

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way.....1	Saul's Visit to the Witch of Endor...7
Sradha Ceremony of the Hindus...2	Black Magic.....9
Records of Private Seances.....3	Spirit Photography.....10
Dr. Parker on Spiritualism.....4	Questions and Answers.....10
Spiritualism and Science.....5	Letters to the Editor.....10-12
The Outlook.....6	Society Work.....12

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Mr. Stead has not only brought upon the world the shallow sophistications of Dr. Parker, but the small wit of others. We have not always admired Mr. Stead's methods, but it would be foolish to deny that he has the courage of his opinions, and in this matter of automatic writing has done yeoman service. As a great part of the work of the late Stainton Moses was of this automatic character, the importance of independent testimony as to all the circumstances connected with its production cannot be over-estimated. Dr. Parker has been treated of in another column, but Mr. Stead has roused some other members of the gallery, among them the Editor of the "Morning Leader." In an editorial of this paper, headed "Interviewing a Spook," we get some of the old hilarity, but in a subdued form. The writer, however, is quite correct in his assertion that when the "spook" told Mr. Stead that the departed "can when they please assume their old bodies or their spiritual counterparts as they can assume their old clothes for purposes of identification," that "spook" was asserting something quite new to Spiritualism, and possibly quite wrong. The central fact is that the writing Mr. Stead asserts to have been done *automatically*.

The newspaper and magazine writers who indulge in ghost stories at this time of the year are often bewailing the departure of the good old-fashioned ghost, with his clanking chains and so forth. Certain it is that the new ghost story, thanks to the publicity which has attached to Spiritualistic investigation of late, is of quite a different type from the old one. Thus the "Sunday Times" for January 1st has an article called a "Gathering of Ghosts," in which article regret for the old midnight ghost having been made in the usual way, the writer, after some silly talk about Home, proceeds to narrate the following episode at a séance where there was present a "sceptic colonel":—

The sceptic colonel declared he believed in nothing, and the knocks on the table, so to speak, went for him. They abused him in really very unspiritual fashion, and recommended his immediate departure. Then they declared that the Christian names of the colonel's mother were "Marie Joseph," which aroused derision until I ascertained that the lady in question had been born prematurely in an obscure Italian village, and that she had been entrusted to the care of a peasant nurse. When I suggested that the child might have been christened "Marie Joseph," by her custodian, the table jumped about with delight. But I thought the jumps and the knocks could be explained away; yet I was fairly "stumped" when the following "strange thing happened." I held the two corners of a handkerchief while an old Scotch lady ("Bobby") retained the remaining couple. Then the handkerchief was pushed up by what seemed to be a phantom hand. No one was near us, and I cannot explain how it was done. I repeat, it fairly stumped me.

This is another story by the same hand:—

Two little girls (near relatives of mine) were with their father in Spain. They were surprised (because father and son were on bad terms) to see their grandfather, who they thought was in London, come into their room and look at them. The next day they expected to meet their grandfather at breakfast. As a matter of fact they did not, as the old gentleman had died in London at the very time they thought they saw him in Madrid. He had asked to see his granddaughters before he died. The peculiarity of the story is that the ghost appeared to two persons at the same time, who believed him to be a living man. I have heard the story from the ladies (now dead), who, I repeat, were near relatives of my own.

And then, as if ashamed of having bowed the knee to Baal, this "Roving Commissioner" tells a story of no import whatever, except as a feeble jokelet.

We have received a courteous letter animadverting on a recent note about the prospectus of the Berean Society. Especially is our correspondent aggrieved at notice being taken of the word "plain," which should have been "plane." This is said to have been a printer's error. Most likely it was, yet at the same time it is the sort of printer's error which makes the ungodly to rejoice: hence the attention called to it. Moreover, there is a strange tendency in all the new pseudo-sciences of to-day to start with a formidable array of words and phrases. If the philosophies of the various societies cannot be elucidated without all this, there is considerable room for misgiving as to their teachings. The English language is a fairly potent machine for most purposes.

Not long ago a letter was received in which the Editor of "LIGHT" was asked these two questions:—"Are you a Spiritualist?" "Were you ever a Spiritualist?" the writer disagreeing with the Editor on a certain point. Recently letters have come, in which not only is the Editor's Spiritualism assumed, but assumed to be of such a nature as to exclude the consideration of subjects which in some way the writers appear to think are connected with Spiritualism. Now, it should be perfectly understood that Spiritualism is a branch of study dealing with the Unseen, and is neither identical with Re-incarnation, vegetarianism anti-vivisectionism, anti-vaccinationism, the assertion of "woman's rights," nor the eating of "wholemeal" bread. A man may believe in the action of independent and unseen intelligences, and study the modes of action of these intelligences, and yet have views about other matters more or less in accord with the rest of the world. There should be no reason given for the enemy to blaspheme, and come to regard, as is very often the case, the word "Spiritualist" as synonymous with the word "crank."

The "New Review" has a remarkable article by Professor Charcot on "The Faith Cure," and the "Fortnightly" an equally striking paper by Mr. Haweis on "Ghosts and their Photos," to both of which we shall refer in a future issue.

Pastor Frank Smith is again *en évidence*. In the "South London Mail" he accuses Spiritualists of the grossest immorality. There are immoral Spiritualists and there are immoral pastors, yet one does not condemn all the pastors. Pastor Smith should read a book by "Saladin" called "Janet Smith"; pp. 82 to 85 would pleasantly instruct him.

SRĀDHĀ CEREMONY OF THE HINDUS.

The Calcutta Psycho-Religious Society has sent certain papers in respect of its work which are interesting, though a little ancient—in fact, the report to which the article with the above heading is appended is that of 1891. The position of the society does not seem quite clear, for in the report there is a reference to an invitation sent by the society to Mr. Booth and other officers of the Salvation Army to visit the Samaj, and accepted by some of these officers, and immediately following this there is a paragraph where Sir George Birdwood is quoted as saying to the society:

The only thing that interests me, and fills my soul with life, is the subject of the civilisation of Brahminical India. Never give up that good fight, stand faithfully and resolutely by the social, religious, literary, and artistic culture of your sacrosanct forefathers. That is my first and last counsel to you.

There seems some little incompatibility in the two statements.

Whatever may be the "spiritual" position of the society the description and explanation of the *Srādhā* ceremony are interesting. The English is, indeed, of the kind called *Baboo*, but that has nothing to do with the subject matter. It is impossible and, moreover, unnecessary to publish the paper in full. Some extracts only can be given:—

We have said before that the Hindus respect the memory of their deceased ancestors like most civilised peoples; and they do more. They invoke the dead and offer food (cakes) to them! What are these cakes for? Do dead men eat? If not, where is the necessity? Or, is it a random shot, a shot in the dark, or is it a priestcraft? We will soon discuss all these questions as we go on. In the first place let us try to understand why the ceremony is called *Srādhā*. The word "*Srādhā*" is derived from *Srodha* or faith. The ceremony is therefore built on faith principally—on the faith that the spirits of the deceased do actually come to partake of the offerings made in gratefulness. It is a spiritual *Yag*. Let us now see whether there is any sensible grounds for the belief.

To show gratitude to the dead ancestors is a pleasing trait in humanity, which is acknowledged by all. To do the same, however, with flowers, fruits, rice, milk, sugar, &c., believing that the deceased do actually come to the spot and feel the pleasure of actual eating, is something which cannot be well understood, much less acknowledged by all. Herein therefore lies the difference. To assume the possibility of their presence, in the first instance, and then of their capacity for enjoyment of material things, presupposes

1st. Our intimate knowledge of the spirit-world and of the existence of spirit-life.

2nd. Our power to invoke the dead and bring them back to earth for a while.

3rd. The capacity of the spirits for enjoyment of material things, food for instance.

Let us now see whether the ancients had any knowledge of spirit spheres. In order to test a truth or a class of truths, it is usual to have at first a clear statement of surrounding circumstances connected with them. If, for instance, an individual or a nation believes that one man can affect another by the odours of his body, or by subjecting one to inhale the smell of the wearing apparel of another for a length of time, it would be necessary on the part of the individual who wants to test the truth or otherwise of the belief, to have a clear statement of all the circumstances connected with it. To ignore a fact or a truth merely on the ground that it is not known to all men is repugnant to all experience and reason. The truth of the circulation of the blood in the animal body flashed originally in one mind only, and though not accepted at first by all remained nevertheless a truth. To say, therefore, that the *Srādhā* ceremony cannot be true on the ground that it is confined only to one nation on the

face of the earth, will be saying something contrary to previous experience.

If it can be shown that the Hindu ceremony of *Srādhā* has been based on something more than mere faith, then the questions asked before in this article hardly require any answer; if not, the subject itself is scarcely worth a moment's consideration. A belief that has no reasonable grounds of support is worthy of no respect whatever. Let us see, therefore whether there are any such grounds which may warrant us to suppose that the ceremony is not a myth. We have said before that in order to test the truth of any beliefs it is essentially necessary that we should know all things connected with it, and for a time try to forget our own prejudices against it. In analysing all the *mantras* of the '*Srādhā*' ceremony we find the following:—

(a) The directions to be observed by the performer of the ceremony on the day previous to the performance.

(b) The selection of the medium.

(c) The invocation ceremony.

(d) The articles used.

(e) The time fixed for the performance of the ceremony.

(f) The knowledge of spirit-life as displayed in *Srādhā* mantras.

Before we venture to discuss on each of the subjects mentioned above, we may note, by-the-way, that the ceremony is not only to be observed once a year, but a person may do it every day if he wishes to do so. It is, however, incumbent on him to do it at the time of a marriage or an "*upanayana*" (the ceremony of the investiture of the holy thread), &c.; and hence *Srādhā* is divided into five kinds:—

1. *Nityā* (daily).

2. *Nymitikā* (annual).

3. *Kāmyā* (when a *kamānā* or object is to be attained).

4. *Bridhi* (when blessings of the departed ancestors are to be asked before marriage, &c.).

5. *Pārhānā* (on a new moon day, "*Urdhodoyā yoyā*," &c.).

