

# Light:

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

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

"LIGHT, MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by the Editor.

From the "Practical Photographer" there come to me what are called instances of Psychic Photography, better known as Spirit Photographs. The reproductions are poor, but it is important that any such subject should have attracted so much attention. The paper from which I quote asks that its readers will be on the watch for such appearances on a plate. We shall learn more and accumulate more evidence by these means than by elaborated experiment. For we cannot summon spirits, though they come unsummoned. The "Practical Photographer" is apparently acquainted with the tricks that can be easily played with ghost-pictures. It seems that Miss Power, of Birmingham, has been taking these pictures for some time. She has allowed four specimens to be reproduced in the pages of the "Practical Photographer," and the printed account seems to me worth quotation:—

Many of our readers will remember that some three years ago Miss Power was drawn into a correspondence in "The British Journal of Photography," in the course of which the editor of the "Journal" offered to lend a stereoscopic camera, as a safeguard against the ghosts being caused by faults in the plates, because, as he doubtless argued, two plates were not likely to be faulty exactly alike. Miss Power also mentioned that she had accepted a dozen marked plates from Mr. H. J. Whitlock, and had promised to expose them, leaving the development for Mr. Whitlock. The correspondence ceased, and had probably been forgotten by most of the readers of the "Journal." At any rate it had passed from our own memories, until it was revived by seeing a cutting from a Birmingham paper, again raising the question of Miss Power's results. Our interest was aroused, and we wrote to Miss Power, asking whether the test of the binocular camera had been applied, and whether Mr. Whitlock's plates had been exposed and developed. The answer was that the binocular camera had not been sent forward; and that four of Mr. Whitlock's plates had been exposed, but not developed. The reason for this was that Miss Power had been unable to meet with any independent party who would go to the studio, watch the development, and allow his name to be used afterwards in connection with the matter. We at once offered to act as such independent party, and early in November, with Miss Power, we called upon Mr. Whitlock. Of the dozen plates originally supplied, four only had been exposed, and the whole packet, during an illness of Miss Power, had been accidentally knocked into some water, so that the unexposed plates, and two of the exposed ones, had been spoiled. The two plates that remained were developed in Mr. Whitlock's dark room, by his assistant, with the result that one came up almost a complete mass of fog, while the other made a pretty good negative, representing Miss Power herself sitting as she usually does for psychic photographs, but with no sign of other presence, spiritual or otherwise. Therefore this test proved nothing.

We visited Miss Power's home—the door of which, by the way, was fearfully battered with stones thrown by a mob that besieged the house for two or three nights in September—and learned her ideas about spirit photography. They are briefly thus:—

1. That the spiritual part of man is immortal; lives and progresses after death; and influences, more or less, those who remain in life upon the earth.

2. That some (at any rate) of such spirit forms have the power of impressing their images upon the photographic plate.

3. That in the future the photographing of those who have left the earth-life will be as common as the photographing of persons in the flesh is to-day.

4. That such work is most important, because it tends to prove to those who recognise the spirit form that such spirit is still alive; and by thus giving an assurance of the life after death, tends to lead to higher aspirations in the earth-life.

Now, with regard to the collection of negatives in Miss Power's possession. As they are decidedly what are commonly known as "spirit" photographs, showing clearly recognisable "spirit" forms, we are forced to one of three conclusions:—

1. That they are accidental (caused by "latent image" on the glass of the plate, or otherwise); or, 2, that they are frauds; or, 3, that they are genuine.

As there are some dozens of them, and as some of them run in series of five or six views of the same face, the first explanation is out of the question.

If the second conclusion is to be held, it must be taken that Miss Power is either duped herself, or trying to dupe others. There seems no good reason why anyone should, month after month, for some years, persistently practise a fraud, and anyone who knows Miss Power knows that she is not a likely person to allow such a deception to continue. As to the supposition that Miss Power herself is a charlatan, we can only point out that she has had nothing to gain, but all to lose, by following her psychic investigations. As a matter of fact, from this cause alone she has lost all her scholars—her school was her main means of livelihood—and, as we stated before, has even had her house besieged and assaulted by a mob of such dimensions that sixteen policemen were told off to protect the place.

Amongst Miss Power's negatives are several which were not taken knowingly as spirit photos. They were portraits and groups, in the open air and daylight, but the "spirits" are there, nevertheless, and in some cases recognisable. On the other hand, even when sitting specially for spirit photography, as many as four dozen plates have sometimes been exposed in succession, without a trace of the desired result. Neither Miss Power nor the operator can see the spirits, though they have no doubt that a clairvoyant could do so.

We asked Miss Power to describe the "Belfast" series of photographs, which we reproduce, but, instead, she asked Mr. Thomas Slaney Wilmot to write the particulars. We cannot reproduce the whole of the article, which deals largely with the question of the composite and spiritual nature of man, but only give the practical part:—

## ASTRAL BODIES PHOTOGRAPHED.

By THOMAS SLANEY WILMOT.

This spray from the divine wave of intelligence gave us directions as to how we could photograph the "spiritual" bodies of our departed relatives and friends, and so prove to materialists how they can satisfy their doubts of a future. They are, briefly: to darken a room; drape with red or blue curtains; keep the air in the room still, by darkness and quiet; focus a sitter whose natural aura, or atmosphere, is white and also luminous.\* The operator to sit by the camera, or so that he can light a magnesium light eight inches long at both ends, then with the cap off, to sit in aspirational silence for twenty minutes, light the tape, take the plate out and develop, then to put in another plate, sit again, and again as long as time permitted. Follow the same directions the next week, and the next, until we began to see clouds and other peculiarities on the developed plate, which there was nothing in the room to account for.

The evening on which the accompanying four plates were exposed had been set apart for a stranger, who wrote asking permission to share our experiments. As she was coming from Ireland, it was necessary that she should have a night's rest before we commenced operations. A telegram preceded her, calling her away for urgent reasons; therefore, as soon as she could (early next morning), she started back, without

\* See "Psychic Photography in Relation to the Physical Sciences," in "Photographic Annual," Xmas, 1891.



accomplishing the object of her visit. Our experiments were conducted weekly, so we sat as usual.

The account of the experiments is given in these terms:—

I. The first plate we exposed was in the camera, the light out, and the dark exposure commenced before the second sitter, Mrs. —, came. She groped her way to her usual place; her chin, hand, and dark dress are seen in the background. The lady who was focussed had on a tight-fitting blue dress, her hair coiled on the top of her head; the loose hair is not hers, but belongs to the spirit or astral body which transfigured her; the halo or luminous atmosphere which surrounds these ethereal bodies passes through the sitter's forehead, covers one eye, and part of cheek. It caused no inconvenience to the sight, nor was she aware of any body or object ethereal or otherwise being between her and the camera. There is also a white outline of a smaller figure to the right, but probably not shown on this copied print.

II. The first sitter pushed her chair backwards to the late arrival, and sat herself on a lower one, Mrs. — leaning forward on the back of the front chair; the development revealed that the disturbances had quite upset the conditions for showing the central spirit, though the spirit to the right seems little altered; the halo instead of being through the front sitter's forehead, is over Mrs. —'s head; there is hardly a trace of the long hair, and the front lady is completely overshadowed.

III. The ladies sat as in II., with the exception that Mrs. — is not leaning forward. The etherealised matter, of which the astral body is composed, does not appear to have lost shape, the long hair can be traced, and the faces of the two focussed sitters are partially covered with it, and this time the right arm of the front sitter is seen. There was nothing visible to the normal eye, yet a clairvoyant who was present saw the front sitter transfigured into an old lady, with hair hanging about her shoulders; several forms from about 15ft. to 60ft. from the camera, and a host in the far distance. The apartment itself was about 16ft. by 12ft.; the influence of the room was calm, peaceful, and spiritual, such as one vaguely describes as "The gate of Heaven." These three plates had each twenty minutes' dark exposure, and then eight inch magnesium tape lit at both ends.

IV. During the next exposure, the sitters remained as in III. After the dark exposure, the Unseen Intelligences told us to light no artificial light; the plate was developed, therefore, as it was. In answer to the criticism in "British Journal of Photography," September 7th, 14th, 21st, 1888, January 4th, 1889, proving that though the plates revealed traces of double exposure, the first was during the twenty minutes' dark exposure: 1st. The central figure, which can be traced in all the four plates, was recognised by the stranger who came from Ireland. 2nd. An old lady smiling down upon the central figure (the plate unfortunately got damaged here in developing). 3rd and 4th. Two tiny heads together, mother and son. 5th. An Irish peasant on left side of the plate. 6th. An unrecognised form looks as though it moved, and a host of hovering forms undefinable.

The query to opticians and scientists is, from whence came the light to impress these forms on the sensitive plate?

Intelligence is sometimes called the "light" of the mind; it is possessed by individuals in varying degrees. In some minds this light burns very dimly, others have so much of it, that they, like the ancient philosopher who said to men "Ye are gods," see no limit to the creative power of man's intelligence, when unfettered by material hindrances and worldly surroundings; but the knowledge that it is electric or actinic is a new revelation to science.

