' said he. 'An emerald bracelet,' the child answered. 'Make the spirit show us the person who took it, and tell us what he did with it,' said M. de Louvois. The child suddenly began to laugh. 'But I can see the man,' she answered, 'he is dressed like yourself, and is as like you as two drops of water; he takes the bracelet off the lady's dressing-table, and puts it into his pocket with a gold box.' M. de Louvois, pale as death, pulled the box out of his pocket, and has since believed sorcerers, and all kinds of fortune-tellers' prophecies."

"I have heard that certain Canadian savages know the future. Ten years ago a French gentleman, who was once page to Marshal Humières, and who married one of my ladies-in-waiting, brought back a savage with him to France. One day, whilst at table, the latter began weeping and making faces. Longeil—for that was the gentleman's name—asked him what was the matter. He answered, 'I saw out of the window that thy brother has been assassinated at such a place in Canada.' Longeil wrote down what he had been told, and six months after, when the vessel arrived from Canada, he learned that his brother had been assassinated at the exact time and at the place where the savage had seen it in the sky through the window. 'This,' the lady adds, 'is a true story.'"

"They buried the Princess de Ragotzé yesterday. Her people tell a most extraordinary tale about her. It seems that when at Varsovia she dreamt one night that she found herself in an unknown chamber with a stranger who offered her a cup and bade her drink. Not being at all thirsty, she refused; but he insisted, saying, that it would be the last time she would partake of anything in this life; then she awoke. She never forgot this strange dream. On arriving here she lodged at an inn. Feeling ill, she sent for a doctor, and they brought her Helvetius, one of the King's physicians. On seeing him enter the Princess became greatly agitated, and on Count Schlieben asking her what was the matter, replied that Dr. Helvetius exactly resembled a certain man whom she had seen in a dream at Varsovia. Then laughing, she added, 'But I shall not die here, for this is not the apartment which I saw at Varsovia.' When she moved into the convent at Chaillot and saw the chamber she was destined to occupy, she said to her people, 'I shall not leave this place as a living woman, for this is the apartment I saw in my dream, and where I shall drink for the last time in life.'

"A famous Turin astrologer once told the Dauphine her fortune. He predicted all that would happen to her till her twenty-seventh year, when her career would be cut short by death. She often spoke of this, for all that he had foretold really happened to her year by year. One day she said to her husband: 'The hour of my death must now be approaching; you cannot remain a widower on account of your rank and piety; pray tell me the Princess you mean to choose.' He answered, 'I hope that God will never inflict on me the pain of seeing you depart this life; but should this misfortune befall me, rest assured that I shall never marry again, for I shall follow you in eight days to the grave.' And so it exactly happened. Eight days after the death of his wife he also died. This is a true story, the Princess adds, not a romance. Often, though fresh and hearty, the Dauphine would say 'I must make haste to enjoy my life, for I shall die this year.' I used to think she said it as a joke, but it was only too true."

"To make of Science an integral whole necessitates, indeed, the study of spiritual and psychic, as well as physical, nature. Otherwise it will ever be like the anatomy of man, discussed of old by the profane from the point of view of his shell side, and in ignorance of the interior work."—*Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I., p. 588.

"THE doctrine of communion has put off its oppressive robes of selfishness and personal aggrandisement, and put on the white garments of good news to the world . . . the world longs to believe, and needs to believe something of this sort. It is essential to our religious well being. I have the very firmest faith . . . that heaven is close to us; and that its inhabitants walk the earth both when we wake and when we sleep. It seems to me that this truth is at the centre of all true religion . . . I do believe in this possible communion with all my heart."—REV. GEORGE H. HEFORTH.

* *Life and Letters of Charlotte Elizabeth, Princess Palatine* (Chapman and Hall, Limited), 1889.

THE GREAT AND THE LITTLE VEHICLES OF BUDDHISM.

By C. PFOUNDES.

(Sometime resident in the Extreme Orient).

There is widespread misapprehension on many important points of Buddhist doctrines, partly through absence of accurate information, accessible to the general public; but chiefly on account of the perpetuation of certain stereotyped generalities, which have been promulgated by those who were far from desirous of placing Buddhism before the world in the most favourable light. Assertions as to the Agnosticism, Soullessness, &c., of Buddhism, are still frequently made by those who should be either better informed, or more candid, fair, and scholarly.

There is nothing upon which so little is understood, and consequently so many blunders perpetrated, as about the Vehicles, the *Yana*, that is the *Maha* (Major) *Yana* (Vehicle), and the *Hina* (Minor) *Yana* (Vehicle), whilst the medium or intermediate teaching, which is eclectic, is altogether ignored, perhaps its existence unknown. Collating, in the briefest possible manner, the condensed material gleaned from the best of the authentic native sources, we find that for the first century after the great decease the teachings of the Master were handed down by *Kaspaya*, *Ananda*, and others. This comprised the earlier, the middle, and later periods of the teaching of the Buddha *Gautama Shakya Muni*. Then there arose two schools, *Sthaviras* and *Samghikas*. A century later the harmony of the *Hina* and *Maha Yana* being disturbed; and quarrelling, the *Samghikas* were divided into nine schools. Again another century later, and the *Sthaviras* were divided into eleven schools. Of these twenty, the *Sarvastivada* was the most flourishing, the Minor Vehicle being taught as illustrated in the principal canon, the *Gnana sastra* and its six discourses.

It is related that certain patriarchs on more than one occasion "came down from the Himavat" and reconciled the disputes for a time, between the conflicting schools.

The *Mahayana* languished for a time, but was revived by *Asvaghosha*, *Nagajuna* (who restored the esoteric doctrines), and others.

The Minor Vehicle, the doctrine of expediency, of the earlier period of the teachings of the *Bhagavat*, (*Gautama Buddha*) was directed to convince the *Astikas*, those who were materialistic, whilst the Major Vehicle was for the *Nastikas*, those who held the doctrine of the unreality and emptiness of all things. The middle path, or Intermediate Vehicle, was for those who had developed, and reached a higher intellectual plane.

The *Sutra* (teachings) and *Shastra* (discourses) most esteemed by the followers of the Minor doctrine, are equally revered by the others, who say the former do not interpret their meaning aright.

The esoteric schools are chiefly followers of the Major Vehicles. Space will not permit, now and here, to enter into minute detail, to give the dates, the names of the schools, teachers, *Sutra*, *Shastra*, and other descriptive matter.

Generalising, however, it may be stated that the three separate collections of the *Tripitaka* (three baskets)—that made within the cave, that outside, and another—contain the basis of the doctrines of all the schools.

Recognising the different conditions, and dispositions of mankind, the teachings were intended to be suitable to each and all. The Minor, incomplete, temporary, and exoteric, for the less intelligent or earnest; the Major, perfect, permanent, and esoteric (or unrevealed to the common people), for the more advanced and devoted.

There was, however, but one object; all the various paths led to the same ultimate purpose, the *perception of truth*, and to ENLIGHTENMENT.

Upon this, the various sects, ancient and modern, of the several countries wherein the Buddhist doctrines were promulgated, each based their numerous, and often conflicting dogmas, each taking some *Sutra* with the later *Shastra* bearing thereon, explanatory or polemically dealing with other *Shastra*.

In Ceylon, Tibet, China, Japan, Burma, Corea, Siam, &c., it is not to be wondered at that there appears to be some confusion.

Both Major and Minor Vehicles teach the absolute truths, the necessity of meditation, of understanding the metaphysical as well as the psychological potentialities of the human being, each to know themselves, and to conquer the lower self, so as to develop the higher self.

Discipline (*Vinaya*) is deemed essential and the moral teachings of perfection (*Sila paramita*) are insisted upon.

The constant references to the future life, and the teachings of responsibility and hereafter consequences of our deeds, or perfect rest, involve the frequent use of terms similar to those so hackneyed of late, *Karma*, Re-incarnation, *Nirvana*, &c., but the crude conceptions of the Occidental tyro are far wide of the ideal of the more astute and sublimed Oriental.

The *Tathagata Shakya Muni* taught, it is believed, the lucid interpretations of the *Vidya matra*—the "exclusive" knowledge of the middle path (or Vehicle), which was revived by *Maitreya*, and elaborated by *Asanga* and *Vasubandhu*. At the Nalanda Seminary, near Magadhas, the esoteric meaning of the *Yoga* was also taught—as also the *Heta vidya* logic and rhetoric, &c.

The ignorant holding the false doctrine of existence of their own *Atman* (Spiritual Ego) were submerged in the delusive ideas of metempsychosis, and to these the Buddha taught the existence of the *Dharmas* and the *Hirayama*.

Those of but moderate intelligence could banish the misconceptions as to the *Atman* and escape re-incarnation, but were incapable of perceiving the higher truths, and to them were given the *Maharana*.

The middle path taught the unreality of the *parikalpita lakshana*, or that evolved from the imagination; but the reality of *tantra*; subservient, and *instipanna*, or completed nature—defining the spheres of *Kama*, desire, *Shiki*, form, and *Arupa*, without form, the eight *vignanas* and the three *lakshanas*.

There are three classes into which humanity may be classified, viz., highly intellectual, moderately intelligent, and dense, stupid, ignorant; for such and each, the doctrines are progressive.

All the schools and Vehicles demand the observance of the practices of self-control, education; and to a greater or less degree contemplation, abstraction, and study of the *Yoga*—or union—the object of all being alike the attainment of *Budhi*, or enlightenment, as the only royal road to *Nirvana*, the grand achievement, the glorious victory over the grosser self, the development of the higher self, as a preparation for the future better blissful state, not annihilation, but rest.

This is no soulless atheism—nor is the highest attainment of the ideal, in the transcendental Buddhism, simply nothingness, as it is even now so often asserted.

There is probably more casuistry in the *Hina Yana*, more metaphysics in the *Maha Yana*, certainly far more philosophy in the eclectic Intermediate Vehicle, that recognises and combines the best, strives to reconcile dissensions, and lead all onwards and upwards to ENLIGHTENMENT.

INDIAN OCCULT POWER.

