

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

There are anniversaries and anniversaries. Some are general and some particular. The general last, the particular fade away, and it is, perhaps, well that they should do so. Yet some of these latter are too important to be allowed to so fade away, and such is the 5th of September. A year ago, on that day, Stainton Moses passed on. That anything of the semi-worship which in France hangs about the memory of Allan Kardec should be attributed to our remembrance of Stainton Moses would have been utterly repugnant to his wishes; his work demands no such doubtful honour. So we simply recall the day, for with a meaning such as the well-worn words rarely bear, "He being dead, yet speaketh."

Mr. St. George Mivart is reported to have made full submission to the authorities of the Romish Church in respect of his article on "Happiness in Hell." As we have only newspaper reports of the submission, it is not quite certain how far it extends. Yet that it has been made at all is a sign of the jealousy with which that Church watches any attempt made to enter what it considers its spiritual domain. It is, moreover, a sign, and a very significant one, of the thralldom in which the Church of Rome holds its votaries. Surely no bondage can be equal to that which is able to so bind a man of scientific eminence like Mr. St. George Mivart as to make him tremble before a tribunal mainly composed of intriguing Italian ecclesiastics.

One is here tempted to inquire what this power of the Church is, and how it has been acquired. Historians, to whom the world's surface life is the only mundane biology worth noticing, are apt to consider the spiritual and the temporal as two sides of the same thing, and so to work out the stories of the nations on that understanding. It does not matter whether such an historian is a believer in another world or not; if he is, he probably treats all questions from the standpoint of an all-wise Providence which directs kings and archbishops in an equal degree; and if he is not, things spiritual and temporal are equally material. Yet the undersprings of the Church's action are never touched.

To the ordinary historian a church is a body of people united by a certain creed or belief, which belief is embodied more or less stringently in so-called articles of faith. But these are simply men who are incarnate; the communion of "saints" is not recognised; yet where should we seek for the source of power in any Church with greater expectation of success than in the communion of its own particular saints? And seeing that millions die every year, trammelled when they die by the narrow creeds

according to which they think they have lived, we have at once in that "communion of saints," whatever its creed may be, a powerful influence for the continued enslavement and domination of those who hold the same creed still being incarnate.

"As the tree falls, so shall it lie"; and if we believe—and we have good evidence for believing—that the incarnated souls of evildoers try to vicariously carry on their earthly practices, it is not easy to get rid of the presumption that "creedists" of all kinds, take their "creedism" with them into the next state, and so influence with a potency in direct proportion to their numbers those who as yet have not gone over. This way of looking at the supremacy of Churches does not apply to them only, but to all communities in which there is a binding principle. We see it in the material prosperity of the Jewish community, just as plainly as we see it in the "spiritual" supremacy of the Romish Church.

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL WITH THE HEBREWS.

There is but little, if any, reference to a future state in the Old Testament. This might be remarkable if we did not remember the peculiar hatred exhibited by the Israelitish race to Egypt, and all that Egypt meant. The tribal god, Jehovah, was as materialistic a personage as can well be imagined, and his idolatrous worship by so-called Christian peoples explains very much of the materialism which has overcome for the time the purer spirituality often possessed by the so-called heathen. That other nations besides the Egyptians and Babylonians had knowledge of a future state has recently been shown by M. Halevy, who has deciphered a Phœnician inscription recently discovered in Northern Syria. This inscription is of about the ninth century before the Christian era. In it, according to D. W. H. Ward, who writes in the "Homiletic Review," of New York, King Panammu I. adjures each of his successors to make, at the time of their coronation, special libations in his behalf, in addition to the usual sacrifices to the god Hadad. The King also says: "When any one shall pronounce my name and recite the formula 'May the soul of Panammu drink with thee,' then the soul of Panammu shall drink with thee, but whosoever shall neglect this funeral ceremony shall see his sacrifice rejected by Hadad, and the soul of Panammu shall drink with Hadad alone."

If this translation be correct we have evidence that belief in a future state was entertained by another nation intimately connected with ancient Israel, demonstrating once more the hatred of that people towards all spirituality, a hatred which will account for the stringent laws against necromancy and witchcraft, a hatred which has been well imitated by the Jehovistic worshippers of the Christian era.

EXPRESSION.—The effort to express the best that is in us reacts upon the character itself to purify and exalt it. Every noble principle, every noble feeling, every warm emotion is intensified by being expressed sincerely and naturally.

THE THEOLOGY OF SPIRITUALISM.

I have lately seen, in the letters of some of your correspondents, so much of what I cannot but regard as weak Theology, that I should like to submit for their consideration a few thoughts which I hope may be useful.

The strong probability is that although Spiritualists are not, and cannot be, for long, theologians in the conventional sense, they will be mainly instrumental in solving or dissolving many of the old world problems in Theology. Their fundamental fact, that natural law persists into the spiritual world or flows from the spiritual world, will ultimately turn all orthodox particulars into human universals; and then the mediæval house of cards will tumble—or somehow vanish away.