In this connection I quote from the "Harbinger of Light" some remarks which are pertinent and to me very interesting:—

We have in "The British Journal Photographic Almanac," a portly volume of over 800 pages, and with a world-wide circulation, an article on Psychic Photography, in which the writer, alluding to the trustworthy testimony of recognised likenesses appearing on the exposed plate in addition to the sitter, when no such likenesses have before been in existence, treats the matter as a fact, and proceeds to analyse the cause of the phenomena. He finds that some particular gift or quality in the operator, or someone taking part in the process, is essential; and by the aid of a Dr. Gallagher, of Stockport, who has attained some celebrity by his treatment of nervous complaints, he has arrived at the conclusion that the quality is a "Fluorescence," or luminous aura, pertaining to the individual: an idea that harmonises with the revealments of mediums and clairvoyants who usually describe mediums as surrounded by an aura of various colours and degrees of brilliancy.

Commenting upon the evidence of this fluorescence, the writer proceeds to show its harmony with the revealments of science, as follows:—

The wonderful improvements in optical instruments of late years has facilitated many advances in scientific knowledge. One

bearing closely on the present subject is the discovery of an atmosphere composed of rarefied ether, in close proximity of everything in nature varying in extent, quality, colour, and fluorescence. If aesculin in solution be placed in a flask, and the rays of the sun or electric lamp be directed through a lens upon it, the cone of light thrown by the lens into the interior of the flask will be seen to shine with a lovely sky-blue colour. The particles of the solution in the pathway of the beam become spontaneously luminous, and emit a soft blue light.

There is also a green spar found in Alston Moor, which by transmitted light emits indigo blue. Quinine in water solution gives a bright blue fluorescence. Petroleum, which is slightly yellow, emits a blue light, but tumeric, also yellow, gives off a green fluorescence. Uranium, which is bright yellow glass, fluoresces a bright green. Now, as this shows that positive science has unintentionally recognised a vital or psychic aura surrounding inorganic life, and has, moreover, discovered that round very few of these inorganic objects is the ether fluorescent, while those objects which are luminous are possessed of qualities which individualise them from the neighbouring objects grown on the same soil, we have arrived at my point, viz., that the aura surrounding mankind, its texture, extent, and degree of illuminating and phosphorescent qualities mark the spiritual individuality of man and thing; is, in fact, its soul, or medium of communication between the material organs and spirit, so that from an examination of the colour and fluorescence of this aura, must the sitters for successful psychic photographs be chosen.

From the foregoing and further comments in the same direction, it is evident that the writer, if not a Spiritualist, has accepted the leading idea of the spiritual philosophy, that spirit is all potent and matter its vehicle. It is in this direction more than any other that Spiritualism is moving; both the philosophy and religion of Spiritualism are permeating the thought of the day amongst those classes who are not entirely absorbed in speculation, money-getting, or orthodox theology; whilst the various phenomena, which were a few years ago considered distinctly Spiritualistic, are being accepted under different names, accounted for by various strained theories, and sometimes simply accepted as insoluble facts—that is insoluble on any other but the spiritual hypothesis—which it is not convenient to accept.

I may, perhaps, remind my readers of a series of articles of mine on the subject which appeared in "Human Nature." (James Burns.) I have wondered that this method of communication has been in abeyance, and should wonder more but that I know that "the wind bloweth where it listeth." The very simplest of our phenomena cannot be got to order. Therein lies the difference between the experiments of the physicist and the psychist. If we could always command these phenomena we could study them and classify them. But we cannot: the time is not yet come, and we who deal with them meantime are not likely to be very comfortable in our work. There is one cause for thankfulness. The time of idle gaping is passing, if not past. The time of careful thought is coming, if not come.

The "Daily Chronicle" has the following:—

With regard to the recent discussion on our fiscal and other departmental returns, attention may again, for the hundredth time, be profitably directed to the completeness of American work. For instance, in the voluminous census returns now arriving in this country there is a mine of curious information with regard to the many religious sects which flourish in the States. Dr. Carroll, who has had charge of this section, has evidently spared no pains, and his researches will doubtless afford pabulum for many polemic disquisitions. Take as an example the report on Spiritualism. There are, we learn, 334 organisations in the States, with a membership of 45,030, the "Churches" owning 573,650 dol. worth of property. Dr. Carroll traces the origin of modern Spiritualism to the demonstrations of the Fox family in the State of New York forty-two years ago, but says the Shaker community had such manifestations before that time. What we may ask, would be the nature of such an official return in Great Britain? The above figures will be a matter of astonishment to many, for in this country it was generally considered that the Spiritualist "boom" had come—and gone.

No, it has not gone; it has come to stay. It would very much surprise the "Daily Chronicle" and others if they knew the people of light and leading who care nothing about any "boom" but who read regularly the literature of Spiritualism. It is not Spiritualism that is gone; it is the writer who so comments on it. There never was a time when, thanks to the efforts of men here and in America, as well as on the Continent of Europe, Spiritualism occupied a more commanding position. It has permeated the intellectual thought of the age. It has permeated literature. It has filtered through current



thought. That means far more than the physical phenomena which used to be considered as alone associated with the name. It is, at the moment, a very distinct power in the life of the age.

"The Young Man," a paper with which I have not previously made acquaintance, and which is only worth notice by way of exposure of ignorant methods of comment, has some notice of Spiritualism. It is a melancholy instance of meddling with what one does not understand. For example, the writer thinks it possible that "at the moment of death the departing spirit should be flashed upon the vision of the distant living and beloved for a single instant." He had better not say till he knows more of the evidence that shows conclusively that the constant communications of the departed are not confined to any such time as he confines them to. They extend over thousands of years; they are not affected by time and space, and some elementary knowledge of the condition under which we have to deal with the world of spirit would have saved the writer from publishing what to a Spiritualist is reprehensible by reason of its obvious ignorance. How "a departing spirit" can be "flashed" on any vision quite transcends my imagination. It is quite conceivable, however, that this sort of nonsense may easily be talked about what is in the air, a subject which the writer does not understand or take the trouble to inform himself about. He can "give a story" *apropos*. Yes: all men can. It is wonderful how men who write this rubbish have always a story to tell. But they take no pains to explain their stories, and they are free from anything which I should call moral consciousness in dealing with them. Fancy only, to quote no more of this story, "a poor stricken soul . . . that can shoot across the earth some ten thousand mile long picture of its trouble." Horrible! But what is the condition of the mind of the writer? More horrible still. We Spiritualists do know where we are. The "Young Man"—he must be *very* young—evidently does not.

#### THE GHOST OF AMY ROBSART.

From "Rambles Round Rugby"\* we get this:—

Here is a curious little story, told by Mr. Rimmer, which shows the long persistence of tradition in some not very remote country districts:—

Some years ago, when I was at Oxford, it was my lot to fall in at a farmhouse with a very old resident who had a curious history to tell. He had been at one time a butler to Pembroke College, and when I saw him he was in his ninety-eighth year, and within a few days of the end even of that, but he was in sound health. He remembered a considerable part of Cumnor Hall standing, and quite well the private chapel, where the grain in after years was stowed. He also remarked that the trees in the park were not oaks, as Scott and Mickle had stated in their records, but elms—as, indeed, we can see them now. But, as I once wrote before, "this aged chronicler mentioned a curious circumstance that illustrates the last verse of Mickle's beautiful ballad of 'Cumnor Hall.'" It was, indeed, a ballad that suggested "Kenilworth" to Scott:—

And in that manor now no more  
Is merry feast or sprightly ball,  
For ever since that dreary hour  
Have spirits haunted Cumnor Hall.

He said that in his young days, which would be some time in the latter part of the eighteenth century, much of Cumnor Hall was left, and also there were, among other things, some artificial ponds for fish, such as were common in old times in great houses, when there was no fish-market or trains to bring sea-fish into the country parts, and so the country houses had to provide for themselves. He remembers that he and his village compatriots used to go and fish in these ponds, and it was a case for immediate running away when one of the party used to call out, "Madam budley is coming!"

\* "Rambles Round Rugby." By ALFRED RIMMER. (Percival & Co.)

#### RE-INCARNATION.

An interesting article in "LIGHT," signed "G. W. A.," opposes "Progressive Experience" to Re-incarnation, on the sole ground that according to the latter doctrine or idea, experience (objective experience) is intermittent, whereas the writer prefers to regard it as continuous or unbroken. Now, if we suppose a person with no recollection of any day of his life before the current day, doubtless the "ceaseless continuity" of waking (objective) life would seem an anticipation "far preferable" to, and "more reasonable" than, the alternation of waking and sleep.\* The question is less one of evidence, in the narrow sense of the word, than of rational presumption from known analogies. We know that nature has cycles within cycles, and that her law in the larger is even as in the less. Thus the year in all its divisions is in perfect correspondence with the lunar month and with the day. So the leaf is an exact representation of the tree. And if we further understand that Nature is essentially the same in her physical and in her psychical manifestations, we shall logically infer that whatever we see, in time and in space, on a small scale is a faithful reproduction of fact or process on a larger. Hence it becomes necessary to extend and deepen our conception of human subjectivity; to recognise that our conditioned self-consciousness is not co-incident with our total being or individuality. To this conclusion, indeed, psychical science is already forced by experimental acquaintance with the "subliminal" consciousness, of which the normal condition of emergence is the suppression of the ordinary waking self-consciousness. Now, if we generalise from this experience to the case of death, we shall be in no danger of making the usual crude mistake about Re-incarnation, that it means the reappearance of the same temporal personality on the earth-stage. For when, in Mr. Sinnett's apt phrase, that is "thoroughly and wholesomely dead" (which may not be, probably is not usually, for a variously indefinite period after physical dissolution, just as profound sleep is not often immediately consequent on getting to bed at night), then the self-consciousness, released from a limiting and pre-occupying relation to external conditions, becomes more radical. That, and only that, is what is meant by the distinction, so puzzling to many, between the "personality," which is self-consciousness in a certain relation which limits and externalises it, and the "individuality" which comprehends the former, but is not comprehended by it. "Re-incarnation" starts an entirely new set of objective conditions, again limiting self-consciousness, and as the self is only known in relation to the content of consciousness, of course a different and exclusive content differentiates the personality from that of any former earth-life, when once we understand the term personality to signify this relation of the true identical self to any partial experience not linked by association or continuity to another context of experience altogether.