The Eastern traveller and historian, Maurice, tells the following experience with an Indian Yogi: "The old man said, 'If you will take your seats I will say my prayers; then I think I shall have power to move any object in this room.' He prayed. I saw on the table a manuscript book, also some peacock's feathers. Having gone through the prayers, and burned incense, 'Now,' said he, 'I have the power to move by my will. If you will please to call it, I will command anything in this room to move.' I said, 'Will you please to move that book on the stand?' He pointed to it, and said, 'Come this way.' The book trembled, fell to the floor, and slipped along the floor to his feet. He told the feathers to come. They leaped around the room. I was astonished. I said, 'Tell me how you do this.' He said, 'You, an enlightened man, ask a poor Brahmin heathen how he does this! I believe in Brahm, the one living and true God. He moves all material things, and just as far as I become Brahm-like, just so far as I control my passions, subdue my earthly nature and live in the divine, in the same ratio have I power to move anything within the range of my voice or my radiations. And so,' said he, 'by prayer, by holy life, I obtain this divine power from Brahm.' And then he told me how he lived—about his bathing, about his food, about his prayers—a most devout life."—*Golden Gate*.

"So sure as we see men, so sure we are that holy men have seen angels . . . have we had intuitive intimations of the death of absent friends, which no human intelligence had bidden us to suspect, who but our angels have wrought it? Have we been preserved from mortal danger, which we could not tell how, by our providence, to have invaded, our invisible guardians have done it."—*The Invisible World*, by BISHOP HALL.

MR. A. F. TINDALL'S MUSIC MASTER.

By Mrs. A. J. PENNY.

Facts reported in this periodical often come to my mind like rays of light into semi-obscurity, giving in one moment connection and meaning to objects which had been without any before. Such an illumination was flashed in by one sentence in Mr. A. F. Tindall's very interesting article on "Musical Mediumship" a few weeks ago. Giving an account of a musical composition ruled by influx, he said that his unseen helper told him that he had been a German soldier in the Austrian army about 300 years ago. Though German people are, as a rule, fond of music, this one must, presumably, have made great advance in the science since his flesh fingers died—judging by Mr. Tindall's evidence: and, as I thought this, I remembered an entry in the *Journal of James Johnson*, the first great medium of this century. He inquired of a communicating "angel" about the welfare of a deceased friend, Mrs. Horrocks. "I asked what at present were her delights? He said, "reading and music; she is learning music very fast." (p. 203.) And next I called to mind that almost the same answer was given at a private séance to a friend of mine, when three children whom he had lost many years before announced their presence; with perfect accuracy as to facts, proving themselves to be what they professed to be, and not (*nota bene*) from facts in the father's memory, for one of them asserted something which contradicted his own, but which on inquiry from a living witness proved to be true. He asked a son who had been taken from him some nineteen years before, "And how do you occupy yourself? "I am learning music," was the answer. To those who think of music according to present day practice, this may seem rather a frivolous *post-mortem* pursuit; but since, as all students of occult learning know, sound is a creative force, it is obvious that music may be learned for processes very other than amusement and pleasure giving. Let St. Martin give some idea of what it is in its original and highest scope.* "Music, in the abstract, had for its object to pierce through the regions of time which enshroud us, and hold us captive by their density. . . It had ability to open the domains of time now oppressing us, in order that powers from on high might penetrate, and come to moderate the disorders here below, to which these tyrannous forces (of time) expose us, and by which they hold us bound." And a few pages onward he wrote: "Music is contiguous to a pure and superior region, and man by this intermediary can not only carry his own being into a Divine region, but can make that region descend into his whole being," and "pure music is the true and only physical conductor of all light and all science." He concludes that "music will be eternally in action, because it opens the world of Divine powers," and "why," he adds, "does it open the region of Deity? It is because it opens in us the world of our internal faculties." Fully to justify these assertions of St. Martin, both chapters on music, in the book from which I take them, should be read. We can easily understand the reason of sweet music so often being heard by dying people, if by music superior spheres are opened. It would not be only a welcome, but a preparation for ascent. Mr. Keely gives scientific sanction to the belief of the French Theosophist. "In my estimation," he says, sound truly defined is the disturbance of atomic equilibrium, *rupturing actual atomic corpuscles*; and the substance thus liberated must certainly be a certain order of etheric flow." And would not *this* form a purer atmosphere for both incoming and outgoing spirits? Swedenborg has much to tell us of music in the world of spirits. Let the fortunate people who possess his spiritual diary turn to par. 489, where he enlarges upon the method by which celestial harmonies are learned—and says, "souls are by degrees introduced into these harmonies and agreements (of consentaneous chanting), so that at length they can be amongst angels." See also pars. 492, and 904, where we read "harmonies of sound as also of the speech, belong to spiritual harmony, and the gladness thence resulting is spiritual gladness; hence the music of the ancient church (transmitted to after ages), hence also singing in the heavens which is so delightful." He also reports extreme pleasure being caused to the spirits with whom he was for the time associated. "It twice happened that I have heard in the streets music from stringed instruments which so soothed the spirits that they scarcely knew but that they were in Heaven, for they were exhilarated to such

* L. C. DE ST. MARTIN'S *L'Esprit des Choses*. (Vol. I. pp. 171, 175, 177, 185.)

a degree as to be, as it were, transported out of themselves." (par. 1,996.) And again, "It happened twice or thrice that there was heard harmonious singing, like as previously had been heard instrumental music, and with that singing were the spirits so delighted that they became, as it were, spell-bound, the sweetness thereof penetrated their interiors. The same was the case with angels. I could perceive their enjoyment by a certain sense." (par. 2,090.) "Musical harmony and singing" he had before noted, "are so delightful to angels, when the thoughts of man are concordant with their ideas—a fact which I have often experienced in churches when the angelic choirs agreed with the Psalms sung, with an interior perception of gladness, credible to none, and thus ineffable." (par. 491.) Agreeing with so many other facts of the *natural history* of spirits since then discovered to us, precisely the same are recorded in our Bible; the effect of music upon them, for instance. In 1 Samuel xvi. 16, we find this advice given to Saul when an evil spirit troubled him, "Seek out a man who is a cunning player on a harp, and it shall come to pass when the evil spirit from God is upon thee that he shall play with his hand and thou shalt be well." And when the experiment was tried, "Saul was refreshed and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him." Whether soothed to harmlessness, or repelled by a good one, we cannot know. Again, when Elisha was consulted by the three kings about warring with the king of Moab, the prophet said, "Now bring me a minstrel; and it came to pass when the minstrel played that the hand of the Lord came upon him." Which—with St. Martin's suggestion and our own (2 Kings iii. 15) constructive sense of what "the hand of the Lord" meant—is easily understood. The minstrel opened the grosser spheres of *aura* encompassing the human actors in that scene, thus making a conducting channel for purer spirits to approach. [Query, would not certain vibrations of air cause constituent particles to *polarise* afresh, and thus *disperse* obstructions to light?] It is conceivable, also, that the object of the daily blast of seven trumpets during the week which preceded the sudden fall of the walls of Jericho was to effect, by some quite *supersensuously natural* result, disruption of surrounding atmosphere, that gave access to superior unseen forces—its overthrow easy to them.* Be that fact or fancy, I am quite sure that many lovers of music will be ready to accept St. Martin's doctrine; and they can thus account for the strange passion of delight and yearning, unintelligible, which it often awakens: and if Mr. Tindall's letter has given as much pleasure to other readers as it gave me, I think they will pardon me for recording the mental reverberations it aroused.

PALMISTRY AS A FINE ART.

To the new number of the *Universal Review* Mr. W. L. Courtney contributes an informing article upon the theory of palmistry.

BRAIN AND NERVE INFLUENCE UPON THE HAND.

It is one thing to judge of a man's character by his hand; it is another thing (Mr. Courtney says) to foretell, to prophesy, to read the future in the lines of his palm. The chiromantist professes to do both, and to the sceptic he is ready to submit a kind of scientific basis for his craft. To what are the lines due? Is it the mere clenching of the fist which causes them? No, the reason must be found partly in the nerve currents which come down to the hand from the brain, partly to some wonderful corpuscles, called, after their inventor Pacini, *pacinic corpuscles*; of which there are some 250 in the interior of the hand. But how are these nerve-currents, these corpuscles, to bear witness to the future? Every man, however perfect his constitution may be, is born with a morbid tendency, a destructive germ, which is latent in some part of his organism. Now because the secrets of all organs are represented in the brain, which coordinates all parts of the human frame and forms their centre and rallying point, therefore in the nerves coming from the brain are found, hidden in potency, the germs of unavoidable fate. If the brain communicates with the hand by means of its nerve currents, then of course the hand will bear the marks of this continuous nerve-action, and will contain also the outward and visible signs of what the brain holds within its nervous structure. Is there any further room for scepticism? To clinch the matter, M. Desbarrolles, from whose ingenious system we have been quoting, will tell the sceptic a quite conclusive story. Once he was visited by a man who wore a cloak which he refused to take

* Joshua vi.

off. The left hand only was tendered to the operator, who immediately told the patient that he was a military man, and that he had received a wound, not in warfare, which had spoiled his career. It was too true. The man took off his cloak and revealed his right arm in a bandage. The right hand, which he said, had been paralysed by an unintentional discharge from a gun, while he was out shooting, was then inspected, and found to be entirely devoid of all markings whatsoever. Paralysis had severed the connection between the brain and the hand, and the lines due to that intercommunication had consequently disappeared. Therefore M. Desbarrolles' scientific theory is true. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

THE ORIGINS OF PALMISTRY.