This will be notably true as to that sublime spiritual being whom we love or adore as Jesus Christ. It is the Spiritualist who will be able to teach the world what "coming forth from the Father" means, and what it is to be a "Son of God." It is the Spiritualist who has in his keeping the key to the whole Bible, from Genesis to The Revelation. It is the Spiritualist who is prepared with an explanation of the Gospels, from the birth at Bethlehem to the rising from the tomb, ay, to the ascension, when that "cloud received him out of their sight."

The word "Incarnation" has become, in Christendom, a grossly dogmatic one, and as unspiritual as anything could be. In some respects, indeed, the modern doctrine of "The Incarnation" is purely pagan, and not much more, if any more, respectable than any one of the thousand myths of ancient Egypt, India, or Greece. The person of Jesus Christ is singled out, and separated from all other created beings or things, and of him alone it is asserted that God was manifested in him, in the sense that "the word became flesh"; and any one who takes this pagan particular, and turns it into the truly Christian universal, that God manifests Himself in all things (creation being, indeed, manifestation), is accused of denying the Incarnation, whereas he may be the only true believer in it.

Judging from the writings of Paul, discursive and fragmentary as they are, we are disposed to believe that he was a universalist, and that his great saying, "God was in Christ" must be read in vital relation with what follows, "reconciling the world unto Himself," and, indeed, with close regard to many sayings which reveal Paul as the democrat of Christendom at its very start, restive in every way in relation to the "pillars" at Jerusalem. If Paul were here, he would be the very man to say with one of our modern apostles:—

Give me, O God, a prophet soul,
With insight deep and clear,
That shall its lower mood control
And see Thee everywhere—
A will behind all Nature's laws,
The moving force in every cause.

Thy glory shines from midnight star,
In blossom, blade, and tree;
Thou all in all, or near or far,
For all things move in Thee:
I would, in these, Thyself desery,
Thou open, hidden mystery!

In modern as in ancient lands,
Jehovah dwells with men;
And they who heed His great commands
Shall see His Christ again:
The sick may touch His garment's hem,
In London or Jerusalem."

Yes, there are men and women to-day, and many, of whom also it might be said, "In him is life, and the life is the light of men: but the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness apprehendeth it not."

It can never be too clearly affirmed that we know God only through His manifestations. We have neither the faculties nor the experience to know Him in any other way. The early parts of the Bible, the creeds of Christendom, and the habit of prayer, have accustomed us to the thought

of God as a kind of mighty Man, to whom we have transferred all human attributes in an exaggerated degree: but the product will not bear either inspection or reflection; and the Spiritualist of the highest grade was never more needed to bring back the world from what is, after all, a kind of idolatry of the imagination.

All we really know is that everywhere there are wonderful forces and vitalities at work, to lift things and persons to their higher place and use. In the material world this is true. Modern science has not left us a trace of the gigantic God of interferences. The true creation of the world has been a steadfast process of development, of unfolding, not a sudden piece of mechanical conjuring. The habitable globe we call the Earth was formed, projected, and lifted into its place and use by unseen subtle forces and vitalities, and by as orderly a process as that whose result is a blade of grass, or the morning dew which revives it: and the same is true of everything that lives upon it, from the butterfly to the man. Each existence is the result of processes of evolution, and each one is a manifestation of the Evolver. Then we come to the higher reaches of mind—to will, memory, prevision, aspiration, love—all, again, the slow results of fine processes, and all manifestations of the Power which has evolved them. So, then, in myriads of ways, God is manifested; in our own fields in one way, in a Christ in another.

Let it be cheerfully admitted, and even insisted upon, that in Jesus Christ there did appear upon the earth a higher, deeper, finer force than mankind had ever known—that in him there were concentrated more vital and more vitalising powers than had ever before met in one single soul. What then? Are we going to exclude God from the earlier processes, from the inferior stages? Are we going to say that he was in the climax and not in the process, in the victory and not in the struggle, in the divine man and not in the groaning brute? It wants considering, and it may yet be seen that the truest believer in the Incarnation is the rational Spiritualist or spiritual Rationalist, who is supposed to deny it.

Let us go back to Paul. He appears to teach that God in Christ in some way more fully entered into human life. Why not? Throughout the history of the human race it does look as though fresh throbs of force came from the unseen, lifting the brute to the man, and the man to the God. It is this mighty power which, as Emerson says:—

In city or in solitude,
Step by step, lifts bad to good,
Without halting, without rest,
Lifting Better up to Best;
Planting seeds of knowledge pure,
Through earth to ripen, through heaven endure."

Why not say, then, that the Christ-force was a new or, rather, fuller welling-up of the God-force within human consciousness and experience? A devout rationalist of our own day thus puts it: "The Christ-power in history is the spiritual germ, the moral force of Jesus' experience of God, entering and re-entering into the fabric of society. The conception of God and of man which Jesus gave the world, his own experience of oneness with the Divine Word, his own convictions of a present kingdom of God on earth, founded in the loving obedience and self-sacrifice of any human soul—these constitute the new power which has saved and will continue to save our race in his name. So conceived of, Christianity becomes indeed a world religion, and its terms can be translated into the most diverse experiences, into every conceivable relation of society and human consciousness."