The "directions to be observed" are what might be expected in any case of "white" magic; purity in thought, word, and deed, both practically and symbolically, as in personal cleanliness, and so forth. As to the medium:—

It is said the medium should be a *joti* (one who can control his mind). He should be also either a *Brahmachari* (one who has devoted himself to the services of his Maker entirely) or an honest family man. A medium should be shunned if he be a thief, an out-caste or fallen, an atheist, a physician, a dealer in flesh, a money-lender, or one who has bad nails or bad teeth.

It will be apparent to anyone who is not a thorough materialist that the medium should be a man who can exercise a control over his mental images, and who should be a man who has devoted himself entirely to prayers, &c.; failing him, he should be an honest family man. The injunction of the *Sāstrā* to shun those who possess bad nails or bad teeth is significant.

Before describing the ceremony of invocation there is given a classification of the invoked spirits:—

They are divided into three great classes:—

(a) Those that are said to be *Sthiramurti*, i.e., possessing forms.

(b) Those that have no form, but can assume form at will. These are called *Itchamurti*.

(c) Those that are without form and wish not to assume form are called *Amurti*.

These are subdivided into seven classes:—

1. *Shubhambara*.

2. *Bahirshad*.

3. *Agnishwata*.

4. *Krabad*.

5. *Upahata*.

6. *Arjapa*.

7. *Sakahsi*.

Among these the first three are *Amurti*, the fourth and fifth *Itchamurti*, and the sixth and seventh *Sthiramurti*.

The substances used in the invocation are —

Besides boiled rice and vegetables, sugar, honey, fruits, and sweets, (1) *kusa*, (2) *til*, (3) *light*, and (4) *incense*.

Of light and incense we need not speak; but of *til* (*Sesamum indicum*) and *Kusa* (*Amden Acad*) a word is necessary. These two are supposed to exercise a great attractive power, as *varish*

or mustard seed is supposed (a supposition based on experience in cases of possession) to exercise a controlling power over earthly spirits, as iron exercises a dispelling influence on them.

And as to the ceremony, the writer says:—

The souls of the ancestors of a man are supposed to belong to either of the two classes of spirits called *Sthirauurti* or *Itchamurti*; for they are said to be not beyond the region of physical ether. *Srādhā* is therefore necessary for them. Their memories are yet green and they retain the affections of the earth, and watch with interest their descendants. *Srādhā* is performed for the *Priti* or satisfaction of the deceased ancestors, commencing from father or mother up to great grandfather or great grandmother. The souls of the ancestors further remote are supposed to have passed beyond the limits of the physical to luminous ether and consequently they retain not the affections of the earth. This is the general ruling in respect to the performance of *Srādhā* ceremony. It is not meant to make provision for individual cases; and hence it is necessary on the part of the performer of the ceremony to have some spiritual education to know whether his father or grandfather is earthy or ethereal spirit to be able to discharge his duties to his own satisfaction and to the satisfaction of his ancestors. To pass the night previous to the performance of *Srādhā* in gay company, and to swamp oneself in gin and brandy, and then to sit the next day to discharge the onerous duties of *Srādhā*, is a grave insult to the memory of one's own ancestors and an unpardonable sin in the eyes of God. We would advise our young men rather not to perform the ceremony at all if they cannot reverentially fulfil all the essential conditions of the ceremony, than to do it in a way which is repugnant to reason and conscience alike.

For a person who is not a Hindu, and even for a Hindu who is not a believer, or who has not once in his life performed the *Srādhā* of his parents with reverence, the ceremony will not be quite intelligible, as is generally supposed. For instance, it is usual to wear the holy thread and the *Utaria* cloth from the left to the right side, but at the time of *Srādhā* it is necessary to bring it from the left to the right side, with a view to leave off that passive state of resignation which is usual with a Hindu, and to attain the state of active self-hood—a state in which one is required to be a worker himself and not a mere instrument. He is required to exercise the will of his own—that will which would enable him to invoke successfully the spirits of his deceased ancestors. But in the *Srādhā*, as in cases of all *Yajna*, it is necessary to address God in prayer, without whom no ceremony is worth anything. He gives strength—He is strength—and is to be prayed first, prayed last and midst. By His strength all evil influences are to be withstood and all difficulties overcome. After Him the *Biswa Devatas* are to be worshipped. By "*Biswa*"-devatas we understand the presiding spirits of the solar systems of the universe, who govern their respective system in the name of God according to the light vouchsafed to them by Him, as we men here make laws and reign in His name according to the light within us. And, lastly, the departed souls are invoked, for whose *priti* or satisfaction the cakes are offered with incense and flowers. They are said to come to the place of ceremony by the *Dera-Prisidha*, or the usual path of the *devatas*, and are asked to bring their friends with them. The cakes are then offered to them. They are supposed to feel the satisfaction of eating the things offered to them in love, respect, and gratitude. The performer of the ceremony is to think that his ancestors are at the spot, and to ask their blessings. The merit of the performance is offered to God, the light covered by the hand, and the ceremony finished with a prayer to God to forgive all shortcomings on the part of the performer of the ceremony.

Such is the account of the *Srādhā* ceremony sent by the secretary of the Calcutta Psycho-Religious Society. Whatever may be its descriptive value, it is very curious that those who practise such a ritual should have thought themselves in some way in sympathy with the Salvation Army.

High things to each mind are the things above it. Let each put forth his hand for those on his own level. It is difficult to think of things as high in the abstract. The dining-room table is high to a black beetle, but a camelopard can easily look in at the first floor windows.—JEAN INGELow.

The will of God can never be other than good; but I doubt if any man can ever be sure that a thing is the will of God, save by seeing into its nature and character, and beholding its goodness. Whatever God does must be right, but are we sure that we know what He does? That which men say He does may be very wrong indeed.—GEO. MACDONALD.

RECORDS OF PRIVATE SEANCES

FROM NOTES TAKEN AT THE TIME OF EACH SITTING.

No. XXXVI.

FROM THE RECORDS OF MRS. S.

June 29th.—Before meeting this evening we had been dining together, and afterwards, during dessert, Mr. S. M. read to us an article he had written that morning upon musical manifestations, more especially concerning those made in the circle by G. Soon after going into the seance-room we perceived much spirit-light, and raps were heard all round Mr. S. M.—one very loud on the door of the bookcase. G. of late had not manifested so frequently, and had made his sounds quite outside of the circle; but to-night he seemed to come at once, making very sweet, quiet sounds on the table. He answered many questions, and told us he had been with Mr. S. M. during the time he was writing the article, had come to our house with him, and had heard all our conversation regarding him and his manifestations. We then asked whether the descriptions were correct. "Yes," was answered joyfully. "Have you anything to add?" "No." "Are you pleased that the account is to be published?" The alphabet was instantly asked for, and "delighted" was given through raps. We then told him how grateful we felt for all the trouble he had taken for so many months in giving us such wonderful manifestations of spirit-power. By raps he said "Thank you." He now played again, louder and better, if possible, than he had ever done before. It seemed as if a giant were playing on a monster violoncello, so loud, deep, and strong were the sounds he drew from his invisible instrument; they were appalling, and would have startled anyone who had not been accustomed (as we had been for many months) to the gradual development of this most wonderful manifestation. All the time this was going on Mr. S. M. was in deep trance. Dr. S. asked for the tambourine sounds. The message was rapped out, "Ask no more." Dr. S. then inquired if our friend H. was present. Instantly he showed his flashing light. It was clear and bright, and darted round the medium, coming close to the table afterwards. Dr. S. then said, "Are any others of our friends here?" He mentioned several names, and thought of Dr. Dee, but would not name him for fear his loud manifestation would alarm us and the medium, still in deep trance. While asking for the "dropping sounds" Dr. Dee took advantage of the thought, and came down with a crashing blow on the centre of the table. It was as if a thunderbolt had fallen in our midst, so awful and loud was the crash; had it been a material blow the table must have been shattered. We were several minutes recovering from the shock of the explosion. Mr. S. M. was too deeply entranced to know what was taking place. Chom then controlled and said he was in a bad way, G. having used too much power; he told us to keep our hands flat on the table and he would keep the medium asleep, or he would have a bad headache. We were then deluged with scent, and perfumed air was wafted over us.

Chom said nothing more could be done, and the Chief could not come near us as G. had used up all the power. Rector was present, and it was well he was, as he helped to restore the conditions. Chom then said "Join hands," and that he and the Indian spirit, who had just arrived, would write. He talked to us for some time, and after Mr. S. M. had come out of the control we found on the paper that had been placed under the table the names of Rector, Chom, and the Indian. Mr. S. M. felt uncomfortable on waking up, but knew nothing that had occurred, as his mind had been a blank during the greater part of the seance.

June 30th. We met as usual. Scent very abundant. G. came making very subdued sounds, as he had made Mr. S. M. ill through using too much power on the previous evening. Chom controlled and spoke a little. Imperator also spoke with great difficulty. He said he had come to let us know he was unable to get near the medium at our last meeting because one of the friends had made too rough a manifestation. It must not occur again, as such manifestations took too much power from the medium. The control was very short, and Imperator left after giving us his blessing.

July 3rd. Mr. Percival sat with us this evening, and we held a short disturbed seance. Rose scent was brought, but as this seemed to turn into peppermint (a very disagreeable scent) we closed the seance. The conditions had been upset before

meeting. I think an uncongenial visitor had been in the house and altered the conditions. After this we held two sances with the manifestations of scent, lights, music, and raps. The Indian spirit brought a very large light, dim, and much draped. He brushed the drapery over our hands several times.