It will thus be seen that our acceptance of the subjective, or Devachanic intervals, so objectionable to "G. W. A.," is logically dependent on our admission of a radically deeper stratum of individual life than is revealed in our physically organic existence. For an unbroken continuity of experience is certainly not one which introduces us at death, or shortly after death, to a consciousness at a discretely deeper level. Many are of opinion that deep sleep is not unconscious, but a consciousness too deep for association with waking consciousness; but in that case "G. W. A." would hardly call the two states continuous experience. And I cannot understand how any Spiritualist can refuse to carry to its consequences the analogy between sleep and death, which is so obvious in its external aspect.

As a single experience, this life of ours is quite unmeaning and disconnected. But some say, notably the Editor of "LIGHT" has said, "Why here again; is not the universe large enough for transition to ever new spheres of experience?" Doubtless; but what determines the theatre of our experience? The world is big enough for me to roam in, and when I leave London to-morrow there is no apparent reason *a priori* why I should ever return. But if I happen to be attached to London by associations or business, that attachment will bring me back

\* We do not in fact so wholly forget our yesterdays; but so much—by far the larger part—of what passed through our consciousness yesterday is forgotten to-day, that we can easily see how inevitably a total obliteration must result from a more radical change of conditions.



to it. Re-incarnation results from the law of attraction. It is also the persistence of force in a given direction ("Inertia") until deflected. Whatever has brought us here once will presumably bring us here again and again till the motive power changes. What is that motive power? If it is, as we most naturally, and with the greatest logical economy of causes, conceive it, the attraction of the earth-sphere for the incarnating entity—the spontaneous tendency of anything to the nature with which it has affinity, original or acquired—then it is for the objector to Re-incarnation to offer reason for supposing that the psychical affinity is exhausted just when physical decay or accident breaks external connection with the naturally related environment. Religion, both in East and West, knows better, and makes the extinction of—in Christian phrase—"attachment to the creature" its supreme end. Regeneration—*new-naturing*—alone exempts from Re-incarnation, the bonds of Desire to the external nature being thus severed, all the tendrils of attachment to it being thus eradicated. This idea is not less explicit in Christianity than in Buddhism. But when the former entered into a compromise with the world, and had to deal with its multitudes of nominal converts, it could no longer, through its official representatives, insist prominently and universally on the tremendous character of the Christian undertaking, and only in the Monastic Orders—the professed "Religious"—was this still really recognised. The false and pernicious notion of an externally effected salvation thus became the Christianity of the secular clergy and of the world—a notion false and pernicious, that is, for those who remain in it, but often leading the soul upward to a pure regenerating love of the divine-human impersonation of perfection. Then we get Christian mysticism, which is a reversion to original Christianity. Buddhism, on the other hand, inherited the idea of Re-incarnation, and therefore was not embarrassed by the fact that Regeneration—(a term, by the bye, much more ancient than its reappearance in Christianity)—requires aspirations and conditions for which comparatively few in any one generation of mankind are ripe. The good Karma (merit, our "morality") of Buddhism simply leads to bliss in the Devachanic interval, and to fortunate life-conditions in a future birth, and that is all the majority aspire to. They are not religious. But they are not mistaught by any confusion between Religion and Morality.

I have already pointed to what I venture to call the scientific aspect of Re-incarnation, as the psychical correlate of the law of the persistence of force in any given direction. Physical dissolution cannot really, can only apparently, defeat the tendency of a force of an order superior to the physical. But the doctrine has also its teleological aspect, according to which this earth-sphere is a school most suitable at any given stage of evolutionary progress. And the uses of a school do not find their natural term in any physical event or accident. Doubtless the universe has many other such schools and universities; but I happen to be at just this one, and I see no reason to expect removal from it to another when I get my "holidays," or when, perhaps I am forced out of it prematurely by an accident. When this school has exhausted its use for me, presumably I shall go to a higher one, but not sooner. There are sixth-form boys, no doubt, who may not need to return. But they are the minority. Depend upon it we are none of us going to "scamp" this school; and to talk of the bigness of the universe is to neglect the fact that in this particular world are represented degrees of psychical and spiritual development as widely apart as are the educational states of the little boy just beginning his first Latin book, and of the big boy who is ready to enter on a contest for university honours. It is only for the latter pupil to begin his telescopic researches into the magnitude of the educational universe; and even he will more profitably look to what is probably proximate.

With "G. W. A.'s" objection to Free Will in the popular and perhaps theological sense of the term, I am in abstract agreement, but I think he quite mistakenly associates that doctrine with evolutionary progress through Re-incarnation. Free Will is only necessary to the Re-incarnationist view in the sense in which it is necessary to every view which recognises the possibility and fact of a false consciousness. What that sense is I endeavoured to show in a paper read before the Christo-Theosophical Society, and since published in "Lucifer."\* And as I have looked in

vain for any reply to that argument, my friend cannot be allowed to assume that it is repudiated even in the Theosophical Society, of which I am not myself now a member.

As to the duration of the Devachanic intervals, I am not concerned to defend any particular statement of it put forward on an authority of which I know nothing. But it must be remembered that a duration, according to our measure and consciousness, by no means necessarily means the same for the subjective consciousness. The sense of duration varies even here with the intensity of mental pre-occupation. Fifteen hundred years of our time may have no meaning at all for the Devachanic consciousness.

I have written this at length, not so much because I want to get anyone to believe in the disagreeable necessity of Re-incarnation, as because I see in arguments adduced against it a complete neglect of that principle of analogy which I believe to be our great, perhaps our only, clue to psychical and spiritual discovery. And let me again remind Spiritualist readers that there is absolutely no inconsistency of this doctrine with the facts of post-mortem communication, nor any evidence possibly admissible against it from the ignorance or disbelief of the communicating intelligences, allowing these to be the identical persons they profess to be. *Ex hypothesi*, they could not possibly know anything about it. They are not yet even in "Devachan," but awaiting the personal euthanasia which is their introduction to that state.

I will conclude by quoting a saying, the source of which I cannot at this moment recall:—

"Not to be twice-born, but once, is wonderful."

C. C. M.

#### SPIRITUALISM IN THE UNITED STATES.

Dr. Carroll, who is in charge of that section of the census of the United States which deals with Church organisation, reports that what is known as modern Spiritualism began with "demonstrations" in the Fox family in Hydesville, New York, in March, 1848. The same phenomena had been common in Shaker communities before that date, and, indeed, in almost all ages and among many different peoples; but it was then that these demonstrations, generally in the form of rappings, began to be interpreted as communications from the disembodied spirits of men and women who had in the ordinary course of nature passed away, but whose spirits were still in a living and active state. From this time individuals began to investigate these spirit manifestations; circles began to be formed, mediums were discovered, lectures recognised, and a literature established. A few Spiritualist societies employ permanent speakers, but usually they appoint lecturers for limited terms, varying from a week to several months. A large proportion of the lecturers are mediums, who are believed to speak under the influence or direction of the spirit who guides or controls them. Summer gatherings or camp meetings, which continue from one to ten weeks, have become prominent among the Spiritualists. In 1891 twenty-two such meetings were held. The Spiritualists report three hundred and thirty-four organisations in the United States with thirty regular church edifices, not including halls, pavilions, and other places owned or occupied by them. There are forty-five thousand and thirty members, and the value of the property reported, which includes camp grounds as well as church edifices, pavilions, &c., is 573,650dol. Not many of the halls are owned by them. There are members in thirty-six States, besides the district of Columbia and the territories of Oklahoma and Utah. Among the States Massachusetts has the greatest number, seven thousand three hundred and forty-five; New York stands second with six thousand three hundred and fifty-one, and Pennsylvania third with four thousand five hundred and sixty-nine.—"Times."

We regret to have to record the departure, on the 22nd inst., of Mary Clissold, wife of Mr. W. P. Adshead, of Belper. We tender to Mr. Adshead our cordial sympathy.

MISS FLORENCE MARRYAT will lecture on Sunday, May 8th, at the Spiritual Hall, 86, High-street, Marylebone, W. (opposite music-hall); Mr. T. Everitt in the chair. Doors open at 6.30 p.m. Lecture to commence at 7. Tickets 2s. and 1s.; a limited number of platform seats at 4s. Tickets to be obtained of Miss Rowan Vincent, 31, Gower-place, W.C.; Mrs. Treadwell, 36, Belgrave-road, St. John's Wood, N.W.; Mr. Milligan, 1, Ladbroke-road, Notting Hill Gate, W.; and of Mr. White, hon. secretary, or any members of the committee, at the hall.

\* "Lucifer," February, 1891.



## A DREAM OF ROYAL DEATH—A REAL DREAM.

I dreamed that I stood without a lofty door, and that within I heard various sonorous voices hold converse upon deep matters of eternal import.

These were the voices, I know in my dream, of the Great Ones, and that they were conversing upon death.