If palmistry had no foundation in the natural aptitudes of the mind, if it were all simple chicanery and deceit, it is reasonable to think that it would have disappeared long ago, or, at least, have suffered the same fate as the belief in witches and dæmonic possession. Apparently palmistry, like many kindred arts, rests on such original and fundamental mental laws as the love of analogy, the tendency to symbolism, and the association of ideas. To these it adds certain scraps of astrological lore; and for the rest it is indebted to the vagaries of imagination and the quick intuitive insight into character which many men undoubtedly possess. The astrological part of it is perhaps that on which the chiromantist especially relies. The first finger is the realm of Jupiter, the middle is Saturn, the third is the Sun, the little finger is Mercury. Venus is found in the pad below the thumb; the plain of Mars is just below the mount of Mercury; the Moon holds sway beneath the kingdom of Mars. Moreover, there is also a calculation of nativities, the "ascendant" in the horoscope being the reckoning of that part of the heavens which is rising in the east at the moment of birth. But observe what successive links of thought must be traversed in the natural history of this superstition. First, astronomers had the fancy to distribute the names of certain deities among the planets. This, of course, was a perfectly arbitrary piece of nomenclature. Then the planets were held to have acquired the character of these mythical gods, so that the arbitrarily named Mars, Jupiter, and Venus were connected respectively with war, power, and love. Then the planets were supposed to influence men's lives, and their influence was in accordance with the attributes which had been thus unreasonably assigned to them. Finally, the fingers of the hand were with equal arbitrariness selected as the receptacles of planetary influence. Every link in the chain is purely arbitrary. A star on the hand, meaning success, is an obvious piece of symbolism; so, too, is the idea of crosses, and of all lines which seem to thwart and oppose themselves to the direct line of life. We might go in detail through a series of the prophetic marks in this way, guiding ourselves by obvious analogies. If, for instance, a square be found on the mount of Venus, it means that the man will be enclosed within the four walls of a prison; if the patient be a woman, it signifies that she will go into a convent. It does not require much imagination to find in triangles on the hand a sign of scientific ability; nor yet in chains traced on the lines *enchainements du bonheur*. So again barred lines, called *grilles*, of course mean obstacles of all kinds; and the lines called "capillary" were a series of small parallel lines are found instead of a single one, mean that the energies are spent in several channels instead of pouring themselves along a single stream. There are naturally a great number of other marks which are purely arbitrary; but no more arbitrary than the signs which we find in other forms of divination.

THE DANGERS OF PALMISTRY.

After all, it may be urged, palmistry is only a pastime. Because some men are scientific, are there to be no more cakes and ale? Is the world to be debarred from its tea-table and its hand-reading because astrology is exploded? By no means, if it can be proved that pastime it is and pastime it remains. Yet there is such a thing as a prophecy bringing its own fulfilment. Not all men are strong-minded. Women are notoriously superstitious. And if a young girl be told on the eve of her marriage that there is in her hand the signs of unhappy wedlock, or if a wife be told that she has in her line of life the fatal "island," which is held to signify a not wholly innocent *liaison*, does the prophet incur no responsibility? To some minds the suggestion is itself a poison, which works its own baneful issue.

"We not only believe in the ministry of angels, but believe that its existence and advantages are demonstrable to all who candidly seek and willingly choose the responsibilities that seeking incurs. And we hail it as the hope of humanity, and the dawn of its brightest day."—REV. JESSE B. FERGUSON.

AN INCIDENT IN THE EARLY DAYS OF MY INQUIRIES INTO SPIRITUALISM.

BY DR. G. VON LANGSDORFF.

(Translated from *Neue Spiritualistische Blätter* by "V.")

There is no Spiritualism without proofs. Proofs are not indeed the substance of Spiritualistic philosophy, but they are absolutely necessary to support the theory of intercourse with another world. There are persons, however, who do nothing but seek after test-mediums, and thus obtain little more than amusement.

Spiritualism is not given us for our amusement, but rather to afford us living and truthful information respecting our present and future state, and thereby to elevate our moral condition. So, at least, have I understood the subject, since I obtained my first proof of spirit teaching, thirty years ago, and I have, therefore, always paid the greatest attention to the ethical side of modern Spiritualism.

Now what is to be understood by a proof?

A proof must be perfectly free from any supposition of imposture and must be independent of any possible mistake. Such proofs, without my seeking them, frequently presented themselves to me during the earlier period of my investigations, as well as later on.

It was in the spring of 1861 that I undertook the medical treatment of a young girl of sixteen named Bertha Stahl, who had come over to America from Hamburg and who proved to be a somnambulist.* It was certainly no accident that placed under my care such a patient, at the very time that my attention was directed to the subject of spirit manifestations. To secure myself, however, from the possibility of any deception, I proposed to the mother of the sick girl, who was a poor widow, to let me have her daughter in my own house, as I could then better observe the malady and could relieve the convulsive attacks more speedily.

My proposal was accepted, and as I was acquainted with magnetism, I soon recognised the fact that my patient was a modern medium. When it happened that the girl, after passing into the magnetic state, no longer remained under my control, but entered into an independent state, or rather passed under the control of spirits of deceased persons, whom alone she could see, it happened that one evening she said she saw a little old lady—whom a closer description identified exactly with an aunt of mine, then living in Baden-Baden. In order to ascertain if this aunt was really dead, I wrote off immediately to my parents, who lived in the same house with her. Our letters crossed in mid-ocean, for when, a fortnight later, I received a letter containing the news of her death, my parents had already heard from me that my aunt had informed me herself of the day and hour of her death through a somnambulist, the facts exactly coinciding.

In a very short time my aunt's spirit learnt to control the somnambulist and came every evening after supper and spoke to us through her medium. It not only confirmed everything which we heard of my aunt from home, but once when my wife, addressing the spirit, said 'Dear aunt, have you no present for me, that I could wear as a remembrance of you?' the answer was given: 'In my secretary is a case, containing a gold watch. This has not yet been found; write about it and the watch shall be yours.' Now, is it not remarkable that after receiving an account of this by letter, my mother instituted a careful examination of the secretary and there found the watch in a case as described?

Let us notice the following facts: the medium was perfectly ignorant that we had such a relative in Germany; there was in the house no picture of her, or of anyone else corresponding to the description given by the medium, further, the correctly given day and hour of my aunt's death was only known to those living in Baden, thousands of miles away, and the family circumstances mentioned all strictly agreed with the truth, even to the fact of the gold watch in a case concealed in her secretary, of the existence of which even my mother was ignorant, though she saw my aunt daily.

What psychical inquirer can explain these facts by the theory of self-suggestion, masked somnambulism, ventriloquism, or toe-rapping?

* After the return of D. v. Langsdorff to Germany, I took the case under my care and can testify to the truth of the above account. [D. B. CYRIAX, Ed. *Neue Spiritualistische Blätter*.]

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Light :

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

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GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT.

DRAWING MEDIUMSHIP.

The automatic drawing which we reproduce in our present issue is one of a great number which were executed through the hand of Mrs. W. M. Wilkinson. From a little volume compiled by her husband, *Spirit Drawings: A Personal Narrative*, we extract so much of the deeply interesting record as bears on these drawings, with due regard to the space at our disposal, commending the whole book to the careful perusal of all whom we may be fortunate enough to interest.

Mr. Wilkinson calls the second chapter of his book

A PERSONAL NARRATIVE.

"In August, 1856, a heavy and sudden affliction came upon us, in the removal of a dear boy—our second son—into the spiritual world. He had passed about eleven years in this world of ours, and was taken from us in the midst of the rudest health, to commence his spirit life under the loving care of his Heavenly Father.

"Some weeks afterwards his brother, then about twelve years old, went on a short visit to Reading, and whilst there, amused himself, as boys of his age are used to do. One morning he had a piece of paper before him, and a pencil in his hand, with which he was about to draw some child's picture, when gradually he found his hand filling with some feeling before unknown to him, and then it began to move involuntarily upon the paper, and to form letters, words, and sentences. The feeling he described as of a pleasing kind, entirely new to him, and as if some power was within him, apart from his own mind and making use of his hand. The handwriting was different from his own, and the subject-matter of the writing was unknown to him till he read it with curiosity, as it was being written.

"On frequent occasions, whilst on this visit, his hand was similarly moved in writing; and afterwards he went to stay with some other friends in Buckinghamshire, with whom he did not make a trial of this new power; but on his return home after some weeks' absence, we, for about two months, watched with deep emotion the movement of his hand in writing; for sometimes, when he wished to write, his hand moved in drawing small flowers, such as exist not here; and sometimes, when he expected to draw a flower, the hand moved into writing. The movement was, in general, most rapid, and unlike his own mode of writing or drawing; and he had no idea of what was being produced, until it was in process of being done. Often, in the middle of writing a sentence, a flower or diagram would be drawn and then suddenly the hand would go off in writing again.

"I have not mentioned the nature, or subject-matter of the words thus written; nor is it in this place necessary to do so, further than this, that they purported to be chiefly communications from his brother, our dear departed child, and were all of a religious character, speaking of his own happy state, and of the means by which similar happiness is alone to be attained by those who remained here to fight out their longer battle of life.

"The first manifesting of this power, or faculty, whatever it may be, was not sought by us, nor by our son; and it would not, I believe in my heart, have been either wise or good to have rejected it without trial, as a fact which should have no abiding place in its chosen home. There is the old fable which tells us to be cautious of turning strangers out of our house, lest we should be rejecting angels unawares; and there are many such strangers, I trow, now wandering about the world, asking for admittance into our hearts and best affections. They 'stand at the door and knock'; perhaps some day, by the Lord's mercy, we may let them in.