That was essentially Paul's idea. To the Colossians he said, "It pleased the Father that in him (in Christ) should all fulness dwell;" and to the Ephesians he said, "I pray that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith: that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length,

and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

Surely that is perfect. "God in Christ"? Yes, and in Bruno, who followed the crucified as, at all events, one who was "faithful unto death," whom the poor fools burnt, in Christ's name, three hundred years ago: God in the martyrs of science: God in the poets, in days when poets were only the lovers of the lowly, and the sunny-hearted prophets of better days: God in the reformers, the rebels, the sturdy questioners, the haters of tyranny, the lovers of justice: God in the artists, the musicians, the delighters in gardens and fields: God in the schools and workshops of the world: God in the honest preachers;—it is His message they deliver; it is His voice we hear.

J. PAGE HOPPS.

THE MAORIES.

"Lucifer" is responsible for the following:—

The "Journal" of the Polynesian Society contains some interesting matter about the Maories, and among other things mentions their extraordinary indifference to pain and recuperative power. To give but a single instance. A certain Mohi in battle had been pursuing his flying enemies, and had become so weary that he could no longer lift his hand. One of his foes turned on him and with a greenstone adze struck Mohi's head and split the skull completely open. The wound healed, but left a considerable depression, so that if the man sat in the rain a puddle of water would form on his head. He lived to extreme old age, but never showed any sign of brain-trouble, and was finally killed by over-leaping himself when mounting a horse. An article on the "Asiatic Origin of the Oceanic Numerals" brings another link to the chain connecting Polynesia—the tops of the ancient Lemurian mountains—with Asia.

A strange ceremony of passing through a "fiery furnace" is recounted. A plant called the Ti (*Dracena terminalis*) has leaves supposed to possess magical powers, and is used for magical wands. The root is good for food, and is baked for three days before eating. The oven is often about thirty feet in diameter, and the floor is of stones, which are heated by logs of wood, and when thoroughly hot, after about twenty-four hours, these stones are flattened down with poles. Only two men now living are able to perform the incantation necessary for passing safely over the red-hot stones; one of these walks in front of a procession of people, and extending a wand made of ti-leaves, he says his incantation and leads the procession across, "barefooted or shod, and on their emergence not even smelling of fire." "All the white residents of the place, as well as the French officers, were present to see the ceremony, which is rarely performed now-a-days." Mr. Hastewell saw the ceremony on September 25th, 1885, and says that the natives walked barefooted over the stones, "which were heated to a red and white heat," "without any preparation whatever on their feet, and without injury or discomfort from the heated stones." The "Journal" remarks:—

No one has yet been able to solve the mystery of this surprising feat, but it is to be hoped that scientists will endeavour to do so while those men who practise it still live.

We may echo the wish, for the account, as it stands, is curious.

A NOBLE MANHOOD.—There are innumerable qualities which make the man, and fit him for that work in life which he is meant to do. But there is one quality which is essential, without which man is not a man, without which no really great life was ever lived, without which no really great work was ever achieved—that is truth, truth in the inward parts. Look at all the really great and good men. Why do we call them great and good? Because they dare to be true to themselves, they dare to be what they are. But it is not mere daring that will keep a man true to himself. That daring must have a root, and the root is faith; faith in that, whatever we may call it, in which we live and move and have our being, faith that right will ever be right, faith that even overwhelming majorities cannot make it wrong, faith that the triumph of wrong can never last, though it may outlast our life. There is no health, no happiness, no loveliness in any who is without that faith, without that courage, without that truthfulness. The true heroes of history have been, are, and will be, those who have acted up to that faith. A man is a man so long as he is true face to face with the world, and, what is harder still, so long as he is true face to face with himself.—MAX MÜLLER.

RECORDS OF PRIVATE SEANCES.

FROM NOTES TAKEN AT THE TIME OF EACH SITTING.

NO. LIX.

FROM THE RECORDS OF MRS. S.

November 17th, 1878.—The usual circle met and the room was at once filled with spirits new to the medium. During the previous week he had visited Mr. Hockley, an occultist, and these proved to be spirits never incarnated, who had followed him from Mr. H.'s house. "Harmony" appeared amongst them, bearing a scroll, as they wished to communicate in their usual way by symbols; but the medium was not, Kabbila told us, lucid enough to understand them, owing to the fact that he had attended a meeting on the previous evening, and the mixed influences had upset him. After a break of ten minutes, the Prophet, H., controlled and spoke as follows in a loud deep voice:—

"A prophet of the old dispensation, I will now herald the new, but the words I shall utter are not my own, for I could not speak without the help of those who are with me. In the name of the true and living God Most High, I, who spoke of old, speak now and declare the truth as I then spoke it, only truth renewed and made acceptable to your changed times."

The control being difficult, Doctor intervened and said:—

"He (the Prophet) is much concerned with the present movement and has returned to your earth to help in building the spiritual temple which is now in course of erection—he who long ago was foremost in restoring a material temple. Now we retire, a greater comes."

Imperator then controlled, saying:—

"May the blessing of the Supreme be with you. We have come unexpectedly, and our friends were not aware of our presence. Times of trouble are now at hand after an interval of blessed peace, and distress and perplexity may be expected alike by us and you. Whenever truth is manifested the adversaries range themselves against it. Those who sigh for peace will indeed have reason to sigh, but those who see in the contest between the true and the false the method of striking out the sparks of divine truth, will not be without good reason for rejoicing. We cannot speak with certainty of times and seasons in your world, but we think that three years must pass away before peace can be restored. Meanwhile, you must look for wars and convulsions, for turmoil and distress, and for much that those who consider the Second Advent to be Christ's return to earth would have led you to expect."