They said, "She stands behind the door and listens; is it well that she should overhear our words, and catch from our words a knowledge of the mysteries?"

Then I thought in my dream that I would retire, and that, indeed, it was not beautiful thus listening to overhear the voices of the Great Ones. Therefore, I strove to withdraw, but my feet were glued seemingly to the threshold of the gate, and I could not retire—nay, rather, even more, I appeared more eagerly to press my face against the portal.

I still heard the voices in deep discourse, but their tones—sweet and solemn as they were—conveyed no idea to my mind beyond the sentiment which is called forth by sweet and solemn music—the heart was moved, though the mind understood not!

Then were the folding doors of the portal opened, but behind them I beheld no form! All now was silence and empty space.

Alone, aloft, I beheld shining forth from a gleaming translucent expanse of sky a glorious burning star, in the centre of the golden rays of which gazed forth a marvellous Eye, which searched into the innermost recesses of my being.

I knew that this was a symbol of the all-seeing, all-searching Eye of God.

Filled with awe—which, nevertheless, was not fear, but love and deep gratitude, mingled with a sense of the sublimity of Deity—my feet crossed the threshold, and I found myself still beneath the azure canopy of heaven, but drawing near to a vast flight of white marble steps, the steps of a mighty amphitheatre.

Approaching, I perceived that there was seated upon these steps a company of motionless figures—male and female, all veiled—their stature lofty and dignified. Each figure, rising alternately one above the other, male and female, was seen in profile—one on the right hand, the other on the left, of an ascent which led upwards to a white throne, which crowned the centre of the amphitheatre. A mighty veiled figure was seated upon the throne.

The forms, male and female, were of varied character. Each one bore in the hand, or supported upon the knee, a beautiful symbol of his or of her nature. This one held a chalice, that one a cup filled with a flaming liquid, that other one a golden rose, and so on. The face of no single man or woman was clearly visible, though the features might be traced through the veil covering each head. This veil was softly wound over the whole figure, leaving here and there a rounded limb entirely visible. The grand contour of each figure was plainly to be recognised through the soft, clinging drapery.

Upwards I passed between these forms until I reached the feet of the Mighty One seated aloft upon the throne.

This veiled One wore a golden crown; a gold sceptre gleamed also in its hand. But the veil shrouded a skull—skeleton fingers grasped the sceptre. The figure was that of a gigantic skeleton, white as ivory, grand and awful in its proportions.

No terror assailed me, though I recognised that this Mighty One before whom I knelt was the King of Death.

"O, mighty Master!" I exclaimed—for I knew, though he appeared to be Death, in veriest truth he should have been called Life—"O, mighty Master! Thou whom I have worshipped and served with tender love all the days of my life, tell me, I beseech Thee, *What is Death?*"

Then came a voice from afar, floating upon a summer's breeze out of the sapphire Heaven, and yet it was, though it came from afar, like to the lisping of a cherub-voice out of my heart of hearts—

Death is not for the ears' hearing,  
Nor is it yet for the eyes' seeing,  
But Death is for the true-knowing—  
Death is for the true-being.

Then suddenly, in the twinkling of an eye, I found myself once more standing upon the marble threshold outside of the close gates; and upon the gates I read these words:—

What is the true-being and the true-knowing?

It is the Aspiring—it is the Ever-Growing.

## THE VEIL OF THE TEMPLE.

"And the veil of the Temple was rent in twain." (St. Mark xv. 38.)

The rending of the veil of the Temple was the first and immediate consequence of the crucifixion and death of our Lord. Therefore we have, as St. Paul says, "boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which He dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh." Here the Apostle touches upon a mystery which is frequently alluded to by writers on occult subjects, though in what sense the authors of the aforesaid writings intend these allusions to be taken it is not for me to say. The study of numbers, as they occur in reading the Bible Kabbalistically, may be compared to picking up skeins of silk from a tangled heap. Some skeins are pulled out at once; others can only be unravelled with time and patience. The Bible is full of these more or less tangled threads which represent numbers, and the most difficult to unravel is the one which represents the number seven. Godfrey Higgins in his "Anacalypsis," if I remember right, battled heroically with the hard knots in this thread. Madame Blavatsky mentions one of the most complicated of these knots: "Aben Ezra says, If thou art capable of comprehending the mystery of *Azazel*, thou wilt learn the mystery of His (God's) name, for it has similar associates in Scriptures. I will tell thee by allusion one portion of the mystery; when thou shalt have *thirty-three years of age* thou wilt comprehend me" ("Secret Doctrine," Vol. I., p. 441); and again, "*Azazel* is a *mystery*, as explained elsewhere." (Vol. II., p. 376.) One of the "similar associates in Scriptures" is probably the following passage: ". . . for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God." (Exodus xxxiv. 14.) The Hebrew word translated "Jealous" is a permutation of the number of *Azazel*. Moreover, as the words Jehovah and *Azazel* dissolve and compound Kabbalistically, it is clear that *Azazel* represents the outer, or the veil which is between us and the Holy of Holies. Or, to use another simile, it is the Red Sea which divides to let the Israelites pass through.

When once this formidable knot in our silken thread disappears, we shall find it a comparatively easy task to follow the number seven through the Bible. We shall find it in the "evening" and the "morning" of Genesis; in the two pillars, Jachin and Boaz; in the two staves, Beauty and Bands; in the name of the prophet who was the companion of Moses at the Transfiguration; in the two witnesses whose dead bodies "lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified." The number can also be found in the bread and wine at the Last Supper, for "wine" is seven, Kabbalistically reckoned; the "bread" must have been unleavened, as the Passover had begun, and the number of "unleavened cake" is nine. "And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands; and I fed the flock." (Zech. xi. 7.) How many poor creatures have perished at the stake because, like the Jews, they said, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" And what is this veil of the Temple, the number of which we have traced throughout the Bible? A mystery; that is all the explanation that can be given at present. But that it is a holy and sublime mystery is shown by the words of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. ". . . the way which He dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh."

LEO.

A FORTUNE-TELLING STORY.—A writer in the "Gentlewoman" says: I remember hearing that a great aunt of mine was assured by a gipsy, who came across her as a young girl, that when she married she would live in a house with so many windows that she would never be able to count them. Now, as it happened, my aunt married an official, and lived with him for many years in Somerset House. She often tried to count those innumerable little windows we know so well, and never succeeded. Now, this is a true story.

WE have the pleasure to introduce our readers to what will prove to them an interesting exhibition. It is well worth seeing, and there are points of contact with us as Spiritualists that are well worth studying. "Egypt at Niagara Hall" ought to prove to the coming visitors to London a very attractive spectacle. There can be no doubt as to the skill displayed in its production, and none as to the interest excited in those whose minds are bent in this direction. It is an educational exhibition, and the best education, or the readiest, comes through the eye.



OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"  
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## Light:

EDITED BY W. STAINTON-MOSES.

[ "M. A. ( O X O N . ) " ]

SATURDAY, APRIL 30th, 1892.

**TO CONTRIBUTORS.**—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to the Editor.

## "THE FORESTERS." \*

Lord Tennyson's new drama is founded, as its title indicates, on some of the old popular ballads on the subject of Robin Hood, with the addition of some incidents from Sir Walter Scott's "Ivanhoe." The horn of Locksley and the fist of King Richard play their parts with our old friends Friar Tuck, Prince John of ill-savoured memory, Little John and the Sheriff of Nottingham, Robin Hood and Maid Marian, with other personages newer and less notable, under the green woods of Sherwood Forest, a background to the picture very congenial to the genius of the poet. So much is this the case, that had the work been a series of poems instead of a play, we might have hoped for some Robin Hood legends to correspond with the Arthurian Idylls of an earlier day; but it is a drama, and a drama rather of action than character, of movement and situation. Much, therefore, which we might have anticipated has been sacrificed to these requirements. Indeed, we cannot dismiss the impression that the poet has suffered at the hands of the players from somewhat of the same inconsiderate "lopping and topping," which, in another famous drama of the last century, deprived the world of the "simile of the canary-bird" and "the description of Queen Elizabeth's side-saddle." We cannot expect that an acting play should give to the reader all the enjoyment of a highly imaginative poem. Each has an effect of its own to produce, and the effects and means of producing them do not correspond.

That with these impediments the poetic fame of the great "maker" should be likely to derive enhancement from this highly successful melodrama (or "picture-play," as the "Athenæum" describes it), we dare not venture to affirm. Fortunately it needs none! Some characteristic touches of the poet have, however, been spared to us by the players; some echoes, as it were,

As of the witchcraft of a distant spell,  
of the musical and majestic voice we so much love to hear.  
As an illustration of this we would cite the following lines, with which the play concludes:—

ROBIN.

Farewell

Old friends, old patriarch oaks. A thousand winters  
Will strip you bare as death, a thousand summers  
Robe you life-green again. You seem, as it were,  
Immortal, and we mortal. How few Junes  
Will heat our pulses quicker! How few frosts  
Will chill the hearts that beat for Robin Hood!

\* "The Foresters: Robin Hood and Maid Marian." By ALFRED LORD TENNYSON.

MARIAN.