July 12th. This evening Mr. Percival again joined the circle. Our meeting room had been closed and prepared for some time before we met. As soon as we extinguished the natural light we saw masses of spirit-light floating all over the room, and rose perfume was wafted over the circle. The zither spirit came and played very sweetly between me and Mr. S. M. The notes were clear and resembled those made on a harp. At times it appeared as if two instruments were being played, as we heard running treble notes accompanied by deep sounding chords. This manifestation was very sweet, lasting a long time. Questions were answered by the spirit through his instrument. When the medium became entranced, this spirit played over the table, bringing the sounds by request to each of the sitters. G. also came when we asked for him and played on his spirit instrument, making deep, but very sweet and musical sounds. After playing for some time wet scent was thrown over us and Mr. S. M. awoke. We changed the room for a few minutes, and after returning more wet scent was sprinkled over us. Raps were then made round Mr. S. M. and the control was soon established by Imperator, who spoke as follows:—

“May the blessing of the All-Wise be with you. We desired to speak to you to-night, as we may not have another opportunity for some time, for the conditions are unfavourable both as regards the atmosphere and the medium's health. A year ago nothing could have been done under these conditions, but experience has taught us how to overcome obstacles, and in this circle manifestations can be generally produced. Since we last spoke to you we have marked great progress in the work we have in hand: the time draws nigh when a great development of power will show itself and should not be hampered. Hence we desire to enforce conditions which may seem stringent to you. You are the recipients in no ordinary degree of a great development of spiritual power. The spiritual sense is increasing amongst men, and step by step the presence of spirit agency is manifested. Strange to say, we are as ignorant of the conditions on your earth as you are of our world. We stand on similar bases, but continued intercourse has shown us how to overcome and provide against bad conditions. The projection of thought from intelligent minds acts on those around you and helps us in our work.

“The wave of spirit influence now passing over your earth is analagous to that which passed over the world during the life of the Christ. Happy for your race if the teaching now revealed be not hereafter adulterated as was that which came through Him. Those who now teach in His name often preach doctrine quite unlike what He taught. The truth we are now bringing, fresh from the Divine source, will meet with the fate that all truth meets with at first. The time will come when men will receive it; that time is drawing near; you have aided and are still aiding it.

“We dread apathy more than opposition to our work—dead, cold, lifeless indifference, which cares not to question and has not sufficient interest to doubt. Now life is perpetually being born into your world—animal life which enshrines the soul. Mind is no attribute of matter, but is a separate birth and creation in each case. New creations of spirits are formed by condensation of the atmosphere which is the connecting link between us and you. You are surrounded by spirit life and are never alone—never.”

July 19th. We sat as usual. Much spirit-light was visible in the room, and we had also wet scent and perfumed air and musical sounds. Mentor rapped round the medium and controlled him. He said he had been with him and Dr. S. that afternoon at the photographer's, helping little Catharine to manifest, and her likeness was on one of the plates and a friend of the photographer's on the other. She was now present, but felt so delighted that her likeness had been taken that she was not sufficiently passive to manifest her presence by rapping. Mentor answered many questions, and said it was too hot to prolong the séance; but he would meet us at Shanklin, where we were soon going.

July 27th. This evening, as soon as the room was darkened, we saw masses of floating light, which remained with us until the conclusion of the séance. Mr. S. M. was controlled at once. G. manifested quickly, and answered questions. The

zither sound also came and played a duet with G. so near to my face that I could feel the vibrations of the air produced by the sounds. Chords were played with a running accompaniment. By request the trombone played close round the circle. H.'s light was very beautiful, and also manifested round the circle. Much liquid scent was brought, and a quantity poured into a claret glass by request. The scent appeared to fall from the ceiling. Chom and Kabbila brought a large flat shaded light, not bright and flashing like H.'s. Dr. S. asked if it had any drapery round it, and, if so, would they brush it over his hands. They complied with his request several times. Catharine then rapped close to me and her brother. During these varied and powerful manifestations Mr. S. M. was in deep trance. He had been withdrawn from the table, and I heard him making troubled peculiar sounds. Catharine's raps became very frequent, and she appeared excited. At last she called for the alphabet and gave the message—“Take care of the Medium.” “Yes, we will, when he has come out of the trance.” This did not pacify her, and as we had been told never to strike a light until the medium had come out of the control we could not understand her wishes. At last she rapped out “Light.” We then discovered that the medium had fallen from his chair, and was in a very uncomfortable position between the book-case and the table. Dr. S. lifted him up, and we bathed his face with cold water, letting fresh air into the room; but it was some time before he recovered. We were afterwards informed that too much power had been used in the manifestations.

DR. PARKER ON SPIRITUALISM.

One is not greatly exercised to know the opinions of Dr. Parker on any subject whatever, yet there are times when it is useful to note what a person of his intellectual capacity has to say when in presence of a subject he does not understand, but nevertheless about which he thinks it proper and necessary to write. Such an opportunity occurs in the “open letter” to Mr. Stead published in the “Morning” of December 31st, 1892. Mr. Stead had sent Dr. Parker the Christmas Number of the “Review of Reviews.” The result is a pleasant study of words. Says Dr. Parker:—

I am glad to be able to accept your statement without the faintest shadow of reserve as to its literal accuracy, because you have given me evidence which makes scepticism impossible.

Very good; and then a few lines further down in the “open letter” Dr. Parker goes on:—

Of what consequence is it that some ghostly presence has drawn pictures, or some spectral influence has written letters or made lines upon a slate, or given some other token and sign of nearness and interest? Even if all this were literally true, in my judgment it amounts to nothing unless we can carry the matter very much further.

“Even if all this were literally true!” and in a paragraph but separated from this by a few lines this accurate writer asserts that he accepts Mr. Stead's statements without “the faintest shadow of reserve as to their literal accuracy!” Acceptance followed by semi-denial is not a very secure basis for the kind of argument used by even such persons as Dr. Parker.

After this one may expect anything, and it is not surprising to find Dr. Parker arguing in favour of his congregation being about the best circle for investigation that can be imagined:—

For myself, I have no difficulty in believing that all sances, all inquiries of the kind you indicate, all earnest endeavours to test the reality of the spiritual, represent so much groping after God Himself. “God is a Spirit.” If men were to give themselves, might and main, to an inquiry concerning God, I should regard that inquiry as expressing the deepest interest in true Spiritualism. Why be anxious to talk to the servant when we can get access to the Master Himself? Why talk to the sentry at the door when we can advance into the very presence chamber of the Monarch? It seems to me that a congregation, properly regulated, ought to constitute the largest and most effective séance possible. I do not look upon a congregation

merely as a public mob, or a miscellaneous gathering of unrelated atoms and particles. I look upon it as a constituted medium or organisation through which the Most High can communicate present-day revelations. Of course, if congregations will not lift up their thoughts to this high level they cannot expect to receive visions from God. If they have merely assembled promiscuously to take only the interest of curiosity in what is going on they will deprive themselves of all the richest advantages.

This, which is of the lowest kind of Sunday-school teaching, is followed immediately by a paragraph where the word "therefore" is as much out of place as the "therefore" between Tenterden steeple and the Goodwin Sands:—

I should hold, therefore, that the letter which you were enabled to write by some kind of spiritual influence, is not for a moment to be compared in living interest, nor for the highest purposes, as equal to what we find written in the Bible.

How a letter can, even "for a moment," be compared "as equal to what we find written in the Bible" it is difficult to see, but the language is of the same excellence as the logic—slipshod English, slipshod argument.

Dr. Parker then drags in Irving Bishop and Stuart Cumberland, notwithstanding the assertion at the beginning of the "open letter" as to the "literal accuracy" which had made scepticism impossible:—

Mr. Irving Bishop was a frequent visitor at my house. He laid no claim to anything in the line of Spiritualism.

The "line of Spiritualism." How well one knows the style. "A new line in fancy cottons. Nothing else like it in the trade":—

He could not explain his own actions; in some cases he was neither afraid nor ashamed to call them tricks. A great scientific authority told him that many of his eccentric and marvellous actions were due to what he called "unconscious cerebration," by which, I suppose, he meant some unconscious action of the brain which did not fall within the ascertained lines of mental science. I have seen Mr. Irving Bishop discover hidden things, find out words that were written and sealed up in envelopes, and so far follow the thinking of a subject as to be able to give names, figures, letters, and the like as they were communicated from the brain of the subject to his own brain. All this was very striking, but what did it amount to?

And Dr. Parker is very careful not to say what it *did* amount to. We then get a panegyric of Stuart Cumberland, whose tricks we are told were "wonderful"; and Dr. Parker proceeds:—

No doubt a rogue could make a great deal out of the exercise of such a faculty, but Mr. Stuart Cumberland simply said that he believed every mental action had its corresponding physical indications, and it was by the out-working of these indications that his hand transferred to the blackboard the impressions that were written upon the brain of the subject with whom he was co-operating. This again, I repeat, is very striking; at the same time one cannot but ask, What is the use of it? What does it amount to? Is it not merely a very curious trick and nothing more?

What does Dr. Parker mean? Does he know what he means himself? After having referred to Mr. Stead's letter as written "by some kind of spiritual influence," he implies that, after all, it was a "very curious trick and nothing more."

That Dr. Parker concludes with the observation that the Church should look upon Spiritualism with a "friendly eye when the processes are honestly conducted" in no way helps us over the difficulties of his contradictions and implications.

THOUGH the "Times" took no notice of the death of Mr. Stainton Moses in its customary daily obituary, nevertheless his death is noticed in the general obituary of the year. He is described as "Spiritualist" and Editor of "LIGHT."

BUILD up spiritual excellence from within, do not start with ceremonies and proceed until you encompass the heart; but start at the heart and build outwards. Keep the pinnacles of that building in symmetrical proportions; do not allow one pinnacle to assume the proportions of a spire at the expense of spiritual symmetry.—GEORGE ELLIOTT WRIGHT.

SPIRITUALISM AND SCIENCE.