In reference to symbolic teaching Imperator said:—

"Jesus used the language of symbolism, for the truth of God cannot be phrased in human language. Hence the higher spirits who have not passed through incarnation, or learned the language of your earth naturally, use symbols and symbolic teaching, by which their message can be shadowed forth to the minds of men and divine truth brought home to them; for many subtle thoughts escape your language, and cannot be grasped logically or expressed. It is only by raising your minds to the realm of spirit that you can understand them, for as one of your old writers said: 'Spiritual things must be spiritually discerned.' It is not the natural reason that can comprehend spiritual verities. This is why the attempts to bring down spirit to the understanding of the vulgar are so repulsive. The spirits who manifest through physical phenomena are not those from whom spiritual truths can be learned. The crude and too often erroneous notions thus given to men must not be associated with the divine truth which the Supreme vouchsafes to all those who seek for it. Our hope is that these lower manifestations will have their day and that the truth which underlies them will at length break forth into light, and permeate the social and intellectual force at work amongst you."

November 24th.—This evening Miss B. joined the circle. After the usual manifestations of scent and raps, Mr. S. M. was easily controlled by a strange spirit, who talked a long time with us. He said we should not know him if he gave his name, but that he had left the earth about fifty years, and when here he was an American preacher. He knew about Spiritualism, preached it, and got into trouble for so doing. It was a mistake to date its beginning from the Rochester knockings. He said this was the first time he had controlled our medium, but he knew him, as he had seen his spirit in spirit-land. He often controlled at circles, but had never been in a more harmonious atmosphere than we had around us. He spoke with great ease,

and dwelt much on the unhappiness and misery produced by unsuitable marriages. He said that our race would never greatly improve until they were differently ordered. Now often in the upper classes marriage was a market, in the lower mere convenience. Want of love and harmony in the parents produced much of the evils we met with in the children. This must be altered, and would be in time, as the spirit world was bringing its influence to bear upon the subject. He told us the colour of our auras, all different; each had its own significance. He also said that Spiritualism taught the value of self-denial and the fact that each man builds by his acts on earth the home in which he will dwell hereafter. He then said he must leave us but he promised to visit the circle again.

When Mr. S. M. came out of the control he said he saw Imperator and the Prophet writing in the air. They then moved towards R. with the paper and dropped it on the floor between her and myself. After this Mr. S. M. saw the strange spirit who had been controlling him, and as he did not know him, he was fearful lest he should attach himself to him. For this reason he suddenly broke up the séance and went upstairs to put his hands into cold water. While doing so in the bath-room a voice came to him, saying: "Don't be afraid, friend, it is only me." It was the spirit who had been controlling him, by Imperator's permission, and Doctor afterwards informed us that he was known by the name of "Old Silas." After striking a light we found a piece of paper under the table between myself and R. with the words, "All hail! we greet you."—Signed "I. * P."

A moonstone was also brought to Miss B.

December 15th.—The same circle met as on the last occasion. A few raps occurred. Much delicate scent was wafted over the circle, and by request the same scent in a fluid condition was sprinkled on the table cloth. Masses of light floated about the room, and another moonstone was placed in front of Miss B. Mr. S. M. saw in the darkness a bright spot of light on the table, and by raps light was asked for. The stone was then found where Mr. S. M. had seen the light. Mentor controlled, and said the stone had been brought for Miss B. Catharine rapped joyously near R., and through the alphabet told us she knew the medium had been writing about her; also that she should be at the meeting next evening when the paper would be read. On R. asking if she would remain with her instead, a very decided "No" was rapped out.

Imperator then came, saying:—

"We have endeavoured to control the medium this evening to say a few words before we separate. A year, as you term it, is drawing to its close—a year of distress and perplexity, trouble and conflict, but marked by much that may give you hope. The next two years also will be times of great distress and the conflict will be severe. You live in an epoch when one era is closing and another commencing; the old order, the old beliefs, the old tone of thought are dying, to arise again in a newer and more spiritual form. Birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, the notes of the life of the Christ, are also the notes of the life of each one amongst you, as well of the race, of the nation, of the generation of the world. Your ascension is a moral rise, the rise into a higher sphere. So, too, your race is developed. A time comes when the old truths are dead and the new truths are yet unborn. You live in the last days of this era which is called Christian. Christ is now returning in spirit and in power, bringing the new revelation which should enfranchise the souls of men. There is not, perhaps, any form of human life to which the spirit looks back with greater satisfaction than to the conflict from which truth emerges. You will soon be in the thickest of the fight, but after that will come a time of peace and repose, a time not of sleep but of joyous consciousness of progress and advance. What the medium regards with dread as infidelity and unbelief is only the fallow land in which good seed may be sown. The mind choked with the tares of old superstitious beliefs is far worse than that which is free from all prejudices. Fear not because so many of your most prominent men are destitute of what you call religion. A clear receptivity must exist before new truth can be borne into it."