And yet I think those oaks at dawn and even,  
Or in the balmy breathings of the night,  
Will whisper evermore of Robin Hood.  
We leave but happy memories to the forest.  
We dealt in the wild justice of the woods.  
All those poor serfs whom we have served will bless us,  
All those pale mouths which we have fed will praise us,  
All widows we have holpen pray for us,  
Our Lady's blessed shrines throughout the land  
Be all the richer for us. You, good friar,  
You Much, you Scarlet, you dear Little John,  
Your names will cling like ivy to the wood.  
And here perhaps a hundred years away  
Some hunter in day-dreams or half asleep  
Will hear our arrows whizzing overhead,  
And catch the winding of a phantom horn.

ROBIN.

And surely these old oaks will murmur thee  
Marian along with Robin. I am most happy—  
Art thou not mine?—and happy that our King  
Is here again, never I trust to roam  
So far again, but dwell among his own.  
Strike up a stave, my masters, all is well.

SONG WHILE THEY DANCE A COUNTRY DANCE.

Now the King is home again, and nevermore to roam again,  
Now the King is home again, the King will have his own again,  
Home again, home again, and each will have his own again,  
All the birds in merry Sherwood sing and sing him home again.

Interspersed through the play are some snatches of verse, which a leading critical authority describes as "exquisite lyrics." The following song may be quoted as a specimen of the Laureate's latest lyrics:—

To sleep! to sleep! The long bright day is done,  
And darkness rises from the fallen sun.  
To sleep! to sleep!  
Whate'er thy joys, they vanish with the day;  
Whate'er thy griefs, in sleep they fade away.  
To sleep! to sleep!  
Sleep, mournful heart, and let the past be past!  
Sleep, happy soul! all life will sleep at last.  
To sleep! to sleep! A. A. W.

## A SPIRIT DRAWING.

The spirit drawing which appears in our present issue is one of much interest. The lady who sends it to us received it in this way. In September, 1856, she lost her eldest daughter, and subsequently received a message from her which induced her to try to draw automatically. She would hold a pencil over a sheet of paper and in three or four minutes such a sketch as we publish would be produced.

It is of great importance to note the method of production. One day it will be very desirable to fix every one of these automatic impulses and to study them. These drawings, of which we give a specimen, were done in a way similar to all these productions. The hand fidgetted over the paper without any consciousness on the part of the medium. The pencil worked with great rapidity, never leaving the paper. The shading was put in by the medium from impression gained by what she saw after the outline was done. So it seems that we have here two separate and distinct things. First, the automatic outline sketch produced by a movement of the pencil over which no control was exercised. Next, an impression conveyed to the mind of the medium, a form of vision, which led her to add details which she saw. It is important to add that the lady has never had a lesson in drawing, and has no idea of sketching anything from nature.

The following verses were given in the same automatic manner in reference to the drawing which we reproduce:—

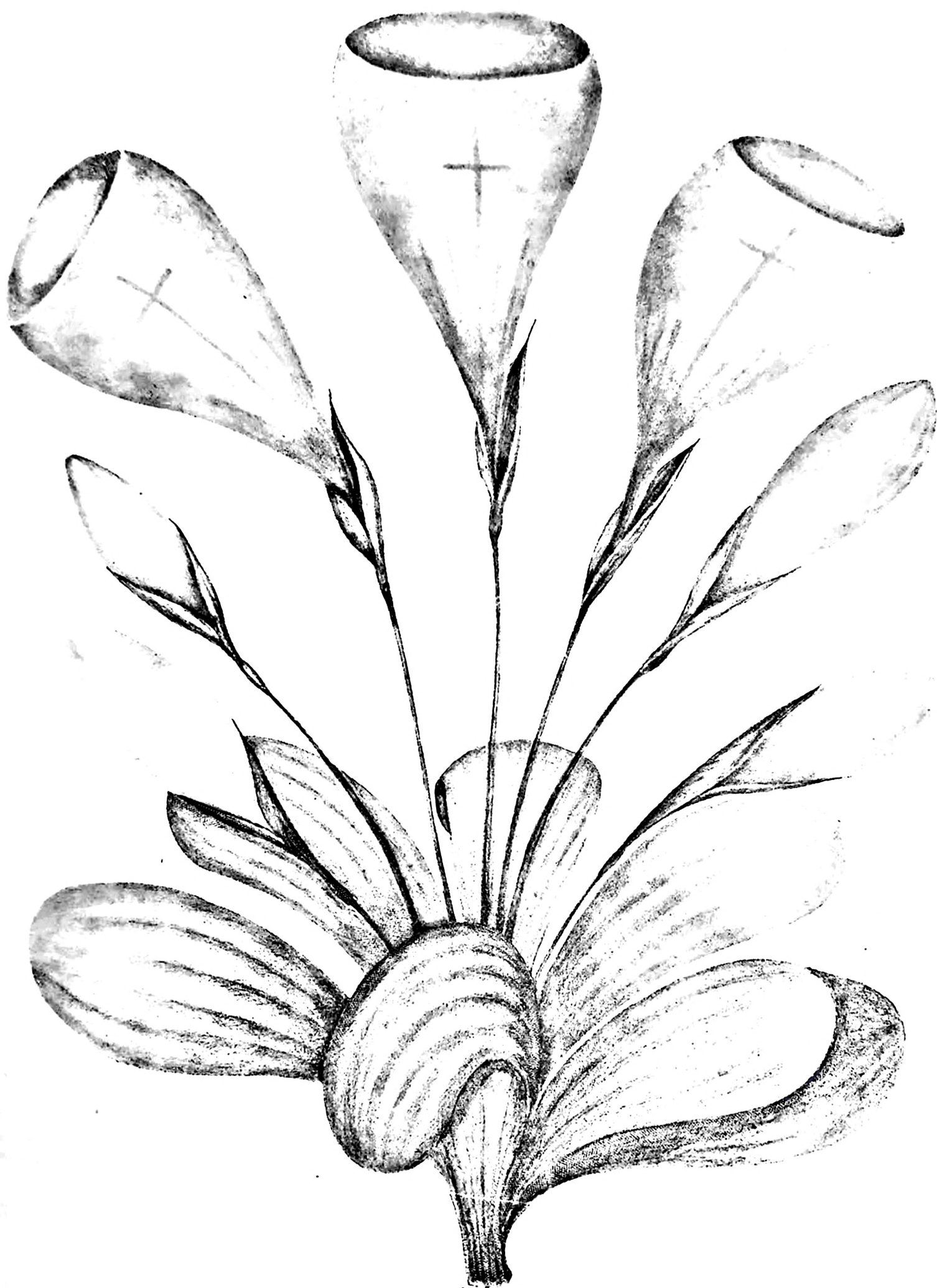
## THE FLOWER OF THE CROSS.

A SPIRITUAL REMEMBRANCE OF CHRIST'S AGONY IN THE GARDEN.

Thou art a sevenfold gift, oh flower!  
Type of Gethsemane.  
Christ's life blood fell in that dread hour  
In drops of agony.  
Thou art an Emblem in thy hue  
Of His deep suffering:  
His bitter cup thou show'st anon  
In thy flower offering.  
Thrice is His Cross erectly set  
As on Mount Calvary:  
It shineth there distinctly yet  
For human memory.

1858.





AUTOMATIC SPIRIT DRAWING.







## ANOTHER PAINTING SEANCE.

By "EDINA."

My reason for sending you a short account of our second painting seance here with Mr. David Duguid is simply because certain additional phenomena occurred worthy of notice.

The sitting took place in the same room in which the former one was held, and on this occasion was confined to eighteen persons. As a test of the medium's powers, his eyes were blindfolded by a bandage before he began operations. On this occasion two pictures in oil were produced in half an hour. The first was a representation of the Woll House Tower, Edinburgh Castle, and the second a Highland Waterfall in Rannoch. The first picture was done in fifteen minutes and the second in thirteen minutes. The medium (still in trance) informed us that the artist controlling him was "Jan Steen." This was afterwards confirmed by our family medium, who was present and saw the control at work. After the pictures were painted the bandage was removed and the medium was still found to be in trance.

Before the direct paintings on the small cards were executed, the medium's hands were carefully and securely tied by one of the sitters. Portions of the cards were then torn off for identification (same as formerly) and the gas extinguished. In three minutes the table gave the signal to relight the gas, and the two cards were found with two small finished sketches in oil painted on the under side of them, both quite wet as being newly out of the hands of the painter. One of these was a reproduction in miniature of the waterfall scene formerly painted, and the other a sketch of a loch with a boat on it. The portions of the cards previously torn off were now fitted on, and found to correspond. On inquiry we learned from the medium that the artist was Ruysdael. This was corroborated by our daughter, who stated she saw this artist in front of the medium painting the small pictures with one brush. At the left side of the medium there was lying another card, and on it were found the following lines written in pencil:—

"Mind, mind alone  
Bear witness with earth and Heaven;  
The living fountain in itself contains  
Of beauteous and sublime."

We were told by the medium that the direct writing was done by Steen, which was confirmed by my daughter, who sat close to where he stood, and who stated that he used a pencil which was lying on the table belonging to Mr. A., from Glasgow, who was conducting the seance on this occasion.

The company then sat for some time in darkness, when we had some further manifestations in the form of beautiful spirit lights, also speaking by the direct voice; and some delightful perfume was wafted through the room. The direct voice was stated by the medium (still in trance) to be that of Sir John Hawkins, an Elizabethan naval hero. The whole seance was most satisfactory, and a marked improvement in all respects on the first one.