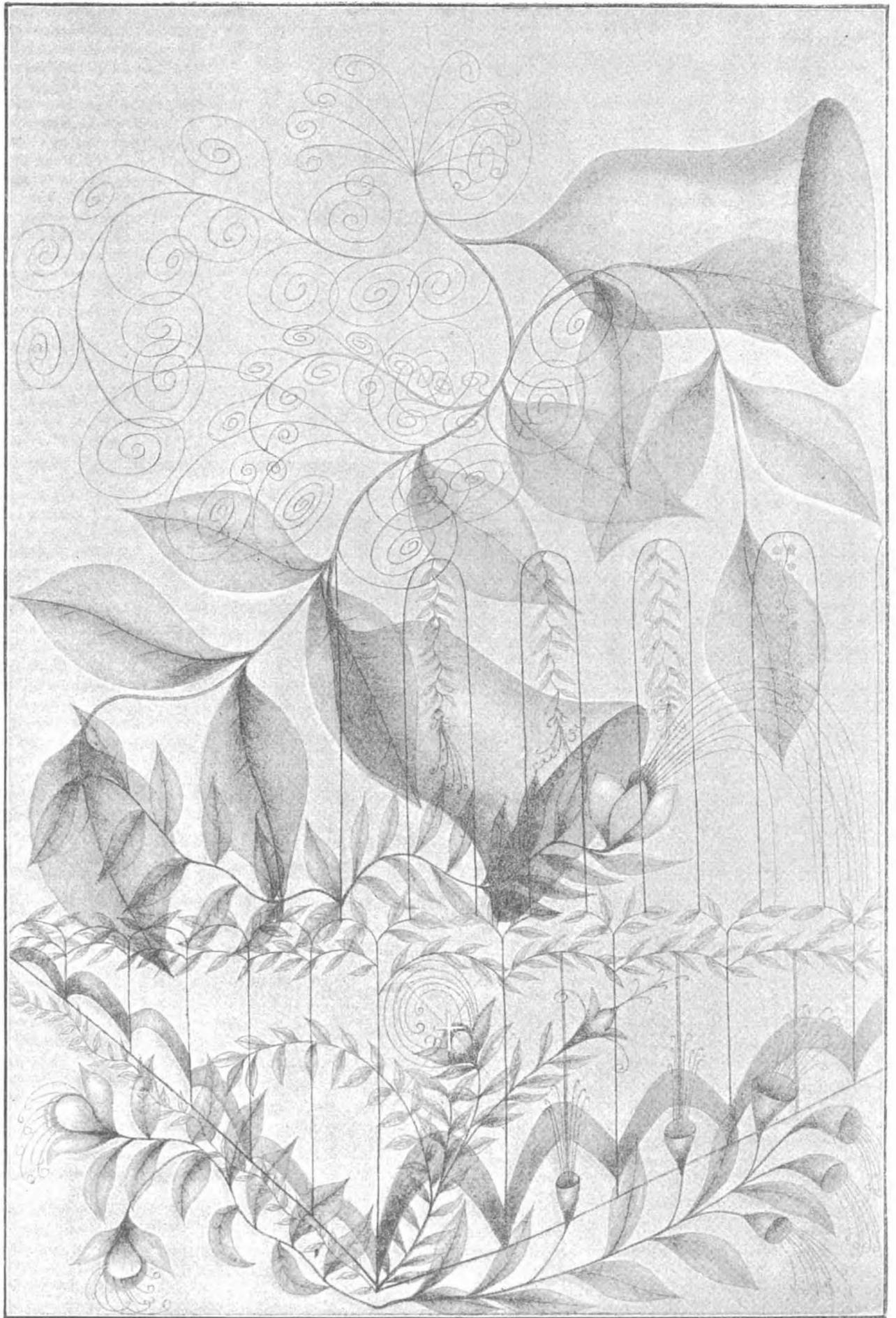
"Well, then, we made a home for this welcome stranger, and, with fond affection, my wife tried for many weeks, with pencil in hand, if any movement could be made through her, in writing; but no 'imagination' nor effort of the mind produced a movement nor made her fancy that her hand moved when it did not. For weeks it was resolutely fixed; but at last, on the 8th of January, 1857, a slow and tremulous motion of the pencil commenced, and ended in the initial letters of our dear boy's name—'E. T. W.'—not in her natural handwriting, nor at all resembling it. Then some straight lines were made, and the day's work was done. The next day a somewhat similar movement of the hand was made, and on the day following a small and simple, but, to us, unknown, flower was drawn, instead of the writing she expected; and the following day another flower, very small, but pleasing; then, on half a sheet of letter-paper, a large flower was drawn with tendrils and other parts of it, to form which the hand extended beyond the paper on to the table, and made it necessary to paste an additional sheet of paper at the side, and afterwards two additional sheets were found necessary to allow room for the completion of the flower. This was the first flower form which was finished. It belongs to no known order, though it is of a beautiful and complex shape, and looks as if it might well have existence in nature, and be no small addition to the floral world.

"There was no 'imagination' nor fancy in the production of it; for, had there been, the original idea of the mind would have been followed by adapting the size of the paper in the first instance to the size of the flower that was to be drawn upon it. The mind was, during the whole process of drawing, in an entirely inactive state; and the only condition in which the movement would continue was by keeping the imagination, and all ideas on the subject of the picture, dormant.

"The influence, whatever it may be, which moved the hand, and produced these new forms in this new way, was always afterwards, for several years, obtainable, and obtained, under the only condition of quiescence of the mind, and it produced no noticeable change, either in the mind or in the body, or any state of excitement, but rather a calm and pleasing feeling, which lasted all the time the hand was being moved, and for long afterwards.

"The movement, particularly in drawing the first outlines, both of that and subsequent pictures, was by long and rapid sweeps upon the paper, to form the stems and other parts of the flowers, and these were nearly always correct in the first instance, requiring no alteration of use of the indiarubber. Decided lines, beautiful forms, and combinations never before thought of were thus produced in rapid succession.

"A large series of these drawings has been produced by devoting about an hour a day to the use and practice of this wonderful faculty. Several of these drawings are of large size—two feet by eighteen inches—but the majority about eighteen inches by twelve. It would be impossible, without seeing them, to form an idea of their nature and variety, so entirely new are they, and their newness is shown in so many striking points. I may, however, give a few instances, as well as I am able without the use of engravings, to show the wonderful fact, that although no idea existed in the mind of the drawer, as to the tendency or effect of the lines of the pencil, in producing the original sketch, yet intelligence of the deepest and most exact kind, embracing in its calculations all the effects which could only appear when the last shading of the picture should be put in, is shown in nearly every drawing.



"FAC-SIMILE OF A SPIRIT-DRAWING."

(Given by Independent Spirit-Power operating through the hand of Mrs. W. M. Wilkinson).

"In some of them, we were quite unable to see how apparent solecisms in the early sketch of the picture could be reconciled; for instance, how a small flower, apparently finished and complete, could be reconciled with a thick stem, and larger leaves and buds, out of all proportion with it. But the only difficulty was with us; though we could not see, nor even wildly guess, how the flower could be enlarged, yet the next day, when the pencil was applied, it moved, at once, to enlarge it rapidly, in so simple and beautiful a way that now the only wonder to us and to others is, how we should not have seen it as the only possible way.; although, in doing this, it entirely changed the nature and bearing of the first smaller flower, by making it the central portion only of one of a different order and significance.

"The flower I have just spoken of was on a half-sheet of common cartridge paper, and having thus commenced with that size, both my wife and I determined that it would be better to keep it for the sake of uniformity, as we intended to have the picture framed. The only change she made in preparing for the next sketch was to obtain some drawing paper, which happened to be of a much larger size than the cartridge-paper, and I measured and carefully marked on it with a ruler and pencil, a strong line of the same size as the former picture, beyond which line she was not to go. Her hand was moved immediately in sketching another flower, and after a few moments travelled not only beyond the lines I had drawn, but covering the whole paper, and even going beyond the paper itself on to the table-cloth and coming back to the paper on the opposite side, and in this way representing a flower which, on two of its sides, was too large for the paper.

"Imagination, or the forming of an image in the mind, by no means can account for such a fact as this, which in its very nature is opposed to what are known as the phenomena of the imaginative faculty.

"Another effect, astonishing to us, as to most who have seen it, was the production of a large circle, described with great accuracy by the hand, without the aid of compasses, and which was next filled up with a series of geometrical figures, each of the four divisions of the circle being correlative with its opposite. It was then a complicated and wonderful circle of geometrical figures and appeared complete in itself; for, whatever it might mean, least of all was it thought that it was to form part of a flower—when, lo! the hand was again moved, and, by a series of rapid movements, described round it the petals of a flower, and next added the stem and a series of leaves. Strange! that a lady, for the first time in her life, should, unknowingly, draw a complicated geometrical series, and then make it the centre of a flower,—a combination surely as novel as the influence by which it was produced.

"Another of these earlier pictures was commenced by quite a new movement of the pencil, which was rapidly carried in a large circle round the paper, and at each of two sides of the circle making another smaller circle, but all by one movement, and in a continuous line. By these means, after many hundred evolutions, a shading and narrowing of each of the circles was produced, till they were gradually brought to centres. The whole appeared to have no form or meaning, and for a day or two none of those who saw it, could see any means by which it could be proceeded with, so as to give it any meaning or consistence. When compelled to this state of ignorant helplessness, the hand was moved in forming, in the centre of the large circle, an eye of beautiful significance, round which the other parts appear as an orbit; and all is then seen as a setting for the eye.

"A curious circumstance in connection with this drawing was this. My son left home in the morning partaking of the family wondering, as to how the centre would be filled up; and when he returned in the evening, he told his mother that he knew what had been placed in the centre. His hand had written on his slate, an answer to a mental question, 'It is an Eye.'

"Several other pictures of flowers, principally of pendent bell-forms, were, like all the others, at first completely sketched before the shading was commenced. Now, it will be seen that the whole idea of the picture is necessarily contained in these first lines of the sketching, although the meaning and necessity for each line is, of course, not apparent till it is worked out, and the whole is shaded and finished. Some of these bell-pictures show a curious and exact knowledge of the law of the elasticity of the spring, as acted upon by the weight of the pendent bell; and in one picture this appears with the additional disturbance of one bell, which is in the act of forcibly pushing down another, so as to throw it out of the line it would otherwise have formed;

and yet, in making the sketch, she had no idea of its meaning, nor how it was to be subsequently carried out in the shading.

"These circumstances are mentioned to prove that some intelligent agent or influence was engaged in the work, entirely apart and distinct from the ordinary operations of the mind of the person engaged in producing the drawing; for not only was drawing a new science to her, but she was not acquainted with botany, nor with the laws of art, with which however, in the opinion of artists who have seen them, the pictures are replete. New ideas as to form, and new and striking effects of transparency, not before known in pencil-drawing, are produced; and in several of the pictures, according to the testimony of competent professional judges, there is a beauty and a harmony of arrangements, which bespeak art, and a knowledge of the principles of composition.