We have received from Buenos Ayres Señor Senillosa's work on "The Agreement of Spiritualism with Science," the result of the patient study of the phenomena for eight years. We have read this book with interest, and are convinced that such a scholarly and withal temperate presentation to the Spanish-speaking public of the case for Spiritualism cannot fail to bear good fruit. The history and philosophy of the movement are ably outlined, and many phases of mediumship are described, interspersed with thoughtful hypotheses as to how the phenomena are produced. Even the knotty question of the existence and form of the soul is bravely tackled—of course, from the Re-incarnationist standpoint, for Allan Kardec's influence throughout the book is abundantly apparent. There are not a few noteworthy records of phenomena which have come under the author's personal notice, scattered among the many interesting but well-known cases compiled from the leading authorities. In one place he relates a rather curious case of haunting. A friend, when a youth, was staying with an aunt of his who died. On the evening of the death, when the family and friends were assembled together for sympathy, the key in the outer door unlocked itself with a harsh grating sound, and the bolt drew back, and the doors flew open much to the consternation of the assembly. When everyone had retired for the night the youth and his brothers heard the noise and short, quick steps, and the rustle of a dress on the floor. The steps seemed to move backwards and forwards, pausing for a while at the door of a bedroom where some relations slept, and where there was a light. In the youths' bedroom were two tables covered with knick-knacks. The young men felt one of the tables move, and it appeared from the noise made to be completely wrecked, together with the porcelain ornaments. Then the other table was approached and the like seemed to happen. When the elder brother exclaimed, "How long will aunt haunt us like this?" the noises abruptly ceased, but the terrified cries of their sister from the adjoining room were soon heard: "Mother! aunt has come to my bed; I feel her near me." "You are dreaming," said the mother, striking a light, "but if you are afraid it is because of the quarrel you had with your aunt." On the sister saying that she wished to forgive her aunt the manifestations at once ceased. Next day the mother declared she had heard no noises in the brothers' room, and, strange to say, the tables showed no sign of damage.

There is also an account of the surprising cure of an internal tumour in a woman by a French magnetiser, which cure Señor Senillosa himself witnessed in Paris. After magnetising the woman for ten minutes, the mesmerist said, "How do you feel now?" "As if I were being burnt up inside," replied the woman, groaning. "Ah, that is what we are trying to do—to cauterise the tumour." This treatment continued daily, for a fortnight the pain becoming less and less acute, finally disappearing. Scattered throughout the book there is plenty of really excellent advice, while here and there are not a few needed words of warning as to the unwisdom of meddling with Spiritualism in anything but a serious mood. "It is a double-edged sword. Woe to him who manages it badly." In this connection we will quote a rather gruesome instance of the folly of blindly surrendering the conduct of mundane affairs to spirit control. There was a certain fruit-seller in Buenos Ayres who had a son, who was a trance-medium. This son was ordered by his control to select a certain number for the lottery. This number drew the prize. Then he was told that there was a large quantity of gold under the house—left there from the time of the Spaniards. The fruiterer excavated in every direction, but found nothing. Not yet disillusionised, he was induced by the spirit to realise his business and take up a concession of land in Patagonia, where he was to erect a factory for making oil from fish, and amass an immense fortune. The result was that the fruiterer's wife died there, his son went mad, and he himself returned home a ruined man. It is significant that the author concludes his work with the words "More prudence and less propaganda."

THE WILL.—'Tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus. Our bodies are our gardens, to the which our wills are gardeners; so that if we will plant nettles, or sow lettuce, set hyssop and weed up thyme . . . have it sterile with idleness, or manured with industry, why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills.—SHAKESPEARE.

* "Concordancia del Espiritismo con la Ciencia."—PAR FELIPE SENILLOSA.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
2, DUKE STREET,
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Light:

EDITED BY "M. A., LOND."

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7th, 1893.

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 OUTLOOK.

Though such epochs as that of New Year's Day are fixed more or less arbitrarily—the summer solstice would have been as good as the winter solstice for the fixed point of a new departure—yet these epochs, whenever they come, bring with them a certain feeling of beginning again. More than ever is it so with us this year. The one man who had been so long identified with "LIGHT" and all matters connected with Spiritualism has gone from us, and others must take the responsibility, and that responsibility is not small, for we stand in the presence of a new order of things.

When Stainton Moses began to interest himself in Spiritualism the world mocked; when he died the world had become interested. The work he did was essentially a fighting work, and when his perhaps not always scientific methods are attacked it should be remembered that it was to gain a hearing by the world of what he believed to be truth that Stainton Moses struggled. If the Society for Psychical Research, whose work has been invaluable, has made it possible to talk of occult matters without being branded as a fool or madman, let us not forget that it was very much owing to Stainton Moses that the Society itself became a possibility. He fought, and the result we are beginning to understand.

The task that has to be performed is in one sense easier than that of Stainton Moses, in another sense harder; easier in that the ground has been prepared; harder as prosperity, however slight, is more difficult to cope with than adversity, however great. To keep healthy on the hills with pure air and simple food is one thing, to withstand the intricate and delicately arranged assaults of a luxurious life on the plains is another thing. Not that the last condition is fulfilled as yet, but there are signs that it will come in the not very distant future, and the fight with the adversaries then will be very hard.

That this is the position needs but little consideration. It is true that the two morning halfpenny papers, the "Morning" and the "Morning Leader," are not of such importance as the greater dailies, but there is the fact that each of those papers devoted on the same day space to the consideration of Spiritualistic matters, banteringly certainly, but only half banteringly in the one case, and seriously though foolishly in the other. The managers of these papers presumably know their public. Undoubtedly certain of the leaders, or rather followers, of public opinion

try to ignore the psychical reaction that has set in, but it is only an attempt, and a leader which appeared recently in the "Times" was an eloquent tribute to the spirituality which is beginning to flood even our commercial civilisation. The old landmarks are being destroyed, and who shall set up the new? There came through the long years mysterious driftwood across the Atlantic on to the shores of Europe, and at last the meaning of that driftwood was understood. The continent of America was discovered. So has the driftwood come across the boundaries from the unseen; and that other country, not the small heaven of the orthodox, but a state real, more real than this, has come within our knowledge. Call it what you will, subliminal consciousness, the Beyond, four-dimensional space, or what not—there has come into our common consciousness something that but a short time since was the possession of an isolated and esoteric few. A whole continent lies before us, and its exploration is our work, subject to all the dangers of travelling into the unknown.

It is easy to suppose that when Columbus first sighted the West Indian islands he, or, if not he, many of his men, thought they had found all that was to be found. In the golden groves of the summer isles they could not imagine the icy shores of Labrador, the cañons of the Yosemite, or the roaring waters of Niagara; yet these were all eventually to be found. So the traveller into the region of the unseen is but too apt to think his small experience is the experience of every one else, his summer land of luxurious peace comprises all the continent of an enfeebling heaven.

The fight has any way to go on, not now so much with this world, but with other and stronger adversaries, who revel in making for us placid assurance that "all is well." For we, indeed, "wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

The next meeting of members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held at 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, on Tuesday, the 17th inst., at 7.30 p.m., when an address will be delivered by the Rev. J. Page Hopps, on "The Unceasing Day of Pentecost."

A COINCIDENCE.

The late S. C. Hall says of Campbell's burial in Westminster Abbey: "Statesmen, poets, and men of letters followed the venerable Dean of St. Paul's, the poet Milman, as, reading the burial service, he led the solemn procession to Poets' Corner. It was not, however, the presence of those illustrious mourners that made the funeral one of the most impressive ever seen in that mausoleum of great men. A long, reverential pause preceded the words, 'Ashes to ashes, dust to dust.' As they were slowly uttered a Polish officer advanced from among the mourners and dropped upon the coffin some earth taken from the grave of Kosciusko, the hero whose patriotism and death the poet had praised in verse. The effect was startling. Then came the climax. 'I heard a voice from Heaven,' read the Dean, and immediately a thunder-clap shook the old Abbey. He paused; the mourners were thrilled. As the awful sound died away, the Dean finished the sentence: 'they rest from their labours.' It is to this startling incident that Sir Theodore Martin refers in his poem, 'The Interment of Thomas Campbell':—

Louder yet, and yet more loudly, let the organ's thunders rise.
Hark! a louder thunder answers, deepening inwards to the skies—
Heaven's majestic diapason, pealing as from east to west;
Never grander music anthemed poet to his hour of rest."

"A coincidence," say you? Yes. But what coincidence is not determinedly co-ordinated with its incidence?—"SALADIN," in the "Agnostic Journal."

LET us, if we must have great actions, make our own also; all action is of infinite elasticity, and the least admits of being inflated with celestial air, until it eclipses the sun and moon.—
R. W. EMERSON.

SAUL'S VISIT TO THE WOMAN OF ENDOR.

BY ALLAMESE, PER R. J. L.

The tragic circumstances attending the death of Saul on the day following his visit to the Woman of Endor have been made the ground of innumerable warnings, on the part of some of our more orthodox friends, against participations in Spiritualist séances, from the supposition that such séances are shown, by the fate which befel the King, to be in opposition to divine laws. The text on which this supposition is based does not appear in the detailed account, given in the Biblical records, of Saul's visit to Endor, but is founded on a condensed statement in the Book of Chronicles where the whole reference to the life of the King is compressed into fourteen verses. This statement is as follows:—

So Saul died for his transgressions which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it; and enquired not of the Lord; therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse. (1 Chron. x. 13, 14.)

Two allegations are made here, both of which are generally accepted without further inquiry, but both of which we believe to be contrary to fact: (1) That Saul lost his life as a penalty for seeking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, and (2) that he did this in preference to inquiring of the Lord. We propose to carry our investigation further than is customary, and will endeavour to discover, if possible, the true answer to two important questions:—

I.—*Had Saul's consultation with the Woman of Endor anything to do with his death?*

To obtain a correct reply to this question we shall have to refer to several passages in the life of Saul as recorded in the Book of Samuel. The first which has any direct bearing upon his death is a message given to the King by Samuel as follows:—

Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass. . . . And Saul smote the Amalekites, from Havilah until thou comest to Shur that is over against Egypt. And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fattings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but everything that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly. (1 Sam. xv. 2, 9.)

It needs no learned theologian to point out that Saul kept but one part of the command, and paid no attention to the other. All that was valuable and costly of the Amalekites' property he carefully appropriated for his own purposes, that which was useless he destroyed without compunction. But he was not dealing with a man; the command for extermination came from the spiritual side of life, Samuel was but the medium of communication. Spiritual intelligences were watching the execution of the command; they saw his faithlessness, and told the same to Samuel while Saul was yet returning from his victory. Samuel was informed of the whereabouts of the King, and went forth to meet him, not to congratulate him upon his success, but to pronounce a sentence upon his perfidy. Hear the old man:—

Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king. (1 Sam. xv. 22, 23.)