I hope subsequently to deal with Mr. Duguid's power of obtaining a spirit photograph for us; but before I close, it may interest your readers to know that on the day following the seance above described he sat with my family in our drawing-room, and with his back to the light painted in trance on a piece of cardboard a very pretty scene representing Kilchurn Castle, Loch Awe, with Ben Cruachan in the background. This picture was executed in twenty-five minutes, and is an excellent reproduction of a well-known bit of West Highland scenery. The artist controlling the medium on this occasion was stated to be "Jan Steen," and this was confirmed by my daughter, who sat quite close to Mr. Duguid during the time the picture was being painted.

I have only to add that these two painting seances have given much satisfaction to the circle here on account of the completeness of the manifestations, and the *bona fides* of the medium, who cheerfully submitted to the blindfolding and tying tests desired by the audience. The card with the direct writing on it is in my possession, and can be forwarded for inspection to the office of "LIGHT." The handwriting is small and very neat.

P.S.—With reference to the perfume which was wafted through the room, I omitted to state that we were told by the direct voice it was distributed by an Indian spirit. My daughter did not hear the direct voice speak, but on inquiry she informed us that she saw an Indian spirit in the room at the time the odour of the perfume was felt by the audience.

## "THE SOUL OF LILITH."

We recently reviewed Marie Corelli's latest book, and it is interesting to place by the side of what we felt it right to say a curtailed review from the "Pall Mall Gazette." We are not singular in our opinion of the book:—

"The Soul of Lilith" is one of those books which shake the reader's faith in his own sanity. If one came across it in manuscript, it would not be one's own sanity that would seem dubious. But here it is, printed, published in three volumes, and paragraphed as having already run through several editions. Even taking these facts and statements with all due discount, we are forced to conclude that the writer must have a publisher and a certain number of readers on her side; and as sanity, in these matters, is, after all, a question of consensus of testimony, one cannot but doubt the report of one's own senses. If a considerable number of otherwise rational people were to look at Cleopatra's Needle and maintain it to be a perfect sphere, one would rush to an oculist for reassurance as to the condition of one's optic nerves. It is no less bewildering to find "The Soul of Lilith" accepted, by a considerable number of otherwise rational people, as a rational, or even as an interestingly, readably irrational, book; and one knows not where to fly for reassurance. The romance cannot be quite so pretentiously foolish, quite so colossally tedious, as it appears in our eyes. And yet—and yet—we should still maintain an obelisk to be an obelisk though all the hosts of Mudie and Smith should with one voice aver it to be a sphere.

There is no plot, no character, very little incident. The descriptive writing is tawdry, the philosophy (and two-thirds of the book consist of would-be philosophical dialogues) is sheer windy rhodomontade.

The book might be called "Pseudo-Philosophus; or, the Dialogues of El-Râmi with the Soul of Lilith, his brother Féraz, Dr. Kremlin, the Monk of Cyprus, and, failing every one else, with Himself."

It would be impossible, in columns of extracts, to convey any adequate idea of the platitude-in-extravagance which pervades this book from end to end. If it were amusing one could forgive it; but there is something so frigid and mechanical in the whole thing that it does not even raise a smile. This is the one really remarkable feature of Miss Corelli's achievement—that amid all her absurdity she should contrive to be so dull.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

[The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents, and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views that may elicit discussion.]

## Progressive Experience of the Soul.

SIR,—“G. W. A.,” in his interesting article entitled “Progressive Experience v. Re-incarnation,” seems to admit the truth of the idea of re-birth, but to object to the “intermittency” of a post-mortem state between each new birth. The reason why Theosophists believe in the necessity for this intermediate existence is drawn from our belief that manifestation in every form is due to motion, and that motion is an effort of a disturbance to bring itself to rest. Thus we consider that the universe is the manifestation of a law—the law of equilibrium—and that motion in the abstract is the result of the displacement of balance. It is for this reason that we talk of polarity and poles, the two opposite factors in a balance. Now, Re-incarnation is the result of a disturbance between matter and spirit, the equipoised poles which enclose, so to speak, the manifested Cosmos. The centre of balance and also the centre of disturbance is the Re-incarnating Ego which lies midway between the poles. Birth is the movement this Ego makes towards the material end of the balance in its endeavour to readjust its disturbed equilibrium. We trace its motion in its growth into a material form and onward to maturity or middle age. Then the beam turns and a backward movement follows to old age and death. This, the neutral point, being reached the spiritual beam descends, as it were, and the Ego moves towards spiritual life, the energy of displacement carrying it on to a corresponding spiritual pitch, whence it returns once again to the neutral point at which the second death occurs, followed by a swing back into physical life as Re-incarnation. The measure of the energy which thus seeks by its dual



manifestation to readjust its equilibrium is evidently taken in units of Time and Space along the physical arm of the balance, which gives us the Ego's *personal* life, and as a ratio of the Ego's spirit to the Logos along the spiritual arm, giving us its individual or Devachanic life. The swing to and fro which thus animates the Re-incarnating Ego is by the law of Progressive Evolution evidently shortened by the lapse of time. First, we have the distance (or contrast) between the personal career of the Ego on earth and its post-mortem spiritual existence very great indeed. With the progress of evolution the oscillations become smaller, the personal man and the Divine Man approach one another, until in the future, to use a Theosophical phrase, the quaternary is absorbed into the ternary and the physical life has become the exact replica of the spiritual life, when the Ego is at rest and at one with the Individuality of the Universe.

THOMAS WILLIAMS, F.T.S.

#### "The Rationale of Mesmerism."

SIR,—Allow me to express my warm approval of all you have said (in "LIGHT" No. 589) respecting Mr. Sinnett's excellent work on Mesmerism; and I am pleased he has the courage to uphold the word Mesmerism, a word that has unfortunately been by many abandoned for the more popular term Hypnotism, a word which is altogether out of place and meaningless when applied to strictly Mesmeric phenomena, as was exemplified to me no longer ago than yesterday, when I cured a gentleman of a bad attack of neuralgia by Mesmeric passes in about fourteen minutes, talking to him meanwhile on different subjects. To have called this process Hypnotism would have been ridiculous in the extreme, and I hope our Mesmerists will keep to the words Mesmerism and Animal Magnetism, which express the meanings they are meant to express, instead of abandoning them for that word which the doctors (who, as a rule, know so little about the matter) are trying to supplant them with. Mr. Sinnett regrets, in the present day, the scarcity of highly developed sensitives. Whose fault is this? I take it that it is the fault of the Mesmerists! My first insight into Mesmerism occurred forty years ago last month, and during those forty years I have developed all the higher phases of Mesmeric phenomena, and I have never been without a clairvoyant of some kind since 1863. If Mesmerists would but try to develop the higher phases of Mesmerism instead of causing their subjects to indulge in monkey tricks and commonplace phenomena, we should then have a little more of what is unquestionably marvellous and really good.

Kimberley Villa, Brading-road, S. R. REDMAN.  
Brixton Hill, S.W.

#### Theosophy.

SIR,—In criticising Mr. Kingsland's pamphlet on "The Mission of Theosophy," Mr. A. E. W. says, "What strikes us most . . . is that here as in the great body of modern Theosophical literature we are really presented with a block of dogmatic instruction which we are to accept at the bidding of an authority that is veiled and withdrawn." It is so important that our position in this respect should be clearly apprehended that I have ventured to address you on the subject. We have in Theosophy a system of philosophy which is at variance with the prevailing attitude of modern thought, and the apparent dogmatism of which our critic complains is entirely due to the necessity Mr. Kingsland is under of placing in distinct opposition the two opposite mental attitudes. As Mr. Kingsland says, Theosophy's mission is to assert the Divinity of Man, but while Theosophists thus announce that they have a clear and well defined object in view the authority for the teaching by which this is to become an accomplished fact is not "withdrawn and veiled," as "A. E. W." has said, for, to quote Mr. Kingsland, "no one is asked to accept any of the teachings of Theosophy save on the authority of his own reason and individual judgment." By this is meant that the divinity of man must become apparent to man himself as a result of studies carried on along Theosophical lines, and that no other authority, not even that of a Divine Hierarchy, is sufficient to override "individual judgment." On the other hand, since we know that this Hierarchy does exist, that men who have followed the doctrines they teach have actually reached a higher sphere of life while living on this earth, it is impossible for us, when enunciating the teaching they have taught, to beat

about the bush with "it may be" or "so and so appears to be." Nevertheless, once enunciated, its acceptance requires the enlightened acquiescence of reason: a truth must be proved true, otherwise we are false to ourselves and the source of our divine capabilities.

THOMAS WILLIAMS, F.T.S.