"Another drawing, which was expected, like the others, to result in a flower, proved, when further advanced, to represent a house with fountains before it, and over the door a cross with rays proceeding from it. The same beautiful symbol is at the top of the house, and under the cross the words, also written by the same influence, 'Lord open to us.' At one side of this house, something resembling a ladder, or stage of progression, is drawn; and, still acting under the same influence, the hand has, from time to time, at intervals of about a fortnight, made on each of the upward bars of the ladder the form of a small cross.

"It was also told by this influence, that the house represented the state of our dear son in the spiritual world, and that the ladder related to his progress in Divine knowledge and love; and that when the topmost stage of it was reached, it would be a sign to us that he had entered upon a higher state, which would be represented by his inhabiting a more beautiful house; one of the 'many mansions' of the progressing soul. Another symbol, shown on one side of this drawing, is a lamp, which is said to serve as an external conscience, and in which, according to its want of brightness, he sees and is reminded of all the unregenerate portions of his life; thus that this lamp, by its increasing brightness, shows his regeneration and progression, as the steps in the ladder also show the same, but in another form.

"Immediately, on the last cross being thus put on the topmost stage, the next drawing was that of another house, and which, from its symbols, flowers, trees, and fountains, shows, evidently, a higher and holier state—shows that the soul has progressed in Divine love, and was fitted to take its place amongst creations and correspondences of higher import; and thus, that its loves, and consequently its surroundings, should be portrayed together.

"The power of involuntary writing had, by this time, shown itself in my hand.

"I had, for many weeks, at intervals, taken pencil in hand, and held it for several minutes at a time, with no result, excepting the firmest conviction that it was of no use to try again, for it was impossible for my hand to move; and my conviction was borne out by repeated failures. It never moved a jot, and though I gave not up the trial, I held the pencil without hope. At last, one evening at my house, in the presence of several gentlemen, I again held it, and after waiting less than five minutes, it began to move, at first slowly, but presently with increasing speed, till, in less than a quarter of an hour, it moved with such velocity as I had never seen in a hand and arm before or since. It literally ran away in spiral forms; and I can compare it to nothing else than the fly wheel of an engine when it has 'run away.' This lasted until a gentleman present touched my arm, when suddenly it fell, like an infant's as it goes to sleep, and the pencil dropped out of my hand. I had, however, acquired the power, and afterwards, the same evening, my hand gently drew some geometrical and some flower forms. The consequences of the violent motion of the muscles of the arm were so apparent that I could not, for several days, lift it without pain.

"The producing of drawings soon ceased in my case, and in a day or two, my hand, after going through a series of up-and-down strokes, moved into writing, and words and sentences were written, which I can only say were not only entirely involuntary on my part, but I did not know in many instances how a word, already begun, would finish; and several times 'what I would, that I could not' write. No stronger proof could possibly be acquired for myself, than that some intelligence, other than mine, as it had ever before been exercised, was at work in producing words which passed not through the ordinary channels of the brain.

"In this way, through my hand, it was told us that I should soon be able to write some explanation of the drawings of my

wife, she not being able to write, but only to draw; and of many of her pictures I have thus written what are called descriptions of them; but unless the two are seen and read together, side by side, it will be impossible to convey much idea to the reader's mind of how much or how little they fit together.

"It will, perhaps, relieve many good persons who have read thus far, to assure them that never has anything proceeded from these drawings, nor from their descriptions, but what should be to us an incentive to a better and a holier life; and though I do not expect—nor, indeed, do I wish—that all should agree with us in the way in which we regard these phenomena, I am most anxious they should believe, that for us, at least, they have not been bad, and that there are, at all events, some who may see light, and have their steps guided by such writings and drawings from another state; as that there are some who can live on what is poison to others, and that what is darkness to some is light to others. I can claim nothing of the writing, which may be thought good, as my own; but I may take only, as my share in their performance, all their imperfections and shortcomings.

"This second house of our dear boy is said to be 'buildded not with hands,' but with his Heavenly Father's love. I cannot help it if many good people should start at the idea of spiritual beings living in what appear as houses. All I can do, in truth, is to put forward such things as have been given to us. Their bearing on the great problem of the future life is under no law of mine, nor of any man. Man does not make laws, but serves them, or ought to do so, as he can discover them. For me, I see no incongruity in these spirit-habitations, nor why a spirit should not need and have its spiritual house, as much as when in the body it needed a natural one. And are we not told that 'in my Father's Kingdom are many mansions,' and of 'houses not made with hands'; also of 'garments that wax not old'? We are told, too, of spirit-beings 'clothed in shining raiment,' and of armies that are 'clothed in fine linen, white and clean.'

"And Milton beautifully says—

"What if earth
Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein,
Each to the other like, more than on earth is thought."

"Another drawing is of a church surrounded with flower forms. On the pinnacle is the cross, with rays of light proceeding from it. On the door are the words in white letters, 'Oh, Lord, open thou our hearts to behold Thy wondrous works,' and underneath is written, 'Matthew iv. 6, 7.'

"This is the writing which was given to this drawing:—

"THE TEMPLE OF TRUTH.

"This is a true temple of the Lord, for He is truth, and all His works are true and holy. This is the temple of the soul, when it loves Him in His truths, and calls upon His holy name. Oh, Lord, open Thou our hearts to behold Thy wondrous works. How shall our sight behold His wondrous works?—how shall the temple of truth be buildded in us, so that each stone shall praise Him, and our souls may live?

"The Lord Himself is the temple, and He is the pinnacle, and, from thence, is ever guiding and protecting us from evil. It is from here that He is ever saying to the sinful false man, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God,' and from the battlements He stands with us fighting for the temple of His truth. So giveth He His angels charge concerning us, and under His loving light they bear us up till the temple is buildded up within us. The people which sat in darkness now see great light, and their hearts are open to behold Thy wondrous works. The glorious temple of a soul which is filled with Thy love, and of which each stone is Thy eternal truth.'

"Another drawing is of a plant, from the stem of which grow two different sorts of flowers and leaves—a phenomenon, at the time, new to us, but, at all events as to the leaves, by no means new in nature, as we have since learned. Some varieties of the acacia have this property, and there are probably many other examples of it, for there is no known instance of a solitary example of eternal laws. In the Revelation we are told of the 'tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.'

"After the drawing of the two flowers, nearly all those following it have shown even a greater variety of different flowers and leaves proceeding from the same stem.

"One in particular contains a beautiful emblem. It is a laminated fruit, on which, when it was finished, our dear boy's initial letters were written, 'E.T.W.,' with this peculiarity, that in each of the letters a cross was made.

"This fruit, we were told, represents his inner state; it is the fruition of his life, and corresponds to what we understand by the conscience, or the book of life, in which is registered the past of man. Each of these laminae, or leaves, lifts up and

shows, as the opening of the conscience, his state of love, his truth, and the qualities of his inmost life.

"Dear friends, is not each of us now engaged in forming such a fruit? How will it taste when we have to feed upon it? And what will be found under its folds when we lift them up?

"The 'resuscitation of thoughts which, in some shape or other, have previously occupied the mind,' and which all of us have sometimes so strangely felt, is, perhaps, but the natural prelude to what will be our experience when we have entered upon the life of spirit, the inalienable and irrepressible recollection of the deeds and feelings played forth in the flesh. This is shown in the 'lamp,' before described, and again the same idea is reproduced in the shape of this laminated fruit. Coleridge, on the same subject, suggests that 'the books which are opened at the last day are men's own perfect memories of what they have thought and done during life.' In relation to this quickening of the memory at death, it is known that persons nearly drowned have seen, in one moment, the whole of their past life pass before them in mental panorama.

"Soon after the drawings of the flowers above described, a new development showed itself in the nature of the drawings. The flower forms ceased, after a time, and churches, temples, and buildings were then drawn, and after being sketched, my wife was impressed to commence to paint them, and which she did, even at first with some success, being told in writing what colours to use, and feeling the brush sensibly moved through her hand. It would be at once seen that, for the first time of holding a paint-brush, the result is a wonderful proof of the existence of some power not ordinarily seen amongst beginners.

"In all the drawings from the commencement to this time, covering a period of seven years, there is markedly a progression and development, so that the whole of them are wanted to tell the story they would convey to us.

"After a short interval the flower forms recommenced, and have since been mingled with landscapes, and strange symbolic drawings, and they have always since that time been painted. Constantly, in painting, the hand has been moved to the proper colour, and, in laying it on, the brush has been gently lifted from, or pressed upon the paper, so as to make the most delicate shading, without any assistance from the will, which indeed must be kept quite quiescent, in order to preserve the power. These drawings now form, together, a long series, and certainly a most remarkable one, for the novelty and evident symbolism which are their most striking characteristics. Of the great number of persons who have seen them during their progress, within the last seven years, there have been very few who have not expressed surprise and pleasure at the entire newness of the forms, and the wonderful play of fancy which they evince. They are distinct from other drawings of an ordinary kind, and form a class of themselves. Many friends who have, during that time, been themselves the possessors of this faculty, greater or less in degree, have also produced series of drawings, different, indeed, in many points, but all partaking of the undefinable spirit or symbolic character, and which enables one, after a little experience, to recognise them at once as coming from the same source. Such there are now, many of both, in England, and in Ireland, America, France, Germany, and Australia, and still, in whatever part of the world they appear, they have all the same unmistakable characteristics.

"What was, at first, to us so striking and, apparently, so unique a phenomenon, has, during our seven years apprenticeship as students, been found to be not only not uncommon at this day, but we have found traces of it in other ages, long passed by, as well as in those nearer our time. Some instances of these will be shortly alluded to in a subsequent page.

"Having heard that as well the hands might be moved in playing music as in drawing, one evening my wife sat down to the instrument, and, placing her hands upon the keys, they immediately moved in improvising music—a power before unknown to her, as to most of us. The only condition again was to let the hands go free in faith, just as in the drawing and the writing, without the influence of the fear that destroys all power—the fear to fail. 'Onward and upward' must the spirit fly, or 'downward and backward' it will fall.