Very long and painful was that interview—the last that ever took place between the King and Samuel, before the death of the prophet. Saul repented of his sin, and pleaded for forgiveness, but Samuel had no power to revoke the sentence; the mind of God had been declared, and Saul was rejected. The next chapter recounts the anointing of David as King in his stead, and adds one sentence in reference to Saul which tells how terribly things had changed:—

But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. (1 Sam. xvi. 14.)

Twenty-three years elapsed between Samuel's declaration of the rejection of Saul and his visit to the cave of the Woman of

Endor, where the next and final interview took place between them. Surely Saul might have been pardoned for hoping that a sentence so long delayed in its fulfilment had been forgotten or revoked. He was still King; the denunciation of the prophet had not driven him from the throne; he would venture to try and see him again by the instrumentality of the woman, and learn if his former sin was really remembered against him. The passage in the Book of Chronicles says it was for carrying out this project that he paid the penalty of his life. Fortunately we can test this assertion by the very words of the prophet—as the whole conversation is recorded:—

And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known to me what I shall do. Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy? And the Lord hath done to him as he spake by me; for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even to David: because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, nor executedst His fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day. Moreover, the Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines. (1 Sam. xxviii. 15-19.)

Not a word, hint, or sign that the coming death of Saul is due to his seeking that interview. The only reference made to it by the prophet is—"Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?" But when the explanation was given, Samuel was satisfied, and merely announced the speedy fulfilment of the long-delayed sentence, and substantially repeated his message of twenty-three years before. Because Saul refused to utterly destroy Amalek was the "therefore" of his death, which was announced for the morrow.

II.—*Had Saul neglected to inquire of God before having recourse to the Woman of Endor?*

Chronicles says that he had, and that therefore he was slain; but the detailed statement of the Book of Samuel does not bear out the words of Chronicles, for it says that he did inquire of the Lord, but to no purpose:—

And when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her and enquire of her. (1 Sam. xxviii. 6, 7.)

He had exhausted every means at his disposal to learn the will of God, but all without avail; and it was only in the last extremity, when the time of battle was drawing nigh, that he resorted to a means which was objectionable to him, but yet the only one available. We say "objectionable," because it must be remembered that Saul had been very diligent in trying to exterminate such as this woman from the land. (1 Sam. xxviii. 3.) A confirmation of this view of the position is found in Saul's words to Samuel:—

I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams; therefore have I called thee, that thou mayest make known to me what I shall do. (1 Sam. xxviii. 15.)

We are well aware that the comparison of the two accounts establishes a case of contradiction in the Bible records, but with this fact we have no immediate concern. We may, however, mention one circumstance which throws some little light upon the existence of these contradictions, and is not without some bearing upon the subject of our inquiry. In the introductory notes to the summary of the Chronicles in Bagster's "Teachers' Bible"—a book by no means published in the interest of Spiritualism—we read:—

The narrative (of Chronicles) runs parallel with that of the preceding historical books, especially that of Samuel and Kings; but whereas the earlier history was written from a prophetic interest this (Chronicles) was written from a priestly. ("Bible Helps," p. 28.)

Here lies the secret of the whole matter. The prophets and the priests were always at deadly feud, and their interests could never be brought to run on parallel lines. The inquiry from God was originally in the hands of the priesthood, but when the prophets came they superseded the priests in this particular, thereby lessening the authority of the latter. This was too

much for the officers of the sanctuary to endure in silence, and consequently they became as zealous, or more so, in persecuting the prophets as in discharging their own priestly functions. Samuel had no interest in maintaining the priestly authority; to him, "to obey" was "better than sacrifice"; hence we do not find him breathing any denunciation for Saul's visit to the woman. On the other hand the priests saw their institution was in danger, and simply refer to Saul for the purpose of declaring that he died for not inquiring of the Lord, and daring to consult God through one upon whom the hands of anointing had not rested.

Some persons will be anxious to ask whether it was not a very strange coincidence, which led Saul to visit the Woman of Endor upon the last night of his life. We reply at once that we do not think there was any coincidence in the case, but that a careful following up of the chain of events from another—and generally unheeded—point of view, will reveal to us the fact that that visit had more of a divine appointment about it, than the committing of a forbidden sin. Let us follow this line of thought.

Sixteen years after Saul's rejection, and seven before his death, David was anointed by Samuel to be King in Saul's stead. (1 Sam. xxi.) Throughout that sixteen years Israel had been at peace, but no sooner had David been anointed than the Philistines marched against Saul, and Goliath "defied the army of the Lord." The craven spirit of Saul was at once manifest in his neglect to answer the challenge of the "heathen" champion. Had the spirit of the Lord been with him then Goliath would not twice have defied them. But the stripling David came to the rescue, achieved the welcome victory, and was at once recognised as being "the blessed of the Lord." "Saul hath slain his thousands, but David his ten thousands," was the cry of the whole nation. This provoked the anger of Saul and led him to hunt David as a fugitive in the wilderness in order that he might kill him. At length David found a safe refuge with Achish, the King of the Philistines, where he dwelt for several years with his friends, until Achish gathered his army and marched against Saul to the fatal battle of Gilboa. David called his followers together and marched with Achish, and only through the lack of confidence shown in him by the princes of Philistia, were he and his men sent back again. The only battle Israel had been engaged in since the rejection of Saul had been won by David; a second battle approaches and the Bethlehemite is with the enemy coming on to the engagement. In the interval between the battles Saul has added to his sins the charge of attempting to take the life of his anointed successor; may we not then expect the battle to go against the forsaken King?

At such a moment Saul consults the oracle as to his prospects of success. Urim is unresponsive; he asks that God will make known His will by dreams, but his sleep is dreamless; then the prophets are consulted, but there is no "Thus saith the Lord." There is one other means of oracular consultation known to him, a person that hath a familiar spirit; to this he must resort for he dare not go to battle until he has tried every available method; therefore his determination.

All the facts of the case point to the one conclusion that events were so ordered as to lead Saul to visit the woman for a specific purpose, which could be only accomplished in her cave. Saul and Samuel had to be brought face to face once again, in order that the King might know from the lips of the prophet that the sentence he had pronounced so long ago had not been revoked or forgotten. This appearance of Samuel could not satisfactorily take place through either of the usually adopted methods. Urim gave its reply by a flash or voice; a dream might be considered by the King as uncertain; and the prophets answered by inspiration or trance; only in the place and the presence of a medium suitable for materialisation could the personal interview be afforded. That the visit was in full accord with the divine will (we use this term without prejudice for the sake of the argument) is patent from the fact of the appearance of Samuel, who came as a messenger of God and established his claim as such according to the Mosaic test:—

When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously. Thou shalt not be afraid of him. (Deut. xviii. 22.)

By the same authority if the thing comes to pass that prophet has spoken in the name of the Lord. Now Samuel told Saul that "to-morrow thou and thy sons shall be with

me," a statement which was verified to the letter, which gave the divine sanction to the interview. But why could not this information have been given by Urim, by prophet, or by dream? It could have been easily done; but the honour of the prophet had to be maintained—and Samuel was the first of his line—by their being brought face to face, a fact by which God taught a great lesson to Israel and set His seal of approval on the line of mediums by whom Samuel would be succeeded.

Another significant and parallel fact calls for our attention here. While Saul was fruitlessly endeavouring to consult the ordinary oracles at Gilboa, David, at Ziklag, had not the least difficulty in doing so. Finding on his return from the army that the town had been burned and his wives taken prisoners, he commanded the ephod to be brought:—

And David enquired at the Lord, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue; for thou shalt surely overtake them and without fail recover all. (1 Sam. xxx. 8.)

What necessity was there for Saul to consult the oracle at all? If the methods usually resorted to were silent why need he seek to consult others? It does not require any very close study of the Mosaic law to know that it was a distinct command that Israel was to go to battle and come in from battle by the direction of the oracle. The command was given when Joshua was appointed leader in the place of Moses:—

And he shall stand before Eleazer the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the Lord: at his word shall they go out, and at his word shall they come in, both he and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation.—(Numb. xxvii., 21.)

The Bible records more than one event where the Israelites were wrong through not making the authorised consultation; it was therefore a very important preparation for a battle to know the will of the oracle. We have just seen that David asked such counsel before pursuing the spoilers of Ziklag, and Saul had no intention of drawing his sword until he had done the same and received a reply. Did the silence mean "wait"? But while he waited the Philistines were gaining ground. So the silence drove him to the Woman of Endor, where the purposes of God were fulfilled—Saul and Samuel were brought again face to face, and the King learned his fate.

Someone will tell us that Moses commanded all such as this Woman of Endor, together with diviners, necromancers, and soothsayers, to be put to death as an abomination to the Lord. We know he did, but for some reason or other we are constantly finding his orders at variance with recorded facts. For instance: When Joseph's brethren left Egypt the second time with corn, he had ordered their money to be put in the mouths of their sacks as before, but in Benjamin's sack his own cup had been concealed in addition. They had scarcely left before we hear Joseph saying to his steward:—

Up, follow after the men, and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? Is not this it in which my lord drinketh, and where-by indeed he divineth? Ye have done evil in so doing. (Gen. xlv. 4, 5.)

Now if Joseph was not a diviner, he could not have been such a model of truth as he is said to have been of virtue. Again, when that mysterious hand wrote upon the wall at Belshazzar's Feast, the Queen of Babylon referred to Daniel thus:—

There is a man in thy kingdom in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the King Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers. (Dan. v. 11.)

Daniel held this position in Babylon for more than thirty years, and was assisted in his divinations by his three friends. Were these four men abominations to the Lord? According to Moses they were, and should have died the death; but instead of this the three were saved, by divine interposition from death in the fiery furnace, and Daniel had an equally signal delivery from a den of lions. The very practices which Moses denounced and commanded to be punished by death, became the legitimate practice of the prophets who came after him.