#### The Advantages of Christianity.

SIR,—I am much obliged to Mr. Williams for explaining the omission of humility among the requirements of Theosophy. What he says about this brings into a strong relief the happiness of Christians, whose faith frees them from the cares of self-disposal, and from an attempt as vague and difficult as that of trying in a world where "out singulars the universal is nothing,"\* "to merge self in the universal." I say trying, because I am incredulous of the sneers of an effort that contravenes the originating law of all creaturely life. The ideal of a Christian is not to abrogate this law, but to restore its first beneficent use. It is our happiness to know that our trance of selfishness must end, because we are being organised by the only life in an universal body, "fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth" (Ephes. iv. 16); and, far from wishing to merge ourselves in the universal we rejoice to think that not one recipient of life in that organisation is without a special use—that our Lord "hath need" of each one of us in it, as in the flesh and blood body there is need of each constituent muscle or nerve, or blood vessel, that regulates the proportion of its growth. We look for gains of infinite love and infinite wisdom, not from loving "the limited interest of personal aims," but from consciously devoting them, as means, to the end for which a merciful Father has given to everyone his work, his faculty, and opportunities of service. What barrier can arise from separateness like that of the fingers—restricting power to parts for the help and perfection of the whole? Apart from the mystical body of Christ (the grand man of Swedenborg) we are worse than nothing—refuse of disease and disintegration. In that body self-seeking is a monstrous excrescence of misgrowth which self can never reduce to health. We therefore submit to the Head and Saviour of that Body as to the only one who can heal us: and of His methods we know enough to be sure that controversy will only inflame spiritual disorder. Any approach to it, therefore, I earnestly avoid, though wishing to show the attitude of Christian faith which necessitates humility. If in practice this attitude had been maintained as well as it is in theory, I doubt if the excellent highly aspiring Theosophists of our time could desire to merge self in anything so comfortlessly indefinite as the universal. For if Christendom was worthy of its name it would have been evident that in "the love of Christ, that passeth knowledge," there are depths which can swallow up the wretched limitations of self-endedness; and freed from those hereditary bonds, what equivalent has Theosophy to offer for the joy of grateful adoration?

Mr. Williams will forgive me, I hope, for submitting to him here a *precis* of the remedial process by which Christians hope to be divinised. To give coherency to brief selections from writing not lucid, I shall run them together, omitting superfluous words and context likely to divert thought by opening side issues.

To his own question, "Seeing the mind together with the senses and thoughts is an inceptive natural life, which standeth in a Time and corruptibility, how may it then in this time be brought to the supersensual Divine life? or how is the Divine inhabitaney in this life?" Boehme, the great Theosopher, answers:—"The life of man is a form of the Divine will, and is come from the Divine inbreathing into the created image of man; it is the imaged word of the Divine skill and knowledge. . . . But the life's will imaged itself with the outward earthly object of the mortal nature . . . and did introduce itself into an own self-image . . . into the desire to own selfhood, and comprised itself into selfhood . . . and the inward Divine ground of the goodwill and substance extinguished; that is, as to the creature became *workless*. . . . For the will of the life broke itself off therefrom, and went out of the Unity into the multiplicity; and strove against the Unity, viz., the one only eternal rest, the eternal good. . . . In this earthly imaging and own self-reception it cannot know its ground and original wherein its

\* Swedenborg's "Arcana Coelestia," No. 6,482.



eternal rest stood; for it hath brought itself out of the Divine *Ens* into an *earthly*, and set it into a corruptible substance, and will rule in that which yet breatheth it, and suddenly as a smoke or vapour passeth away. . . . This captivated life the great love of God came to help again . . . As a new fountain of unity, love and rest, out of which it may now frame the life, and quench its painfulness and disquietness in the centres of the own selfhood. . . . This new fountain of Divine love and unity hath with its outflowing, in Christ, incorporated itself into the true life of all the three principles of the human property, and is entered into the natural *apostated* will of the life and assumed humanity, and broken the selfhood and own self willing with the inflowing of the sole and only love of God. . . . And thus hath powerfully demonstrated how the Eternal One can mightily rule over the multiplicity, and own selfhood, that the might of the *non* and *super*-imagibility may not be a god: but that the might of the *non* and *super*-imagibility may rule all: for the imagibility is only an object or representation of the un-imagible will of God *where through the will of God worketh*. ("Divine Vision," chap. ii., pars. 1 to 17.) I beg for stress of attention on those last six words.

If the life of man with all its illusions of personality, its unavoidable solicitude for self, its varying flux of hopes and fears, is the instrument of God, wherewith He works, why should its folly, in the abstract, offend us? No weapon is cognisant of the use to which it is to be put—not even man. Mankind is not the only race of beings in this world for whom the Father cares, and we in our short existence here are doubtless subserving ends of which the cause lies in Eternity before Time, and the consequences in Eternity beyond it. While we try habitually to merge blind self-will in the holy Will of God, *consciousness* that it is "a form of the Divine willing" gives to life a calmness and dignity which no other effort can secure.

A. J. PENNY.

#### The Proposed Discussion Between Spiritualists and Theosophists.

SIR,—I fear no useful purpose can be served by carrying out Mrs. Besant's proposal. Since Mrs. Besant has become a Theosophist she seems to have lost all her love for Free-thought, while the true *philosophical* Spiritualist is essentially a free-thinker, that is to say—he adopts no system whatever, far less one that explains man's and nature's genesis and ultimate issues. It follows therefore that the discussion must necessarily be as to whether the Theosophical system is true or not, we having and wishing to have no system to defend; but merely aiming at the observation of phenomena and deducing therefrom such conclusions as each individual mind may find reasonable.

For myself I define Spiritualism as a name covering the inquiry into spiritual things, whatever form that inquiry may take. I consider Mrs. Besant and the late Madame Blavatsky as much Spiritualists as "M.A. (Oxon.)," or Alfred Russel Wallace are. The fact that the two former believe in Re-incarnation and "Karma," and the two latter do not, is unimportant. What is important is that all four inquire into the spiritual nature of man and nature, and for this reason they are all Spiritualists. Moreover, from my observation here and abroad, I should think there are in Europe and America far more free-thinking Spiritualists who believe in Re-incarnation than there are Theosophists, and that in modern times the first European teachers of this doctrine were the Spiritualists who followed the teaching of Allan Kardec, whose numbers are stated to be now over six millions. Spiritualism does not prevent its votaries stultifying themselves by following the lead of eminent dogmatists who cannot prove the things they assert. Each man or woman is responsible to himself alone for the method of his inquiries, and the more or less reasonable conclusions he arrives at, which conclusions bind no one but himself, whether he is a Mahatma or an ordinary mortal. A Spiritualist can, if he chooses, go and live on the top of any mountain he may select, and from his elevated standpoint may propound a theory that explains everything; but nothing can disassociate him from Spiritualism except the ceasing to inquire into spiritual things.

That section of Spiritualism which has ceased to allow (or at all events encourage) individual free thought and delights in the name of Theosophy, laughs at that other section of Spiritualism which sits at tables and listens to raps and more or less foolish talk. Happily neither of these two classes represent, the true philosophical Spiritualism which

is the backbone of the movement. Philosophical Spiritualism, while smiling at the simplicity of the table-rapping Spiritualist, laughs heartily at the enormous assumptions of the Theosophical Spiritualist, which are taken without proof simply because the different parts appear to hang well together. Nevertheless, with all this difference, these and many other classes of inquirers necessarily remain Spiritualists. Just as a man would remain a geologist even if he believed that coal was always found directly on the top of red sandstone, or as a man who studied anthropology in Central Africa, who believed that all mankind were black. The one was a geologist because he studied the rocks, and the other an anthropologist because he studied the material body of man and its history. The truth, or untruth, of any conclusion they might arrive at from the facts and phenomena investigated, could not affect their position as geologist or anthropologist. In short, the majority of Spiritualists are, before all things, students of nature, while that small, although highly educated, section of them called Theosophists are not mainly engaged in examining into real facts and phenomena and discovering therein Divine laws; but devote the whole of their attention to finding analogies in support of an ancient system of thought derived from the East, which was quietly decaying away like all other old things in nature that have served their purpose, and giving place to greater freedom of individual inquiry and conclusion.

R. DONALDSON.

#### Great Names in Communications from Spirits.

SIR,—In the deeply interesting series of "Records of Private Seances" now being published in "LIGHT," there is nothing that has struck me as being more noteworthy than this paragraph in your issue of March 26th:—

The men you honour and call great have been from all times used by the Almighty as channels, and are inspired by spirits to become great and honourable. When the influence is removed from them, they *sometimes* lose much of their greatness, as they are nothing in themselves: hence it is that Milton, under spiritual guidance, was great; without that he would have been worthless; and if you could converse with him now you might perhaps find him quite different from what he was in earth-life, and his communications on a lower plane. This may account for your difficulties with regard to the trifling nature of the communications given by many spirits who come with great names.

Is it so? "Sic transit gloria mundi."

Scarcely less are we indebted to "Edina" and his gifted daughter, a wondrous psychic indeed, for the details of private seances they have so kindly and generously provided us with, details of very great value with respect to our knowledge of the compensative powers given to the bereaved, but so scantily and so prejudicially, as I opine, recognised by the "Society for Psychical Research." And surely, in the foregoing paragraph from "LIGHT," "Edina" and his daughter must have felt that they had found a *raison d'être* for perplexities.

A medium, after the death of Dickens, published a sequel to "Edmund Drood," a novel that Dickens left unfinished at his death. There was no reason, in any way that I ever heard of, to doubt the good faith of the medium; but although there was, so far as I can remember, a good deal in this sequel that reminded the reader of the style of Dickens, the sequel was not generally considered equal to the compositions of the author when alive.

And now allow me shortly to allude to a coincidence between the passage I have just quoted from the "Records," in "LIGHT" of March 25th, and what I had said in a letter to "LIGHT" of January 23rd. My sole purpose is to show that my argument, taken from words from Shakspeare, lay in the same direction as that in the "Records." I brought forward a remarkable passage from the play of "Henry V.," where, under the name of that king, Shakspeare is evidently speaking of himself. He tells us:—

"His body was a paradise  
To envelop and contain celestial spirits.  
Never was such a sudden scholar made."

Shakspeare seems here to imply that it is the "body" of living men that attracts teaching spirits, more than the soul. So, arguing therefrom, I tentatively asked, "Where is the body of Dickens now, that once contained 'spirits' of such teaching powers? Is he left to his own resources? Does his old love of story-telling still continue? Does he in some measure lack the old help his body once possessed?"