"Ever since that evening the power comes at will, and has not had, like the drawings, any intervals of cessation, and though I know little of music, I am told that what is given is good, and that it is a pity that it should be lost; and so it would be, if it were not always there at will, in its ever melodious strains, fresh from the springs of harmony in never-

ceasing flow ; no fatigue however long she plays, for there is no effort of the mind, and its beauty is for her as well as others, its newness.

"One day whilst she was thus playing and I was sitting listening to the music, she asked if she was spiritually guided by our dear boy. I got a piece of paper, and my hand moved in the words which follow. I could not omit telling of these phenomena without secreting what is not mine. If they are strange, the strangeness is not mine, but must be accounted for, as all strange or new facts—by calm inquiry, or, better still, by heartfelt love and childlike reception.

"I am giving mamma the music she is playing. It is a hymn of praise to God for His mercy and His enduring, never ceasing love and care. Joy comes from Him and from His praise, and shows itself in sweetest music.

"All His works are musical in their Divinest harmony and join in the universal concert which is the condition of their creation and the expression of their love, returning to its circle from whence it came.

"I love to hear this music—more grand, more sweet, and more penetrating as I learn more to know His works, and to see the infinite qualities they contain, but all in rhythm and Divine perfection.

"Why is not all musical on earth ? It is that man is discord, and throws his sweetest works out of their created harmonies ? Love and peace shall put them all in tune, and make Him all in all, and that is music. "E.T.W."

"It has been frequently also written in this way, that our dear boy is instructed in Divine truths by his guardian angel, and that he, in his turn, was employed in instructing, or to himself appeared to instruct, other little ones not so far advanced as himself—that this was indeed his use for his own progression ; for he was himself obliged, though willingly, to learn of his guardian angel, in order that he might teach, and thus that his teaching was in like manner guided for the instruction of his pupils. Here, he was always fond of flowers ; and all the series of flowers and fruits which have been drawn, it was told us, were from his perceptions of flower-forms about him in his new and happy home.

"I asked mentally if his guardian angel was still with him. At once my hand wrote :—

"Yes, I am always with him ; and he is improving much in knowledge and in happiness. He is as happy as it is possible for him to be, and he loves the Holy Word, and spends his thoughts upon it, and on learning and comparing its Divine correspondences. He is most fond of these in flowers, and says it is Divine botany, and that all flowers now arrange themselves for him according to their Heavenly qualities, He teaches this to his dear little pupils, and learns himself through his teaching ; and we are all so happy, but in different modes. His little ones are happy in their opening minds, and that they are taught with so much care and love. He is happy in their teaching, and to see the progress of their knowledge of Heavenly things—that he is allowed to influence them for good, through the Lord, and that he himself learns so much whilst he is teaching them. And I am happy in my use to them, as to any of our Father's children, as the only and the highest use I can perform. It is in this way that the Lord suffers little children to come to Him, and that He entreats they may not be forbidden. They are not forbidden here ; but on earth they want a Father's care, and often find it not. Prepare your children to be the loved ones of their Heavenly Father, that they may come without stain or spot. I love you all and all mankind."

"I have now said enough to give some idea of the tendency of what has been drawn, and of what has been written, and what means the music that is played. There is much more that might be told, but perhaps there is already more than will be believed or received in a kindly heart. I will close by stating that the same power, both of drawing and of writing, was shown some months afterwards in two others of our children, one of nine, and the other of seven years old, and that they have both drawn curious and beautiful forms, suited to their years, of a holy symbolic kind. It had not the least apparent physical or psychical effect upon them. After lasting for a year or two it gradually ceased.

"What is very remarkable in this power, has been its intermittence. For two or three years it was continuous, and then suddenly, and without any apparent reason, it entirely ceased for perhaps a month or two. During this interval, notwithstanding frequent trials and strong expectation, the hand refused to move, and nothing could be done. Then it as suddenly was renewed, and went off at once in full strength as before. The hand would then trace out the drawing rapidly and boldly without a mistake or misgiving, and so on for several months, or perhaps a year, when it again ceased. On two or three occasions it has in this way ceased for several months at a time. Once, after being suspended for nine months, my wife said that she did not think she should ever be able again to do any drawings. The very next

morning, on putting her hand to the paper, it moved in the usual vigorous way, and a beautiful drawing was produced.

"I have not for several years felt inclined to use any power of writing.

"These intervals of the absence of the faculty have been so striking, as clearly to demonstrate the existence of a power entirely out of herself, and they show the insufficiency of the common idea that the drawings are the result of imagination. In fact, such a notion could not be entertained by any one acquainted with the facts, which clearly point to some interior influx, which, under certain conditions unknown to us, has the power of manifesting itself in this external way.

"To show that the power or faculty is not confined to a particular family, to a particular belief, or to a higher or lower state of the mind, but that, like all laws, it is general in its application, it is useful to tell that many persons we know have here developed this faculty, both of drawing and writing—their hands have been moved, generally at first in spiral forms ; and of the first seventeen who sat down with a pencil, the hands of fifteen were moved in less than five minutes. These consisted of old, and young, and middle-aged ; of male and female, married and unmarried, of physicians, barristers, students, Englishmen, and foreigners—a mixture of classes and conditions quite sufficient to give an average of those who can be so quickly acted upon. But I think it more probable that the faculty of mediumship, in some form or other, is universal.

"Several have in a few minutes become able to improvise in music ; others I know who write involuntarily in verse, and some who have the power of speaking by impression, in the same way as others write, and with an enlightenment not less wonderful than absorbing for its beauty."

SPIRIT EVOCATION IN NEW ZEALAND.

The following story is taken from a book entitled *Old New Zealand, a Tale of the Good Old Times, and a History of the War in the North against the Chief Heke, in the year 1845.** Told by an old chief of the Ngapuhi Tribe.

It gives a good account of the raising of the spirit of a person recently dead, by a native priest, amongst savage tribes. "These priests or *tohunga* would, and do to this hour, undertake to call up the spirit of any dead person, if paid for the same. I have seen many of these exhibitions, but one instance will suffice as an example. A young chief who had been very popular and greatly respected in his tribe had been killed in battle, and, at the request of several of his nearest friends, the *tohunga* had promised on a certain night to call up his spirit to speak to them, and answer certain questions they wished to put. The priest was to come to the village of the relations, and the interview was to take place in a large house common to all the population. This young man had been a great friend of mine ; and so, the day before the event, I was sent to by his relations, and told that an opportunity offered of conversing with my friend once more. I was not much inclined to bear a part in such outrageous mummery, but curiosity caused me to go. Now it is necessary to remark that this young chief was a man in advance of his times and people in many respects. He was the first of his tribe who could read and write ; and, amongst other unusual things for a native to do, he kept a register of births and deaths, and a journal of any remarkable events which happened in the tribe. Now this book was lost. No one could find it, although his friends had searched unceasingly for it, as it contained many matters of interest, and also they wished to preserve it for his sake. I also wished to get it, and had often inquired if it had been found, but had always been answered in the negative. The appointed time came, and at night we all met the priest in the large house I have mentioned. Fires were lit, which gave an uncertain flickering light. The priest retired to the darkest corner. All was expectation, and the silence was only broken by the sobbing of the sister and other female relations of the dead man. They seemed to be, and indeed were, in an agony of excitement, agitation, and grief. This state of things continued for a long time, and I began to feel in a way surprising to myself, as if there was something real in the matter. The heartbreaking sobs of the women, and the grave and solemn silence of the men, convinced me that, to them at least, this was a serious matter. I saw the brother of the dead man now and then wiping the tears in silence from his eyes. I

* The book from which this story was taken was published by Bentley in 1876.

wished I had not come ; that I felt that any unintentional symptom of incredulity on my part would shock and hurt the feelings of my friends extremely ; and yet, whilst feeling thus, I felt myself more and more near to believing in the deception about to be practised. The real grief, and also the general undoubting faith, in all around me, had this effect, We were all seated on the rush-strewn floor—about thirty persons. The door was shut ; the fire had burnt down, leaving nothing but a glowing charcoal. The room was oppressively hot. The light was little better than darkness, and the part of the room in which the *tohunga* sat was now in perfect darkness. Suddenly, without the slightest warning, a voice came out of the darkness. 'Salutation!—salutation to you all!—salutation!—salutation to you, my tribe!—family, I salute you!—friends, I salute you!—friend, my pakeha* friend, I salute you!' The high-handed, daring impostor was successful ; our feelings were taken by storm. A cry expressive of affection and despair, such as was not good to hear, came from the sister of the dead chief, a fine, stately, and really handsome woman of about five-and-twenty. She was rushing, with both arms extended, into the dark, in the direction from whence the voice came. She was instantly seized round the waist and restrained by her brother by main force, till moaning and fainting she lay still on the ground. At the same instant another female voice was heard from a young girl who was held by the wrist, by two young men, her brothers. 'Is it you?—is it you?—truly is it you?—*ane, ane.*' Here she fell insensible on the rush floor, and with the sister was carried out. The remaining women were all weeping and exclaiming, but were silenced by the men, who were themselves nearly as much excited, though not so clamorous. I, however, did notice two old men, who sat close to me were not in the slightest degree moved in any way, though they did not seem at all incredulous, but quite the contrary. The spirit spoke again. 'Speak to me, the tribe!—speak to me, the family! speak to me, the pakeha.'" The 'pakeha,' however, was not at the moment inclined for conversation. The deep distress of the two women, the evident belief of all around him of the presence of the spirit, the 'darkness visible,' the novelty of the scene, gave rise to a state of feeling not favourable to the conversational powers. Besides, I felt reluctant to give too much apparent credence to an imposture, which at the very same time, by some strange impulse, I felt half ready to give way to. At last the brother spoke. 'How is it with you?—is it well with you in that country?' The answer came—(the voice all through, it is to be remembered, was not the voice of the *tohunga*, but a strange, melancholy sound, like the sound of the wind blowing into a hollow vessel)—'It is well with me ; my place is a good place.' The brother spoke again. 'Have you seen —, and —, and —?' (I forget the names mentioned.) 'Yes, they are all with me.' A woman's voice now from another part of the room anxiously cried out, 'Have you seen my sister?' 'Yes, I have seen her.' 'Tell her my love is great towards her and never will cease.' 'Yes, I will tell.' Here the woman burst into tears, and the pakeha felt a strange swelling of the chest, which he could in no way account for. The spirit spoke again : 'Give my large tame pig to the priest (the pakeha was disenchanted at once), and my double gun.' Here the brother interrupted, 'Your gun is a *manatunga*, I shall keep it.' He is also disenchanted, thought I, but I was mistaken. He believed, but wished to keep the gun his brother had carried so long. An idea now struck me that I could expose the imposture without showing palpable disbelief. 'We cannot find your book,' said I, 'where have you concealed it?' The answer instantly came, 'I concealed it between the *tahuhu* of my house and the thatch, straight over you as you go in at the door.' Here the brother rushed out, all was silence till his return. In five minutes he came back *with the book in his hand*. I was beaten, but made another effort. 'What have you written in that book?' said I. 'A great many things.' 'Tell me some of them.' 'Which of them?' 'Any of them.' 'You are seeking for some information, what do you want to know? I will tell you.' Then suddenly, 'Farewell, O tribe! farewell my family, I go!' 'Here a general and impressive cry of 'farewell,' arose from everyone in the house. 'Farewell,' again cried the spirit, *from deep beneath the ground!* 'Farewell,' again *from high in air.* 'Farewell,' once more came moaning through the distant darkness of the night. 'Farewell!' I was for a moment stunned. The deception was perfect. There was a