Imperator concluded with a very solemn prayer that we might all be preserved during the time of trouble and distress.

THE test of every religious, political, or educational system, is the man which it forms. If a system injures the intelligence it is bad. If it injures the character it is vicious. If it injures the conscience it is criminal.

SOME AUTOMATIC WRITING.

Under the title "Automatic Writing with the Ouija Board," a communication has been sent to the "Religious Philosophical Journal" by Professor Elliott Coues. The account is written by Winfield Smith. It is very much to be regretted that details are not given. While entirely agreeing with Professor Coues that "we cannot have too many cases well recorded and fully attested," we must take exception to the phrase "well recorded and fully attested," as applied to this communication. Exactitude of the very essence of these investigations:—

In July, 1892, I joined, after two or three months' absence from my family, constituting, with other near relatives, a household in a small village on the seashore in Massachusetts, where we spent some months, during which we were favoured with phenomena that seemed to me to be worth recording.

And beyond these meagre details none are given. None from internal evidence, had those details been added the account would have been a very valuable one indeed. The writer continues:—

Two or three members of the household were believers in the possibility of communication by spirits of deceased persons with those living. Some were not, and others were indifferent or hostile to the practice of seeking such communications. Two of the ladies most active were near relatives and I can vouch for the perfect truthfulness, not only of themselves, but of the other persons who from time to time took part as spectators or otherwise.

On the first evening of my arrival I found that the "Ouija board" was in use. This is a board on which in a convenient order the letters of the alphabet are printed, and over which a pointer easily moves under the direction of the hand of the person or persons acting as psychics. The lady whose arm was moved in this case, and in the generality of cases, was hardly a believer in spiritual communications, and when writing she paid no attention to the matter written, except at rare intervals. She did not herself look at the board or the letters, nor in fact did she ordinarily know which letters were being pointed at, except when her attention was called by something peculiar in the communications as read. The two hands on the pointer concealed the letters from her sight. It was noteworthy that her hand alone did not impel the pointer, but as soon as the hand of another person seeking communication was held with hers upon the pointer, or upon hers, the pointer proceeded to move, and generally with a rapidity so great that few persons could read fast enough to understand the communications, and it was found necessary to select one person for that purpose, who, sitting at the other side of the board, was ordinarily able, after practice, to read the letters indicated. This was usually done aloud, so that each person listening could hear what was given: the most of us being unable to keep pace with the movement of the psychic's hand. It is also noteworthy that it was immaterial whether the person whose hand was joined to that of the chief psychic was capable of writing alone. If unable to write alone, yet laying the hand upon the hand of the chief psychic, caused the motion to be at once set up. The peculiarity of this phenomenon was that two persons, neither of whom could write alone, by joining hands upon the pointer caused it to move, and so rapidly that neither of them could read the letters, for which purpose, as stated, a third was specially appointed. We were informed that the medium, or chief psychic, had been developed for the purpose of transmitting communications and was of uncommon value because of her indifference to the matter of the most of them, and because of the clearness with which she was enabled to give the exact meaning desired to be impressed, uncolored by her own thoughts or feelings. Her indifference seemed in truth foreign to her natural disposition.

These communications were received almost daily, during several months, and were to some of us, including myself, of great interest. It happened at one time, perhaps in September, that we were informed that her peculiar powers were liable to be taken away at any time, and that an illustration of this would be given them. In a moment after she laid her hand upon the board, and although another person's hand placed upon it would ordinarily have produced motion at once, her hand was entirely motionless, even with another laid upon it, and this continued until some time later, when her power to write was restored.

and another member of my family were each early told that with sufficient practice upon our parts, we possessed enough psychic power to receive communications directly through our own hands without her help and this in fact turned out to be true, although neither of us ever attained to that accuracy which seemed to mark all the messages given to us through her hand as I have described.

During a few weeks our communications were not only interesting, but seemed to be unmingled with deception, and to the last it seemed that the communications received through the two hands, one being that of the chief psychic, were fully to be relied upon. I do not mean by this that all matters foretold by them as likely to happen came to pass; but it appeared to us that these communications were at least the genuine creation of the parties who were named as the authors, and that they gave intelligent evidence of their presence in a manner to be reasonably satisfactory. That could not be said, however, of the communications which we latterly received without the agency of the medium whom I have called the chief psychic. We discovered, each of us who gave the most time to writing on the board, that other agencies were at work than those who professed to be writing. To describe it in the simplest way, it appeared that deceitful and mischievous spirits were writing to us in the character, and under the assumed names, of friends who had before written to us, and who were for some time supposed to be continuing; but the matter of the messages, and even the character of the psychic force, and the peculiar methods of writing, indicated to us at first doubtfully, but soon clearly, that we were being imposed upon. It was found extremely difficult to get rid of these impostors, and the effort to do so can hardly be said to have been fully successful, although after a prolonged struggle one or two of them finally disappeared under peculiar circumstances quite interesting, but which I do not now narrate. Others, however, took their places to a greater or less extent, and all those creatures seemed to have, by reason, perhaps, of their nearness to what is often termed the "earth plane," a greater influence, so that through them communicating force was strong and ready; and, unfortunately for us, they seemed also to have the power to exclude the presence of our friends on the higher planes who had previously been in communication with us, and whom we fain would have retained as our only correspondents. This is an explanation we received over the Ouija board.