There is evidence in the Bible, however, which comes much nearer to the case of Saul and the Woman of Endor, than these instances bring it. There are several cases recorded where "heathen" necromancers, such as was this woman of Endor, were specially used by God when Israelitish prophets were

not at hand. The instance of Balaam is the best known of these cases. When the messengers of Balak arrived at his house, with the reward of divination, the wizard said :—

Lodge here this night, and I will bring you word again, as the Lord shall speak unto me : and the princes of Moab abode with Balaam. And God came unto Balaam, and said, What men are these with thee ? (Num. xxii. 8, 9.)

"God came unto Balaam." These words prove our case without quoting the whole story, which is so well known, and in which we find that God and His angels came again and again to this Moabitish necromancer, and used him for the purpose of blessing Israel.

When "the Ark of the Lord" had been captured by the Philistines and placed in the temple of Dagon, at Ashdod, with such wonderful results, God revealed His will to the Philistine magicians as to the offerings they should make, and how the Ark should be sent back to Israel. (1 Sam. vi. 1-9.)

Necho, King of Egypt, also received a command to go up to battle from the Lord through His wise men (2 Chron. xxxv. 21), which was fully substantiated by the victory he obtained and the death of King Josiah. So was the Woman of Endor used for the same divine purpose, and when her part was played she, too, fell into the background and was forgotten.

How terribly unusual was the answer to her enchantments on that eventful night is evidenced by her cry of fear, when she beheld the spirit of the prophet arising from the ground. This was no "familiar" ! Her "familiars" were not in the habit of making themselves visible, but answered by speaking "low out of the dust" (Isa. xxix. 4), and declaring themselves to her alone whose command they obeyed. But in this instance there rose up before her astonished sight "an old man covered with a mantle," who forthwith dispensed with her services and addressed himself to Saul. The King was to go to the battle, and Samuel said it would be his last.

What more need we say ? The only shadow of a curse which is to be found in this incident is that which priestcraft and bigotry seek to throw across it. The only curse which rested upon Saul was for his disobedience at Amalek.

Does God ever work evil that good may result ? If so—if He were capable of so doing—then He would become a broken reed to rest upon. Absolute truth is an essential part of absolute perfection ; it is therefore an impossible thing for a perfect God to act or tell a lie. God permitted Samuel to appear to Saul, or the Bible becomes a false guide ; and if Samuel appeared, that one case establishes the fact that the so-called dead have the power to return. It matters not if there had never been another instance known ; the fact remains the same. That Samuel did appear to Saul and speak to him no one can deny in the face of the evidence : there must therefore exist some law by which the spirits of the departed may enter into communication with friends on earth. The case of Samuel is corroborated by the reappearance of Moses and Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration, and if further evidence is needed to show that such intercourse is permissible, is it not found in the fact that Jesus conversed with them ? The two cases quoted are all the evidence needed to establish a truth, but these have been supplemented by thousands of others occurring in all ages, in every nation, and authenticated equally well with any other known fact. Bigots may condemn this fuller and brighter revelation, as they have every other in the past, but truth has always been too powerful for error, and so it will be once again. Spirit intercourse rolls back the stone from the door of the sepulchre ; it proclaims the presence of those we love ; it strikes the chains of superstition from the sons of men ; it is the foe of dogma, creed, and sect ; and knows as its only gospel that which was taught by Jesus—the Fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man.

Is such a system promulgated by devils from hell or angels from Heaven ? Let common-sense, not blinded bigotry, give an answer.

PEACE.

God spoke to her, and so she fell asleep.
I laid a white fair lily on her heart,
And when I saw her face I could not weep.

It had the peace Death only understands ;
And when I knew she would not wake on earth
I laid my heart between her folded hands.

God spoke to her so softly, saying : "Rest !"
And when she wakes in Heaven, she will find
My lily and my heart upon her breast.

—CORA FABBRI.—*Lyrics.*

BLACK MAGIC.

The *Theosophist* for December contains some more old stories of Black Magic. Those now given are by Pietro della Valle, an Italian traveller who visited Turkey, Egypt, Syria, Persia, and India some time during the seventeenth century, and by Abul Fagal, of about the same period. It goes without saying that at the time when our own Royal Society was discussing the qualities of "sympathetic powders," and so forth, the world at large was a trifle credulous. At the same time, there is a curious uniformity in these old stories of witchcraft, and one would like to know where and how they have their counterpart now. Pietro della Valle says :—

An Arabian woman, by name Meluk, was thrown in prison on a charge of having bewitched, or as they call it, eaten the heart of a young native of Ormuz, who had lately, from being a Christian, turned Mahomedan. The cause of the offence was that the young man, after keeping company some time with one of her daughters, had forsaken her. He himself who was in a pitiable condition, and in danger of his life, was one of her accusers. This sort of witchcraft, which the Indians call eating the heart, and which is what we call bewitching, as sorcerers do by their venomous and deadly looks, is not a new thing nor unheard of elsewhere ; for many persons practised it formerly in Slavonia, and the country of the Triballes, as we learn from Ortelius, who took the account from Pliny, who upon the report of Isigones testifies that this species of enchantment was much in use among these people, and many others whom he mentions, as it is at present here, especially among the Arabians, who inhabit the western coast of the Persian Gulf, where this art is common. The way in which they do it is only by the eyes and mouth, keeping the eyes fixed steadily upon the person whose heart they design to eat, and pronouncing between their teeth, I know not what diabolical words, by virtue of which and by the operation of the devil, the person, how hale and strong so ever, falls immediately into an unknown and inevitable disease, which makes him appear phthisical, consumes him little by little, and at last destroys him. And this takes place faster or slower as the heart is eaten, as they say ; for these sorcerers can either eat the whole or a part only ; that is, can consume it entirely and at once or bit by bit, as they please. The vulgar give it this name, because they believe that the devil, acting upon the imagination of the witch when she mutters her wicked words, represents invisibly to her the heart and entrails of the patient, taken out of his body and makes her devour them, in which these wretches find so delightful a task, that very often to satisfy their appetite, without any impulse of resentment or enmity, they will destroy innocent persons, and even their nearest relatives, as there is a report that our prisoner killed one of her own daughters in this manner.

This was confirmed to me by a similar story, which I heard at Ispahan, from the mouth of P. Schostian de Jesus, a Portuguese Augustinian, a man to be believed, and of singular virtue, who was prior of their convent when I departed. He assured me, that in one of the places dependent upon Portugal, on the confines of Arabia Felix (Yemen), I know not whether it was at Muscate or at Ormuz, an Arab having been taken up for a similar crime, and convicted of it—for he confessed the fact—the captain or governor of the place, who was a Portuguese, that he might better understand the truth of these black and devilish actions of which there is no doubt in this country, ordered the sorcerer to be brought before him before he was led to his punishment, and asked him if he could eat the inside of a cucumber without opening it as well as the heart of a man. The sorcerer said yes, and in order to prove it a cucumber was brought. He looked at it, never touching it, steadily for the time, with his usual enchantments, and then told the captain he had eaten the whole inside ; and accordingly when it was opened nothing was found but the rind. This is not impossible ; for the devil of whom they make use in these operations, having in the order of nature greater powers than all inferior creatures, can, with God's permission, produce these effects and others more marvellous.

Abul Fagal tells this :—

One of the wonders of this country is the "Jiggerkhar" (or liver-eater). One of this class can steal away the liver of another by looks and incantations. Other accounts say that by looking at

a person he deprives him of his senses, and then he steals from him something resembling the seed of a pomegranate, which he hides in the calf of his leg. The "Jiggerkhar" throws on the fire the grain before described, which spreads to the size of a dish, and he distributes it amongst his fellows, to be eaten; which ceremony concludes the life of the fascinated person. A "Jiggerkhar" is able to communicate his art to another, which he does by teaching him the incantations, and by making him eat a bit of the liver cake. If any one cuts open the calf of the magician's leg, extracts the grain, and gives it to the afflicted person to eat, he immediately recovers. These "Jiggerkhars" are mostly women. It is said, moreover, that they can bring intelligence from a great distance in a short space of time; and if they are thrown into a river, with a stone tied to them, they nevertheless will not sink.

The people in authority had a pleasant way of punishing this kind of thing:—

In order to deprive any one of this wicked power, they brand his temples, and every joint in his body, cram his eyes with salt, suspend him for forty days in a subterranean cavern, and repeat over him certain incantations. In this state he is called "Detchereh." Although, after having undergone this discipline, he is not able to destroy the liver of any one, yet he retains the power of being able to discover another "Jiggerkhar," and is used for detecting those disturbers of mankind. They can also cure many diseases, by administering a potion, or by repeating an incantation. Many other marvellous stories are told of these people.

SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY.

FROM THE "DAILY GRAPHIC."

To the "Fortnightly" the Rev. H. R. Haweis contributes a further interesting paper on the subject of spirit photography, a subject which he has now taken under his especial patronage. What he has to say may be listened to with the more attention because, as he explains himself, he has never seen a ghost. "I am not clairvoyant, very doubtfully clairaudient, only slightly telepathic; I am not good at *planchette*, pencils will not write automatically for me, tables will not rap unless there is a medium present; I cannot see in crystals; I have no prophetic dreams, no distinct intuitions, and, though not a direct hindrance to phenomena, I am not particularly helpful at séances, and although I have attended a good many, I am now very rarely present at them." So it is rather as an outsider that he holds a brief for the earth-walking spirit, for in other directions he has been still as unsuccessful:—

I have had many friends who have passed away after promising faithfully that they would appear to me if they possibly could after death. The last of these was my valued and lamented friend, the Rev. John Macnaught, who was by his own desire cremated at Woking. I have never yet had the least sign from him or any of the dead.

Mr. Haweis's main argument though is this:—"The camera has no fancies; the sensitive plate is without imagination;" and many photographers are in the habit of casting aside plates, after partial development, because they have what they call a fault—that is, a blur or marks obscuring or occupying portions of the plate. That these marks should be carefully examined is what Mr. Haweis recommends:—

I heard the other day of a young lady who was photographed, at Brighton. I believe, and twice the plate came out blurred. The second time she persuaded the photographer, who was about to lay it aside as useless, to develop it. The blurs, on being examined with a magnifier, proved to be faces, all the same face. She at once recognised it as the face of a rejected lover who had died.