* A Pakeha Maori is a white man who lives amongst the Maories.

dead silence—at last. 'A ventriloquist,' said I, 'or—or—perhaps the devil.'

"That night the young girl who was the second to cry out at the meeting, committed suicide. 'She has followed her *rangatira*,' the *tohunga* remarked when he saw her body."

CORRESPONDENCE.

Misconception of Theosophy.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I respect your correspondent "Colenso," but I must say it does seem to me almost scandalous that a writer of his intelligence—who cannot be indulgently credited (as too many must be), with mere inability to understand a theory or doctrine which is in a general way distasteful—should put forward such a statement as the following : "Esoteric Buddhism, as has been before shown in 'LIGHT,' is the most immoral theory of man's future that he has yet dreamed. It asserts that at the instant of death the saint and the murderer both obtain absolute perfection, no matter what their past lives may have been. But these perfected saints are quite unable to influence for good the fellow mortals that they leave behind them. On the contrary they must exert an absolutely fiendish influence, for their unadulterated evil qualities have become detached from them. These, animated, with arms and legs, perform the part of the demons, tempters, and hobgoblins."

I am not now a member of the Theosophical Society (which, by-the-bye, I did *not* leave on the ground stated by Madame Blavatsky in a recently printed correspondence), but being still in much sympathy with it, I cannot disclaim the duty of protesting against peculiarly gross misrepresentations of its views, when coming from a quarter likely to gain attention. "Colenso" would not, I know, designedly misrepresent anyone's opinions, and I can only conclude that he has not really taken any trouble to inform himself in this case. But has he never even heard of the purgatorial state "Kama loca," a state of indefinitely protracted duration, in which the earthly memories and passions, deprived of their objective occasions and stimuli, gradually (and often very slowly) sink into latency, and the spiritual consciousness, with its vital accessions, as gradually disengages itself? Has man never "yet dreamed" of this? If "Colenso" had said, "Why, there is *nothing new* in this ; it is just the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory with another nomenclature," the criticism would have been obvious, and I think sound, though not, therefore, disparaging. "At the instant of death the saint and the murderer both obtain absolute perfection"!! and this in the face, not only of the above doctrine of purgatory, but also of the additional doctrine of "Elementaries," beings in whom the spiritual principle has been so divorced from the personal consciousness that it can carry no remnant of that consciousness into the subjective state of rest, and the individual, as far as we know him, or as he knows himself, remains in "outer darkness." Then, as to influence on the living here. The first presentation of the "Theosophic" doctrine in *Esoteric Buddhism* was admittedly defective, and seemed to leave no opening for the influence and communications contended for by Spiritualists. But the possibility and actual frequency of such communications from spirits, good, bad, and indifferent, in the intermediate state, were almost immediately recognised and conceded, and it is not excusable to ignore this natural development of the doctrine, or, rather, this supplement to an originally defective exposition. It is regrettable, also, to find "Colenso" still dwelling in that early misunderstanding (for which *Esoteric Buddhism* is *not* responsible); that the individual after death is split into two fully-conscious personalities, a biune yet distinct individualisation of the good and evil or the spiritual and material principles, or that the evil of any man remains in active and conscious personality after the purgatorial process of disengagement is complete. That process is essentially a struggle of adverse affinities or tendencies for possession of the consciousness of the man ; when one has finally and entirely prevailed, there is no more consciousness left for the other to distract the individuality. But it is quite conceivable, and even in accord with some experience on earth, that the separation of tendencies, when advanced but still incomplete, should result in a duality or at least alternation of consciousness, by which the very identity of the individual seems compromised. The "shell" is simply the remaining psychic organism of habit, which is not wholly dissipated when consciousness has left it, but may be galvanically revitalised by

rapport with human beings on earth, re-exciting then, perhaps, the potential attachment which remains to it of the true individual consciousness. The condemnation, alike by occultists and by the Church, of the evocation of the departed may refer partly, perhaps, to the danger of drawing back the consciousness to those psychical remains, when the spirit is at rest, but chiefly, before that stage is attained, to the mischief of delaying it by interference with the subjective process by re-stimulation, contrary to order, of the interests and associations of the past life.

C. C. M.

Re-incarnation.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—To my recent letter in "LIGHT" in disproof of the theory of Re-incarnation, I find three replies in your penultimate number, but these replies have not in any degree shaken my convictions, because they do not appear to me to have any logical foundation.

I asserted that there have been on this planet about 50,000,000,000 of human beings, and that although a few individuals have imagined that they remembered their former incarnations, not one has given any proof that his faint sensation of memory was more than imaginary. If, for instance, I had lived in the days of any great historic character, I could, if I remembered my then incarnation, be able to give a minute portrait of the individual and a minute description of his surroundings; but in not one single instance has this occurred, and all that "1st M.B.(Lond.)" ventures to say is the mild expression, "I am by no means so sure" that the memory is not in some cases retained, while Mr. Clayton argues on the other hand, that as spirit can only act on matter through the soul, therefore the absence of memory is a philosophical necessity—with the re-incarnated.

But this is only an assertion by Mr. Clayton, and it is clearly not a correct assertion, because spiritual beings have appeared on this earth, and thousands have, as spirits, manifested perfect memories.

Again, "1st M.B.(Lond.)" says that my remark, that this total absence of all memory in the 50,000,000,000 of incarnated beings who have lived on this earth may be regarded as a proof that they had no previous existence to remember, is as unphilosophical as the Materialist's denial of spirit because he has no evidence of its existence.

Now this is clearly illogical, for there is no matter of fact evidence whatever for Re-incarnation; whereas there are millions of people now living who *know*, from experience and experiment, that spirit is the supreme power, and that spirits individually exist.

This last writer also, like Mr. Clayton, philosophises on the theory of memory, and offers this theory as an explanation why the re-incarnated do not remember; but his theory, as non-proven, cannot be accepted as an explanation or an excuse of the fact, that no substantial memory of supposed former incarnations exists.

I am nearly seventy years of age, and yet remember some of the most minute facts of my life when four years old, although theoretically every atom of my brain has been changed during this period of my life ten times, and if so, I think I am justified in asserting that had I passed through the physical changes of re-births I should have remembered a good deal thereon.

My antagonists are displeased, because I say that heredity accounts for likenesses and unlikenesses in the children of the same family. In the vast majority of cases the children, both physically and mentally, resemble their parents; but sometimes an apparently great exception occurs, and this exception the Re-incarnationist attributes to the influence of a re-incarnating spirit. But if the great majority of children closely, both in mind and body, resemble their parents, and sometimes to the most minute details, how can we escape the conviction that the parents are the authors both of soul and body, by generation, in their children?

With regard to apparent exceptions to the rule of heredity, I have been lately much interested in the typical case of a son, who in some respects, both of mind and body, was singularly *unlike* his parents, and I often used to suggest that this son probably drew his characteristics from some ancestor. For instance, this youth had an eccentric love of encamping in the woods at night; and only recently I got the clue to this in the fact that a distant forefather had married a gipsy—thus giving an interesting example of the persistence of heredity.

I omitted one argument in my first letter, namely this, that we have now 1,500,000,000 of people on this planet. Now originally there were probably only a single pair of human beings, and if so, how is it possible to explain the enormous multiplication of human souls in any way, other than by generation?

I have, on a former occasion, asked this question in your pages, and I have also asked it of individuals, but as yet have received no answer whatever, except that the souls may have come from other planets, but if so, how were they created in those planets?

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

P.S.—Since writing the above I have read in your pages a letter from "C.C.M." on Pre-existence, and I would suggest, that as the spiritual part of man is born of the spirit and as spirit is one and eternal, in this sense the spirit of each individual has pre-existed, and thence may possibly be derived the Eastern idea of *personal* pre-existence and re-incarnations.