How much more important the evidence would have been if the means had been described by which these imposing spirits were got rid of! We are told of a "prolonged struggle," and of "disappearance under peculiar circumstances quite interesting," but we have no account whatever of the "struggle" or of "the peculiar circumstances." The same regrettable reticence is observable as the story goes on:—

I do not desire at this time to go into the subjects of these communications, but I might say this—not only while the communications were sent to us through three persons, engaged, two in writing and one in reading, but at other times when one of us alone was writing for his own pleasure, the messages sent seemed to be wholly distinct from the tenor of our own thoughts, to come from personalities entirely different from ourselves, to convey sentiments and doctrines different from and often quite opposed to our own. In our dialogues the opposition of views led to discussions sometimes warm, although not controversial—in short, similar to the discussions one could have with friends here upon different subjects. There was nothing within our conscious minds, either in present thought or remembrance, resembling the views often presented to us through this outer agency. We were constantly assured by them of their identity with the persons they professed to be, and of their immediate presence with us. Those whom we had known upon earth gave us frequent proofs, by reference to special events within our knowledge and theirs, and to incidents of different kinds, and by their style and manner of speech, of the truth of this claim, and so impressed it upon us that we were talking with them that we could hardly doubt it. I frequently conversed with old friends and playmates of matters that had occurred many years ago, and was reminded by them of circumstances which had completely passed out of my mind. Not only that, but the character, the peculiar manner of speech, the well-remembered wit of some of those spirits—if I may so

—speak—gave us a most complete confidence in the reality of the persons who professed to be speaking to us, to be seeing and hearing us, although we could neither hear nor see them.

I might say that while learning to write, I for considerable time, and even at intervals afterwards when the influence upon my arm was weak, had difficulty in distinguishing my own personal impulse from that which was communicated to me, so that I was not always certain whether the writing was the result of my own mind or of another, yet as my sensitiveness increased and I acquired the mental habit of submitting my arm more entirely to the foreign agency, I came to be generally able to distinguish the influences so received very clearly from those originating in my own mind; and it is as certain to me as anything within my own consciousness can be, that many of the sentences which my hand thus wrote, were not only not dictated by my own feelings, wishes, or opinions, but were new to me, and were sometimes strange and even unwelcome.

I was so much disturbed in the latter part of the summer by the activity of impostors who seemed to be determined to monopolise the opportunity of writing, which they generally did by personating friends of mine, that I felt often doubtful of the authenticity of the messages of my friends until they had been verified through the agency of at least one of the other psychics, through the means above described; and I may admit that probably a third of the communications which during a period of four months I personally received were deceptive.

It appears to me, as conclusion from my own experience, that the greater amount of the frauds and falsities charged upon professional mediums may be attributed to base or tricky spiritual influences which obtain control of them, frequently without their knowledge or participation. Ordinarily these mediums would desire to be truthful and accurate. The higher their reputation the greater would be their pecuniary reward. I suppose it would be more pleasing to them to earn their money honestly than dishonestly; and if they had the powers it would also be very much easier. But the spirits on the other side, if we may believe what we are constantly told, are of the same nature as when they lived among us, and are in as large a proportion false or malicious as those among us; and if they have a greater strength or greater desire to use the opportunities of communication it is quite reasonable that tricks and deceptions should happen in so-called spiritual communications, and that they should prove unreliable to that degree which has made investigation obnoxious to many.

The peculiarity of the communications which we received through the chief psychic is perhaps this: that they came through so many hands that there could be no previous combination of purpose; that the chief psychic was so utterly under the control of the agencies as to be quite incapable of formulating the communications, or even of understanding them, until after they were read aloud; that she never looked at the letters nor followed the pointer; that the personal character of each of the individuals engaged in producing them was such as to place all possibility of fraud out of the question; that a real spirit of investigation controlled all the minds, and that there was no circumstance nor influence in the household leading to any deception, even to self-deception. The persons concerned were honourable, the motives unassailable, and the results seemed of the most satisfactory nature, until after the time when the class designated as impostors seemed to have found their way in; but they were a class, who, as I have said, could, with due discrimination on our part, be distinguished from our truthful visitors, and through the instrumentality of the psychic, who had been designated for that purpose, we were able to detect on each occasion, when we submitted it to the test, the doubtful communication which had been in fact received from a fraudulent source.

These communications continued with more or less activity until the close of our summer at the seaside. After that it was difficult to obtain the co-operation of the various persons who had convened there, and the communications have since been in consequence rare, interrupted, and almost at an end. For myself I may say that I am quite unable to procure through my own arm the attendance of any of those visitors except occasionally of some wandering cheat, who is willing to sign any name, or to make any statement for the purpose of deceiving me, and obtaining the opportunity for a short communication, to which, however, he never gives his true name.

Milwaukee, May, 1893.

There are several things in the foregoing communication which afford material for serious thought. The necessity for combination of two psychic powers in order to obtain satisfactory results and the interference of opposing influences are among those which will be remarked at once.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
2, DUKE STREET,
ADELPHI, LONDON, W.C.