In short, the contention—and it is one of the most reasonable contentions ever put forward by Spiritualistic advocates—is this: "May not a surface more chemically sensitive than the human retina be able to receive impressions of things really objective, but to us invisible?" The answer is of course obvious. We have only to reflect on the thousands of stars which have been photographed—stars whose light no telescope, however powerful, has been able to reveal to the human eye.

The talent of success is nothing more than doing what you can do well; and doing well whatever you do—without thought of fame. If it come at all it will come because it is deserved, not because it is sought after.—LONGFELLOW.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Under this heading we propose, at the request of several subscribers, to give from time to time such questions as may reach us—provided we deem them of a profitable character—with a view to their being answered, not necessarily by the Editor, but preferably by our readers. Both questions and answers should be stated clearly and succinctly, and in the replies the questions should be indicated by the number, to prevent the necessity of their being re-stated.

1. Why is an "Astral Body" so called, and what connection has it with the stars?—A. C. M.
2. Why, in astrological lore, is Saturn considered an *unlucky* planet, while his reign on earth is called the "Golden Age," to designate the happiest of all periods?—A. C. M.
3. Has any reader of "LIGHT" had experience of the control of automatic writing by the spirit of a person still in the flesh? A friend of mine has been surprised by a message thus obtained, professedly from a person living in a distant part of the world?—INQUIRER.
4. I should be glad to have a definition of spirit and the relation between spirit and matter. Are they dual, co-existent, co-equal, and co-eternal? Is matter the result of a condition of spirit, or are they different and independent entities?—CHARLES STRANGE.

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.]

Re-Incarnation.

SIR,—If "G.M.C." will refer to my letter in your issue of December 10th he will see that my statement in regard to the consciousness and reality of spirit life was in opposition to the condition of material existence, and did not extend to Kardec's conception of spirit existence outside the material world.

As to the "apparent injustice of our present surroundings," I should say that it is only apparent, and that our ideas of justice vary. As we have to pass through this life it is our duty to rise above our surrounding conditions, whatever they may be. I should like "G.M.C." to say of what good are all the virtues in the world without their corresponding vices, and the possession of such vices without the opportunity to gratify them. If the incarnate spirit fails, during its passage through this life, to learn certain lessons necessary for its future progress, it has to gather them under a new set of conditions and with the burden of increased difficulties, as a retribution for its past failure. It is stern justice, I know; but still, it is more consonant with my ideas of justice.

The fact that there are exceptional intellects is no proof of the actual existence of Re-incarnation; it only shows that one man has made more use of his gifts than another. Besides, astrologers have another solution of that riddle.

I have made a study of Kardec's works for three months, but at last came to the conclusion, as I said before, that he does anything but explain the necessity for personal existence, which individuality, after the process termed death has taken place, is thrown off like an old garment.

In conclusion, I will add that my remarks on the theory of Re-incarnation refer, as will be seen by my former letter, to re-birth on this planet in a physical human frame, and not to the possibility of existence (not necessarily material or personal) in other worlds and systems. CHARLES STRANGE.

SIR.—Your "LIGHT" comes weekly to our house, hence I see it, and you will forgive me if I say I feel regret that you show such a strong bias against the only key* to the problems human life presents—viz., re-embodiment. I accepted this at the time I was a Spiritualist because of its logical necessity, and it seems to me impossible to believe that the countless millions—billions, rather—have, after one life on this planet each of an average length of less than thirty years, slipped out of physical existence altogether.† Also, a being generated in time cannot be immortal;‡ the immortal part of it necessarily possesses pre-existence. As for the injustice of this one-life condition, it simply makes a chaos of human life altogether. One person has every advantage in wealth, position, and brains, another is a wretched outcast: one enjoys life after a fashion, another

* How—the only key?—ED. † Why not?—ED. ‡ Again, why not?—ED.

commits suicide; one works for humanity, another lives in an asylum; one is strong and robust, another is handicapped by wretched health; and so on *ad lib.* No use to say, "Oh, that is all compensated for in the spirit-world." Is it? Certainly not. No injustice—and such it then would be—can be got rid of in that light manner. Again, one sex has been subordinated to the other, and very sad has been the outcome. All this ignorance demands enlightenment; all these inequalities need adjustment. To imagine that they can be dealt with on a plane where the physical ceases to exist is to stultify the laws of Nature and of orderly evolution. "Men" continually need experience in the form of womanhood, and *vice versa*.

The loss of the body carries away with it the force of various emotions and feelings, and these can only be overcome and used (not abused) by the higher nature when it is connected with the body. This is the Christ-victory, and a Christ is not evolved in a day. I know many Spiritualists are Re-incarnationists, but in U.S.A., where the mass of the Spiritualists are given to phenomena and personal matters, and the "comforting assurance" that they are all going to a summer-land of happiness (Pandemonium, I should say!--if the folks are the same as they are here!), the philosophy which teaches anything deeper is absolutely hated.

Through seeing this, and also the wreckage made of so many lives over there by courting "controls" of all kinds, I and many friends who had been through the same experiences turned our attention to Theosophy. I have ever since been glad of it, and have found a great deal of light in its study. The "Kingdom of Heaven is within us," and we can make no spiritual progress until we "know ourselves"—the only knowledge which gives a key to any external phenomena.

I have read nearly all the leading literature of Spiritualism, but I find more instruction as to the origin and evolution of man and the laws of Nature, in, for instance, Old's "What is Theosophy?"—a mere handbook of outline—than in any of these volumes, although there are many observations in them which are of value; but these are all on a level with a keen human observation and brain. As I had been more than an inquirer—a worker in behalf of Spiritualism, and one who honestly believed it could regenerate humanity—this contrast struck me very much. I think any Spiritualists, however, who desire to penetrate beyond the surface might accept and read with pleasure Annie Besant's shilling handbooks, which are wonderfully clear, and give reasons for every item of information, &c.*

I think Spiritualism has done and is doing an important work in many ways, and one which will eventually tend in the Theosophical direction. I had thought of sending a reply as to re-embodiment, but considered, after all, it would be of little use, until experience shows—as it will show in every life sooner or later—that it is the first light which dawns upon us with regard to self-knowledge. So long as any feel a prejudice against it, so long will it be useless to say anything; the present feelings, ideas, loves, &c., are too positive, and bar the way. We have to suffer a good deal and give up much before we can accept truths which give light, but do not bend to our personal desires and feelings. But as to the after-life, Theosophy presents a very beautiful picture of rest, which all souls do indeed need after the crucial experiences of the physical life. We lose nothing at all linked with the higher nature, while the loss of the body (with which are connected the selfish and lower principles) enables life to be a real dream of Heaven while it lasts; and it lasts until we wear it out, and feel the need of further bodily existence. Nothing very dreadful in this!

EQUALITY.

SIR,—I have read with interest, and with due appreciation of its vigour and ability, your article of December 24th, with its adverse comments on my former letter. I should be glad to see the subject discussed fully, and by abler pens than my own. I hope I am neither bigoted on the subject, nor inclined to be unduly "aggressive." I have written in defence of what appears to me an eminently reasonable and logical explanation of the reason for the existence of the phenomenal universe. In endeavouring to avoid dogmatism, and in speaking of the subject simply as a theory, I have to some extent anticipated your desire to see the matter brought forward as a hypothesis.

Well, even from this point of view, I must entirely demur to such sweeping and indeed astonishing assertions as that the idea is essentially materialistic, that Spiritualism and Re-incarnation are not convertible terms, and that it is always "flesh" of

some kind that the Re-incarnationist has in mind. The mere etymology of the word is possibly responsible for the last assertion, which cannot be squared with Kardec's statement that it is only in the lower worlds that matter is so gross as here, that life becomes less material as we advance, until in the highest worlds it is almost pure spirit. If I understood by re-incarnation mere re-birth into a world resembling this, I should repudiate the doctrine quite as heartily as you. But no, the Re-incarnationist holds as you do, that spirit is the abiding reality and matter the phantasm. And if you admit that spirit undergoes one "presentment" in matter, why not as easily two, ten, or fifty such presentments? What is the length of even a long series of re-incarnations in comparison with Eternity? In both cases the result, the evolution of pure and perfected spirit, is the same; it is a matter of indifference whether that result is achieved under purely spiritual, or chiefly spiritual and partly material, conditions. Only in the former case we do not see any clear reason for the existence of this enigmatical and almost apparently accidental world; in the latter we do, and see that it is all part of an orderly and beautiful plan.

I consider it unfair to say that Spiritists take a hypothesis and then try to find facts to fit it. The testimony comes from precisely the same source as yours, from the spirit world itself; the real difficulty is to understand why one spirit should assert that Re-incarnation is a fact, and another should say nothing about it or perhaps deny it. Argument on this point is likely to cut both ways.

(G. M. C.)

SIR,—I am glad to see the above named subject discussed in your journal, the belief in its truth having been to me of the very highest value, because I seem now to understand the mystery of suffering and sorrow in a way I never did before, and am able to "justify the ways of God to man" to my own satisfaction, and I think to that of others sometimes who converse with me on the subject. The Apostle Paul declared in the Epistle to the Romans that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain"; he added "until now," and surely we may say the same even at this date, and the fact of this being so has been used by some amongst us as an argument to disprove the teaching that God is loving and merciful, for they say no loving and omnipotent Father would allow his children to suffer as so many do during this earth-life. And it is not only these who think this, but many a "tender child of grace" has at times thought so likewise; once, however, let him grasp the idea of Re-incarnation and all such doubts will vanish, for the sufferer will then feel that the sorrow he bears himself, and sadly witnesses in others, is but the effect of wrong-doing committed at some time or another of his existence, and is absolutely necessary in order to wipe out the stain incurred thereby. Every true Spiritualist believes that "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap," and consequently that it is not God Who causeth us to suffer but our own evil actions, although without the belief in a previous existence we shall be unable to account for much that we see, and suffer also. These are my views upon the subject after nearly seventy years of sojourn here on earth; they may seem weak and childish to some, but as I said before, I value them highly, and the thought may perhaps help to lighten the burden of some "worn and weary" sister or brother who may read these words.