A Mysterious Disappearance.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Your correspondent "I.O." seems to have got hold of a modernised version of a very old story, that of "Booty's Ghost," which may be read in Neale's *Unseen World*, in Ennemoser's *History of Magic*, and in various other publications, but which has long since been exploded as a silly and superstitious fable. The narrative is, that in 1687 a Mrs. Booty brought an action to recover £1,000 damages from one Captain Barnaby for having asserted that he had seen her husband driven into the infernal regions by way of the mouth of a volcano at Stromboli. It is stated that the defendant, and some thirty witnesses besides, deposed to having perceived from the ships to which they belonged "Old Booty" run with superhuman swiftness into the flames of the volcano and disappear; it is also stated that it transpired in court that he died at Gravesend about two minutes after he was seen to rush so precipitately into the fiery furnace. As the result of such overwhelming testimony, we are informed, the widow lost her cause. Though the story is indeed amply refuted by its own absurdity, yet facts have been adduced by writers who have examined into it by which its nonsensical character has abundantly been demonstrated. Sir Sherston Baker, in the *United Service Magazine*, about the end of 1882 or the beginning of 1883, dealt with the subject. He showed that no such legal proceedings as those described could have taken place, as an action for slander could only be brought by the person slandered. Fancy a court of law solemnly sitting to decide the question of whether a man had gone to hell or not! Sir Sherston Baker also pointed out that in Ennemoser's account, appended to a copy of a document descriptive of the supposed trial, appeared the signatures of King James II. and four judges, none of whom could possibly have had any connection with such a trial. The fact that the witnesses are also said to have sworn to the very buttons on Booty's coat, although he was going to perdition with such extraordinary celerity, is cited as another proof of the incredibility of the narrative. The document quoted by Ennemoser has, or had, existence, I believe, but it is clearly proved to have been a comparatively modern forgery, and it may have been one of the innumerable frauds by which the priests in all ages have sought to maintain that system of terrorism which has given them such an ascendancy over deluded mankind in the past. The narrative is simply a relic of an old barbarous superstition, according to which the craters of volcanoes were the entrances to the fabulous hell of fire—a theory which, to the shame of the nineteenth century, has even quite recently been propounded by a fanatical writer. It is a reproduction of the myth of thirteen centuries ago, by which it was declared that Theodoric the Ostrogoth was seen at the instant of his death to be hurled into the burning crater of the island of Lipari.

"I.O." says he heard the story he relates—which is somewhat different from that I have given, since it describes the disappearance of a ship captain and two others down the crater of Mount Vesuvius—from the chaplain of a man-of-war, and seems to imply that the rev. gentleman had given him to understand that the circumstances had occurred in the experience of persons living in his own time. But the readers of "LIGHT" will have no difficulty in deciding as to how much credence is to be attached to an account probably derived, if the clergyman ever heard it, from some superstitious or mendacious sailors, and too readily accepted, mayhap, by a man who was, perhaps, one of the

old-fashioned hell-fire parsons, and predisposed to believe anything that squared with his own theories.

I would point out that there is a discrepancy in "I. O.'s" own letter. He says the tale was told to him by the chaplain nineteen years ago, and subsequently declares: "This is simply the story as it was told me by my relative, who was then chaplain, about 1825-39."

I have just a few other remarks to make in conclusion. Though I believe the whole narrative and all others like it to be palpable fictions, still there are two alternative explanations. Since Spiritualism shows that spirits appear on earth in their own distinctive human forms, and can manifest their presence in any part of the universe, it is just possible that an apparition might sometimes be seen entering a fiery volcano. If an enlightened Spiritualist witnessed such an occurrence, however, it would not be to him a proof of the truth of the ridiculous theory that hell is a place of subterranean fire, but only a confirmation of what Spiritualism has conclusively proved, that spirits could in no way suffer from contact with material fire, and therefore could enter it with impunity. But there is another consideration. Were it in modern times to happen, as described by "I. O.," that three men should be observed ascending Vesuvius and then apparently disappearing down its crater, and that subsequently two of them were seen descending without the third, the circumstances would surely be obvious ground for prompt investigation by certain of the civil authorities. If even the preposterous narrative cited by "I. O." were credible, the case might thus be easily explainable in a very materialistic way, though it is much more likely, indeed quite certain, that the tale is a sheer invention, the outcome of the parson's own exaggerative fancy, or monstrous credulity, not to hint at mendacity.

J. G. SPEED.

Phantasms of the Living.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Perhaps you may care to print the following rather curious story, which I suppose may rank among what are called "Phantasms of the Living."

I will begin by copying what I wrote down within an hour of hearing the story.

"To-day, the —th of November, 188—, my friend, Miss E., came to see me. She lives in a very old cottage near my house, but I have never heard that it has the reputation of being haunted. She seemed agitated, and said she wished to tell me something privately, and we went into a room by ourselves. She then said, 'I have seen a ghost!' and went on to relate the following details:—

"Last night, or rather this morning, for the moon, two or three nights past full, was shining in through the window on my right hand, I awoke from a quiet sleep. I lay awake a short time, thinking over various unimportant matters, when suddenly at the foot of my curtainless bed I saw the small, white figure of a woman. Distinct as the figure was I could not see the face, and yet it was not covered; only there was a kind of fringe or band that overhung the upper part. I was not at all frightened, but I could not speak. The figure, on which I kept my eyes, glided round the bed to my right side, as I lay, and passing the bright moonlight window I saw that the white clothing showed white and glistening with the moonlight behind it. It raised its arm and waved what seemed a white handkerchief across my face—not touching it. The gesture was caressing, not menacing. I saw no hand defined. And then it glided away as it came, back to the foot of the bed, where it vanished. I struck a match, lit a candle and searched the room and examined the door, but found not even a suggestion of explanation. The door was fast, as I had made it; the old-fashioned latch could not be handled without some trifling noise, and I had heard no sound whatever. I was anxious to test my own state of mind and nerves, and, returning to bed, I repeated two or three poems to myself which I learned years ago, and, forgetting a line here and there, searched my memory till I found it.

"I satisfied myself in this way that I was in full possession of my mental faculties. I remained awake for awhile, then fell into a calm sleep, and did not again awake till my usual hour this morning."

The rest of the story I will now add.

Next day I saw Miss E. again, and we again spoke of her curious experience. I asked her if the apparition resembled any one she knew or had ever known. She said: No, she was not impressed by its resemblance to any one she was acquainted with. "It was a little, slender figure with a small head, something like my friend Mrs. —." Here she suddenly

broke off, and then exclaimed excitedly. "It was Mrs. — I do believe!" "But," I said, "is Mrs. — lead?" "No, I hope not, I trust not; but I have not heard from her for a long time; I will write to her to-day."

Three or four days after that I was passing Miss E.'s cottage, and saw her standing at the door, and beckoning to me. When I went to her she said in much agitation, and with tears, "It was Mrs. —, and she is dead. Her death is in this newspaper, and I have a letter from her husband." Mrs. — had died in child-birth, or very soon after, and had been dangerously and hopelessly ill for two days and nights before. She was not dead on the —th of November, when Miss E. was visited by the apparition, but mortally ill.

M. B.

SOCIETY WORK.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—Speakers for August: 4th, Mr. H. Darby; 11th, Mrs. Yeeles; 18th, open meeting; 25th, Mr. R. Wortley.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—Experiences with especial reference to magnetic and other forms of healing were given by members at the morning meeting; Mr. Wortley gave an earnest and impressive address at the evening gathering. On Sunday next Mr. A. M. Rodger, at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.; Children's Meeting at 3 p.m.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

NORTHAMPTON.—We had Mr. Robert James Lees, of London, with us last Sunday, at 11 a.m., on our Market-square, and at 2.30 and 6.30 p.m., in the Odd Fellows' Hall. Subject, afternoon, "Prayer"; evening, "Three Steps to Heaven." Both discourses were brilliant, and commanded the attention of a good audience, whose repeated applause showed their approval of a display of language and power possessed by the guides of the speaker. Mr. Lees will be with us next Sunday, when we expect opposition from Mr. Barber.—THOMAS HUTCHINSON, Sec., 58, Craven-street.

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS, 24, HAR-COURT-STREET, MARYLEBONE-ROAD, W.—Attendance is given at the above rooms every Friday, 10.30 a.m. to 9.30 p.m., and Saturday 10.30 to four, Sunday morning eleven to 12.45, the latter for pure, Spiritual intercourse or devotional exercises, the former for answering questions on Psychical and Social Problems; there will be a variety of useful articles on sale Friday and Saturday to defray expenses, rent, &c., also with a view of showing how a system of trading may be instituted to secure fair dealing. Lyceum at 3 p.m. on Sundays.—J. M. DALE.

CLAPHAM JUNCTION, 295, LAVENDER HILL, S.W.—A meeting was held in Battersea-park on Sunday afternoon last. Speakers; Messrs. Hopcroft, Rodgers, Bartell, Hough, and U. W. Goddard. Many friends from London attended, and much interest was manifested by a large audience. Quantities of "LIGHT," *Two Worlds*, *Medium*, and leaflets were given away. At the evening meeting, at 295, Lavender Hill, Mr. Hopcroft's controls gave great satisfaction, and 5s. 7d. was collected for some friends in distress. U. W. Goddard will continue the open-air meetings at 11.30 and three on Sundays, near band-stand, Battersea-park, and will be glad to receive assistance of speakers and friends. Usual meetings at 295, Lavender Hill; Sundays, seven, (Lyceum, three), and Wednesdays, at eight. Private development circles on other nights—a few vacancies.—U. W. G.

A PRAYER.

Her soul is steeped in sorrow,
And wrapt in night;
Blind to the coming morrow,
And dawning light;
O Faith! calm Faith, draw nigh and give her rest,
Take her a little while upon thy breast.

Her heart no more rejoices
To understand;
She cannot hear the voices
Of angel land;
Haste then, O love! in all thy godly grace,
Reveal to her the beauty of thy face.

Her tender thoughts are dying
In dull despair;
Her purest joys are flying
To worlds more fair;
O Hope! who canst our fiercest pangs subdue;
Touch her weak spirit—kindle it anew!

Her life's blue sky is clouded
This dreary day;
Its brightest hues are shrouded
In sombre grey;
Hallow her being, through her darkness shine,
O Sun of life! O Light and Power Divine!

—MARIE GIFFORD.

TO THE DEAF.—A Person cured of Deafness and noises in the head of 25 years' standing by a simple remedy, will send a description of it FREE to any person who applies to NICHOLSON, 21, Bedford Square, London, W.C.