Light:

EDITED BY "M.A., LOND."

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9th, 1893.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, London, W.C. 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, London, W.C., and not to the Editor.

AGE.

"The days of man are threescore and ten." An Oriental psalmist said this and it got into the Biblical collection of monographs, and having got there a Council of the Church said it was inspired; so the age of man was fixed. The Christian followers of the Jehovistic cult kept up the notion, and thus people were expected to begin to prepare for death practically when they reached sixty, though theoretically they were supposed to be doing it all their lives. "Practically" about that age, because up to then serving God in the office or behind the counter somewhat militated against the proper exercise of the preparatory powers. Perhaps in the world's history there has never been an equally striking example of man's incapacity for judging for himself, and of his readiness to obey the dictum of any supposititious God. The nearest approach to it is possibly the English belief that "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," because Sterne having said so someone else guessed from the style that it must be in the Bible collection.

The singer who, penetrated with the Jehovistic materialism, sang the aphorism about threescore and ten no doubt believed in it, for it could only be said by such a materialist. Such regrets as this "inspired" psalmist uttered could only be uttered by one for whom the world was all in all. Nevertheless this singer of Israel was the bard of all that innumerable race which hopes for and tries to bring about length of days spent in prosperous ease, until annihilation or the dreaded and ever only half credited "great change" comes about; a "great change" which is rarely spoken of except on those stated occasions when to speak of it is as proper as it is meaningless. All this is of Materialism. Spiritualism teaches something better, and by Spiritualism is here meant all that makes for spirituality.

Life is a struggle, but a struggle not as those people imagine to whom the gospel of getting on is the one only true evangel; it is a struggle against opposing forces, forces which, because they are opposing, produce that presentment called material, and which forces, therefore, must be overcome or they will conquer. Starting, then, with the hypothesis, that spirit and matter are only different in form and not in essence, we at once arrive at new ideas as to age and all that belongs to it. That, indeed, there is a certain amount of general knowledge that the variations depending upon the sequences of time, called generally differences of age, are not always to be measured by years, is obvious from the familiar use of such expressions as "He was never young," or "He never will be old." A certain something is here understood, though but roughly expressed.

Now age, as to its measurement, is only reckoned in terms of terrestrial time; spirit cannot be reckoned up in that way, so that the threescore and ten of the Psalmist is very earthy, as we have already seen. It follows immediately,

therefore, that the more men get into touch with pure spirit, that is, the more nearly they approach to victory over the opposing forces which bring about the material presentment of spirit, the less they will be concerned with terrestrial age. And this is one of the objects which a perfect Spiritualism should have in view.

It may be urged that a good life is one where, having done one's duty when it is known what that duty is, the world is allowed gradually to fall away, and the spirit losing its trammels floats placidly into the unseen. This is but half-hearted spirituality, and more than half-hearted materialism. It is living in the world and of it, until there is no chance of doing otherwise.

The Theosophists teach that this spiritualising of the conditions of life is possible, and hence comes all that we hear of adepts, and problematical Mahatmas, but the teaching is so hedged about with Oriental mysticism that one is puzzled continually, and, moreover, the conquest of the world is made a matter of such duration that one may forgive any who hesitate about going through so serious and lengthy a course of education. Nevertheless, we are at one with the Theosophists that even here a great change may be brought about. Not that it can be done at once, nor that it can be done without suffering, nor without many failures; the heart may indeed have to break, but there comes at last a power which He knew who said of this conquest, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

THE DANGERS AHEAD.

We cannot be accused of concealing the dangers of spirit communion; some of our friends, indeed, think we have too persistently admitted and even urged them. Nor can we be accused of exaggerating the value of mere "phenomena"; and here, again, some may have thought that we belittled these in our efforts to give prominence to Spiritualism as Science and Philosophy. This has earned for us the right to say a word of encouragement, at the present time, to those who, amid many difficulties, are patiently feeling their way along the good old beaten track of experiment. We have never lost sight of the fact that at the back of all our Science and Philosophy, Experiment stands as at once motive and justification. We have not been spinning theoretical cobwebs—we have been building a foundation; we have not been composing a creed—we have been collecting facts; and if, in some respects, we are now independent of "phenomena," we have not the slightest intention of disparaging or pushing aside the ladder by which we have climbed. The reviled "raps," the objective movements of the laughed-at table, the voices, the sensitive lights and forms, the valuable evidences of passive writing, are all too precious to be either disparaged or discarded.

And what of the "dangers"? These supply no reason for surrendering our quest; they only suggest prudence and care. That some men commit forgery is not a reason for ceasing to write letters or sign transfers and cheques. That razors and revolvers are dangerous and even deadly in careless or criminal hands, is not a reason for ceasing to make them. That swindlers sometimes call for the parcel when we have put in the window the card inviting the carrier, is no reason for deciding to send no more parcels or to invoke no more the carrier's help. No; the dangers, in one sense, only invite us on. If the scouts of the Unseen can be treacherous and dangerous, that is surely a reason for pressing forward and trying to hunt them down. We may not entirely succeed, but the further we advance and the more we know, the less will the danger be; for such danger as there is turns mainly upon our ignorance, our inexperience, our incautious readiness to take for granted, to get excited, to believe.