We all know that the facts of Spiritualism are firmly established. We heartily wish, however, we could have the same proofs of identity. The identity of spirits visiting men is always more or less problematical, whether it be of spirits in the flesh or spirits out of the flesh; for telepathy and bi-location or bi-corporeity have always been understood by Spiritualists, as they have by the Roman Church. A daughter of the well-known American scientist, Professor Mapes, had great telepathic powers in the early days of Spiritualism. Miss Blackwell tells us, in "The Medium's Book," of St. Anthony of Padua appearing in his native city when his body was in Spain. Mr. Stead tells us, in the Christmas number of the "Review of Reviews," "At the time Ignatius was living at Rome, he appeared to Leonardo Clisselis at Cologne." So the Theosophists are not original in such matters; but with regard to the positive identity of souls presenting themselves, if one side is in a haze, surely so is the other. Perhaps the souls most likely to prove identity and individuality are those of unimportant people, such as we read of in Dr. Coues' article in "LIGHT" of April 9th, and concerning the villagers of C, of which "Edina" writes, in "LIGHT" of April 16th, who come for the first time, who are not prominent personages, and who present themselves before there is time for cunning, idle, unprincipled spirits, lying in wait for mischief, to insinuate themselves into their position, as I have read, and perhaps push them aside in order to personify them. And this is no more anomalous than that honest, innocent people should find themselves unexpectedly in a house haunted by demons; or that some people should be born in an atmosphere of sin, and others hedged round by every propriety. Again, those souls, whether assuming to be in or out of the flesh, living or dead, who come with great names, or names assumed to be great, are likely enough, in a general way, to be personating spirits of one kind or the other, from the beginning. But the subjects, perhaps, most open to fraud are natural mediums who have great names of their own, and who are teachers of others, for such are well worth lying in wait for by the treacherous tribe seeking to fool them to the top of their bent. So it has always been. While the persons, perhaps, least open to fraud are those who are visited by spirits without knowing or much caring who they are. These can profit by spirit teaching, accept or reject what seemeth to them best; and such are at any rate guaranteed from being subject to personation, though not freed from fraud.

T. W.

#### BOOKS AND MAGAZINES RECEIVED.

"Shakspeare's Plays." Revised edition. (JAMES BURNS.) We were not aware that Shakspeare wanted revision.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- A. C. DE V. LEADER.—Prophecies are risky unless you know.  
 A. D.—"Max Hereford's Dream" is excellent. We will notice in due course.  
 "PRACTICAL PHOTOGRAPHER."—Thank you. We note the contents that concern us.  
 FEDERATION REPORT.—Received. Refer to our article on Spiritualism and Theosophy.  
 I. O. AND M. A.—We have received what you send. The subjects are outside of our scope.  
 E. W. (California)—Sorry not to be able to print your letter, which wants more preparing for the press than we can give time for. We will try to reply to your questions, but we fear they are not all solvable.

CHRISTO-THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.—The eighth session of this society has just commenced. The meetings are held as usual at 33, Bloomsbury-square, W.C., at 4 o'clock p.m. (for 4.30), on Thursdays, except on the first Thursday in the month, when the time will be 7.45 p.m. (for 8.15). May 5th, "Some Practical Problems from a Christo-Theosophical Standpoint," Rev. G. W. Allen; May 12th, "Walt Whitman's Philosophy of Life," William Clarke, Esq.; May 19th, "Jesus Christ as an Object of Faith and Worship" (conversational), Rev. R. W. Corbet; May 26th, "The Proposed Restrictions on Mesmerism," Dr. G. Wyld; June 2nd, "Determinism and Free Will," Arthur J. Bell, Esq.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' CORRESPONDING SOCIETY will assist inquirers. Copies of "LIGHT," leaflets on Spiritualism, and list of members sent on receipt of stamped envelope. Address, J. Allen, hon. sec., 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or W. C. Robson, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne. The Manor Park branch will hold the following meetings at 14, Berkley-terrace: On Sunday, at 11.30 a.m., for students and inquirers; on Friday, at 8.15 p.m., for Spiritualists only, the study of mediumship; also, at 1, Winifred-road, White Post-lane, on Tuesday, at 8.15 p.m., experimental seance, and the first Sunday in each month at 7.15 p.m., short address and clairvoyance.—J.A.

#### SOCIETY WORK.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—Service every Sunday, at 7 p.m. Next Sunday Mr. G. D. Wyndoe, subject, "Easter and its Lesson; a Glance at its Origin."—J. CHAPMAN, Hon. Sec.

WANDSWORTH SPIRITUAL HALL, 132, ST. JOHN'S HILL, CLAPHAM JUNCTION.—Mrs. Ashton Bingham will open the above new hall with a concert and reception on Wednesday, May 4th, at 8 p.m. Thursday, at 8 p.m., seance, Mrs. Whitaker. Saturday, at 8 p.m., seance, Mrs. Mason.—H. B., Hon. Sec.

KING'S CROSS SOCIETY, 184, COPENHAGEN-STREET, N.—Mr. Horatio Hunt gave an eloquent discourse on Sunday, a crowded meeting, upon "Different Orders of Ghosts." Next Sunday, May 1st, Mr. J. Burns will lecture upon "The New Spiritualism." Sunday, May 8th, at 10.45 a.m., seance, Mr. Hunt, medium; evening, at 6.45, lecture by Mr. Hunt.—REYNOLDS, Sec.

PECKHAM SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET.—On Sunday morning last we had a good attendance. In the evening Mr. Dales expounded the Scriptures, taking for his text Luke vii., his remarks being greatly appreciated. Sunday next, Rev. Rowland Young, at 7 p.m. Monday, at 8 p.m., Bible study.—J. T. AUDY.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH, 14, ORCHARD-ROAD.—On Sunday last to a crowded meeting, the Rev. Dr. Young delivered an exhaustive address on "Christ's Resurrection." The lecturer went over various portions of the New Testament to show that Spiritualists ought not to ignore Jesus, and that they should proclaim Christ to all. May 1st and 3rd, Mr. Horatio Hunt's special seances, by ticket only, at 8 p.m. May 5th, Mrs. Whitaker, seance at 7 p.m. May 15th, Mr. Cable, at Pendleton, on Psychometry, at 7 p.m.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE.—In the absence of Mr. Slater, Mr. J. Hocker kindly gave an able address on Sunday. In the course of his remarks, he instanced, from his own experience, the difficulty which existed in the pathway of the Spiritualist, and the propagation of all unpopular truths, even to-day. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., friendly meeting; at 7 p.m., Mr. T. B. Dale, "Spiritualism amongst Savage Nations." Tuesday, at 7.45 p.m., lecture. Thursday, at 7.45 p.m., seance, Mrs. Wilkins. Saturday, at 7.45 p.m., seance, Mrs. Hawkins.—C. HUNT.

LONDON SPIRITUAL FEDERATION.—We shall hold our annual meeting at the Athenæum Hall, 73, Tottenham Court-road, on Sunday next. There will be a business meeting for members only at 3.30 p.m., and a public meeting at 7 p.m. All Spiritualists are invited, the subject for consideration being "The Need for Further Investigation of Spiritualism." Admission free. Many prominent Spiritualists will speak at the meeting, and Miss Florence Marryat has signified her intention to be present.—A. F. TINDALL, Hon. Sec., 4, Portland-terrace, N.W.

SOUTH LONDON SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, 311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—Earnest inquirers are earnestly requested to attend the Wednesday evening seances, at 8.30 p.m. On Thursday evening next a public debate between Mr. Morrison and Mr. W. E. Long, subject, "Does the Bible Confirm Modern Spiritualism?" All friends will be welcomed at 8.30 p.m. On Sunday evening last, "Ghosts and Apparitions" was the subject of Mr. Long's address, and the audience listened with much attention. Next Sunday, spiritual seance, at 11.30 a.m.; Lyceum, at 3 p.m.; Mr. J. Veitch on "Psychometry," at 7 p.m.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

CARDIFF.—On April 17th we had the pleasure of listening again to Mrs. Green, of Heywood, who gave two excellent addresses to good audiences; morning, "There is no Death"; evening, "Inspiration." Several clairvoyant descriptions were given by Mrs. Green to members of the audience at the close of each address. Most of them were recognised at the time and others subsequently. At the evening service "The Better Land" was beautifully sung by Miss Rosie Mead. In lieu of a lecture on Monday night (it being holiday time) a semi-private seance was held at Mr. Sadler's photographic studio, when thirty-three clairvoyant descriptions were given, twenty-five being immediately recognised and some of the others subsequently. In view of the successful exercise of Mrs. Green's clairvoyant gifts and the satisfaction and comfort afforded thereby, a second seance was held on Thursday evening with similar success. Mrs. Green very generously giving her services on this occasion for the benefit of our funds. A noteworthy incident of Mrs. Green's visit was the naming of the infant son of our worthy members, Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Haviland, which took place at their residence on Wednesday evening. It was a service beautiful in its simplicity, and touching for the words of tender, loving, and wise counsel imparted. On April 24th Mr. R. Phillips gave an address entitled "Easter Teachings," embodying the communications recorded in "M.A. (Oxon's)" "Spirit Teachings," upon the celebration of the various Church fast and feast days.—E.A.

THE wisest of men cannot foresee the amount of good that will come from a good act.