T. L. HENLY.

[Does our correspondent not see that the mere belief in Re-incarnation does not make the Re-incarnation itself a fact, though it may be comforting to have such a belief? Moreover "previous existence" and "re-incarnation" are not convertible terms.—Ed. "LIGHT."]

Australian Race Dream Prevision.

SIR,—The paragraph at p. 620 of "LIGHT," dated December 17th, 1892, has much interest for me; because, since 1870, during ten years' residence in Australia, I have, in common with most Australians concerned in racing matters, been on the alert about dreams seeming to indicate winners of horse races, especially of that greatest of all the races of the Southern Hemisphere, the Melbourne Cup, of which it is not too much to say that all Australasia cares for it more than for anything else, save, perhaps, cash.

No doubt many Australian racing men deride the notion that dreams are of use towards the discovery of winning horses. But, often as I have heard that question discussed, I have invariably found the discussion including a remarkable case of dream pre-

vision which I will, if you please, add to the two others contained in the paragraph published on p. 620 of "LIGHT" of the 17th ult.

At this moment I cannot state exactly the year when Nimblefoot won the Melbourne Cup. I think this happened in 1868 or 1869. However, if any of your readers wish to be certain about that a list of winners is probably in the "Australasian" of November 12th, 1892, describing the Cup week. The owner of Nimblefoot was Craig, the proprietor of Craig's Hotel, at Ballarat, and Craig was in his time as well known in Australia as the Melbourne Cup. Some weeks before the race was won Craig dreamed that he saw Nimblefoot win the race, that the rider was wearing his (Craig's) colours, and that the jockey had black crape round his arm. I can only so far fix the time when Craig dreamed this by stating that it must have been at least a month before the race; because at that time Nimblefoot was not fit, and his chance of winning was so little thought of that Slack, at that time the biggest bookmaker in Australia, when Craig told him of his dream, laid Craig £1,000 to eight drinks that his horse would not win. Well, Nimblefoot did win, and the jockey who rode him rode in Craig's colours; but there was not crape round his arm, though Craig died before the race was won.

Now, if I am asked how I know that Slack lay Craig £1,000 to eight drinks, I answer that Slack told me so himself. I knew Slack very well, and he told me about this wager while we were on board a P. and O. steamer, journeying from Gallo to Melbourne; and he said that he paid Craig's widow the £1,000, though he said, "I need not have done so, because Craig's death made the bet off." This dream was published in the Ballarat papers before the race was run. I had, but I have lost, a cutting from a newspaper, published before the race was run, mentioning the dream, and I know very well that the circumstances are, in the main, as I have stated them; and knowing, as I do, how much this matter has been discussed in Australia, I have no manner of doubt that the two dreams published in "LIGHT" of the 17th ult., were talked of and likely enough published, too, in Australian newspapers before Malvolio won the Cup in 1891 and Glenluth won it in 1892. I wish I had been there in November; I would have given the bookmakers cause to remember me, as, indeed, many of them do—alas, not so much on account of my winnings as by reason of what I paid them.

These last statements are calculated to discredit me in the opinion of theological and scientific tyrants who may read this letter. Still, sir, that cannot efface the things done which I narrate; and it doesn't signify if it be said I'm as bad as my facts, and so much the worse for the facts; and so on towards the disestablishment of all else but what is thought to be respectable and proper.

It is remarkable that Glenluth won over a course deep in mud, so much so that his rider said he was almost blinded by mud cast in his face by the horses he had to get through; and he seemed surprised that the horse had won.

January 1st, 1893.

GILBERT ELLIOT.

SOCIETY WORK.

58, TAVISTOCK-CRESCENT, WESTBOURNE PARK, W. (near station).—Mrs. Mason will give a séance on Saturday next, at 8 prompt, at the above address. Investigators will be heartily welcome.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—On Sunday, in the absence of our appointed speaker, Mrs. Mason kindly gave us a special séance. Several spirit-friends (relatives) of the sitters were present, and were all recognised. Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Spring. Tuesday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason.—J. H. B.

18, CLARENDON-ROAD, WALTHAMSTOW.—Several controls by the spirit band spoke through Mr. Brailey, the subjects being "Charity," "Truth," "A Year's Retrospect," "From Glory to Glory." Several solos were also rendered. The dates were unfortunately given wrong by me of the undermentioned entertainments:—18, Clarendon-road, Walthamstow. Mr. Petersilea's entertainments:—January 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th, February 2nd, 9th.—B.

SOUTH-PLACE INSTITUTE, SOUTH-PLACE, FINSBURY, E.C.—A course of eight lectures on the "Language, Literature, History, and Religion of Ancient Egypt" will be delivered by F. W. Read (chairman of the London Spiritualist Federation) on Tuesday evenings, at 8 o'clock. The lectures will be of a popular character, and fully illustrated by photographic views exhibited by the limelight lantern. The first lecture will be given on Tuesday, January 10th. Admission free.

SPIRITUAL HALL, 86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE.—On Sunday Mr. Isaac Hunt spoke on the subject announced, giving an account of private séances recently attended, &c. January 9th, Dr. F. R. Young, "The Dream of Pilate's Wife." January 15th, Mr. H. J. Bowen, Trance Address. January 22nd, Mr. C. Petersilea on "The Fallacy of Re-incarnation" preceded by, "Why I am a Spiritualist." January 29th, Mr. Anderson, from America. Public séances discontinued.—C. H.

PECKHAM SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET.—On Sunday morning an interesting discussion was opened by Dr. Bass on the "Solar System." In the evening Mr. Butcher kindly gave an address in which he dwelt mainly on the work of the society during the past year, and gave encouragement to continue our efforts to bring the truth of Spiritualism before the people. I have another letter inserted in both the "South London Mail" and the "South London Press" in reply to Frank M. Smith's attack on Spiritualists. Sunday next, at 11 and 7, M. Veitch.—J. T. ADY.

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—Spiritual service each Sunday, at 7 p.m. Speaker for next Sunday, Mr. J. Allen; subject, "Mesmerism, the Handmaid of Spiritualism." The collection will be given to Mr. W. Wallis, who requires assistance, having met with a serious accident. On Saturday, January 21st, at 7.30 p.m., Mr. James Burns will deliver a lecture at the above Hall, on "Spiritualism: its Facts and Phenomena," with one hundred oxy-hydrogen limelight illustrations. Tickets, reserved seats, 1s.; unreserved, 6d.: from the committee or after the usual service.—J. RAINBOW, Hon. Sec.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION, FEDERATION HALL, 359, EDGWARE-ROAD.—Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., T. Shorter, Esq., will lecture on "Early Spiritual Phenomena." We are forming a new circle for Saturday evenings. Those who wish to join please write first. On Sunday, the 15th, we invite all Spiritualists to a conference to aid the Federation in starting a philanthropic scheme to assist mediums and the poorer Spiritualists. This is a matter which we have much at heart. Mr. Percy Smyth will take the chair. Any who cannot attend the lecture, and who are interested in the matter, please write to me at the hall.—A. F. TINDALL, A.T.C.L., Hon. Sec.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, 311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—Sunday, at 11.30 a.m., service; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., service; at 8.30 p.m., general meeting. Wednesday, at 8.30, spirit circle. January 29th, anniversary services; and Tuesday, January 31st, tea and soirée. The watch night séance was very successful, many realising the nearness of their beloved friends in the spirit land. On Sunday evening a memorial service was held for our departed member, Mrs. Watkins, Mr. Wyndoe giving a pathetic reading on "Immortality," followed by Mr. Long, who spoke as to the definite knowledge that our sister still lives, death being a birth into the spiritual realms.—M. G. COOTE, Hon. Sec.

NEW YEAR'S BALL.—A dance has been arranged for Monday evening, January 23rd, at the Portman Rooms, Baker-street, W. The (No. 2) suite of rooms has already been taken, and Mr. Austin's full quadrille band has been specially engaged, so that there will be a grand opportunity for those who delight in a real good dance. Light refreshments will be provided. Tickets are now ready, and as they are limited early application is necessary. The price has been fixed at 5s. each, and tickets can be obtained of any of the following ladies, who are also members of the committee:—Mrs. Everitt, Lillian Villa, Holder's Hill, Hendon, N.W.; Miss Rowan Vincent, 31, Gower-place, W.C.; Mrs. Russell Davies, Sunnyside, Ledrington-road, Upper Norwood, S.E.; also at the Office of "LIGHT," 2, Duke-street, W.C.; and of Mr. Alfred J. Sutton, hon. sec., Woburn House, 12, Upper Woburn-place, W.C., to whom all inquiries respecting the dance should be addressed. Further particulars will be announced.—A.J.S.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.—Information and assistance given to inquirers into Spiritualism. Literature on the subject and list of members will be sent on receipt of stamped envelope by any of the following International Committee:—America, Mrs. M. Palmer, 3, 101, North Broad-street, Philadelphia; Australia, Mr. Webster, 5, Peckville-street North, Melbourne; Canada, Mr. Woodstock, "Waterniche," Brookville; France, P. G. Leymarie, 1, Rue Chabanais, Paris; Germany, E. Schlosaur, 65, Königgrätzer Str., Berlin, S.W.; Holland, F. W. H. Van Straaten, Apeldoorn, Middelland, 682; India, Mr. Thomas Hatton, Ahmedabad; New Zealand, Mr. Graham Huntley, Waikato; Sweden, B. Fortenson, Adc, Christiania; England, J. Allen, Hon. Sec., 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or W. C. Robson, French correspondent, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne. The Manor Park branch will hold the following meetings at 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane: Sunday, at 11 a.m., students' meeting; and the last Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., inquirers' meeting. Friday, at 7.30 p.m., for Spiritualists only, "The Study of Spiritualism." And at 1, Winifred-road, Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m., inquirers' meeting. Also the first Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., inquirers' meeting.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. H. H.—Next week.

UNA.—Next week. But in the meantime please give us your name and address in confidence.

W. O.—Thanks for your communication, which shall appear in our next.