MR. R. L. STEVENSON'S DREAMS.

Though the account of these dreams was copied into more than one journal soon after its appearance in the last number of the "Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research," yet as some of the readers of "LIGHT" may not have seen the story it is reproduced here. The remarks of Mr. Myers are also given, as these dreams come perhaps more nearly into the category of the "subliminal uprush" than many of the phenomena recorded in the same number of the "Proceedings." Mr. Myers says:—

We must now come to concrete examples. And first let me remind the reader that there is nothing unique or isolated about these hysterical disturbances of personality. The personality of each of us is in a state of constantly shifting equilibrium, and the healthy person, under the influence of various intoxications, or from mere changes of trophic conditions, undergoes shiftings of the threshold, uprushes and subsidence of many kinds, which bear to hysterical phenomena somewhat the same relation which those in turn bear to the more permanent psychological changes of actual insanity. Alcoholic intoxication simulates in its various stages a strange variety both of hysterical and of insane symptoms. Hunger, fatigue, slight poisoning by impure air, produce a well-known group of disturbances of sensory and sensation. A very small degree of fever is enough to produce a transient perturbation of personality of the most violent kind. Familiar though all this may be, there is yet, I think, some interest in the following account of a feverish experience, sent to me by Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson, from Samoa. For in Mr. Stevenson's paper on his own dreams, elsewhere alluded to, we have the most striking living example known to me of that helpful and productive subliminal uprush which I have characterised as the mechanism of genius. It is, therefore, interesting to observe how under morbid conditions this temperament of genius—this ready permeability of the psychical atmosphere—transforms what might in others be a mere vague and massive discomfort into a vivid though incoherent message from the subliminal storm and fire. The result is a kind of epigenital duality, the perception at the same time of two personalities,—the one rational and moral, the other belonging to the stratum of dreams and nightmare.

Then follow the dreams:—

Vailima Plantation, Upoho, Samoan Islands.

July 14th, 1892.

DEAR MR. MYERS,—I am tempted to communicate to you some experiences of mine which seem to me (ignorant as I am) of a high psychological interest.

I had infamous bad health when I was a child and suffered much from night fears; but from the age of about thirteen and I was past thirty I did not know what it was to have a high fever or to wander in my mind. So that these experiences, when they were renewed, came upon me with entire freshness; and either I am a peculiar subject, or I was thus enabled to observe them with unusual closeness.

Experience A. During an illness at Nice I lay awake a whole night in extreme pain. From the beginning of the evening one part of my mind became possessed of a notion so grotesque and shapeless that it may best be described as a form of words. I thought the pain was, or was connected with, a tap or coil of some sort; I knew not of what it consisted nor where it was, and cared not; only I thought, if the two parts were brought together the pain would cease. Now all the time, with another part of my mind, which I venture to think was myself, I was fully alive to the absurdity of this idea, knew it to be a mark of impaired sanity, and was engaged with my other self in a perpetual conflict. Myself had nothing more at heart than to keep from my wife, who was nursing me, any trace of this ridiculous hallucination; the other was bound that she should be told of it and ordered to effect the cure. I believe it must have been well on in the morning before the other (or the other fellow) triumphed, and I called my wife to my bedside, seized her savagely by the wrist, and looking on her with a face of fury, cried: "Why do you not put the two ends together and put me out of pain?"

Experience B. The other day in Sydney I was seized on a Saturday with a high fever. Early in the afternoon I began to repeat mechanically the sound usually written "mhn," caught myself in the act, instantly stopped it, and explained to my watcher, who was in the room, my reasons for so doing. "That is the beginning of the mind to wander," I said, "and has to

be resisted at the outset." I fell asleep and woke, and for the rest of the night repeated to myself mentally a nonsense word which I could not recall next morning. I had been reading the day before the life of Swift, and all night long one part of my mind (*the other fellow*) kept informing me that I was not repeating the word myself, but was only reading in a book that Swift had so repeated it in his last sickness. The temptation to communicate this nonsense was again strongly felt by myself, but was on this occasion triumphantly resisted, and my watcher heard from me all night nothing of Dean Swift or the word, nothing but what was rational and to the point. So much for the two consciousnesses when I can disentangle them; but there is a part of my thoughts that I have more difficulty in attributing. One part of my mind continually bid me remark the transrational felicity of the word, examined all the syllables, showed me that not one was in itself significant, and yet the whole expressed to a nicety the voluminous distress of one in a high fever and his annoyance at and recoil from the attentions of his nurses. It was probably the same party (and for a guess *the other fellow*) who bid me compare it with the nonsense words of Lewis Carroll as the invention of a lunatic with those of a sane man. But surely it was myself (and myself in a perfectly clear-headed state) that kept me trying all night to get the word by heart, on the ground that it would afterwards be useful in literature if I wanted to deal with mad folk. It must have been myself, I say, because *the other fellow* believed (or pretended to believe) he was reading the passage in a book where it could always be found again when wanted.

Experience C. The next night *the other fellow* had an explanation ready for my sufferings, of which I can only say that it had something to do with the navy, that it was sheer undiluted nonsense, had neither end nor beginning, and was unsusceptible of being expressed in words. Myself knew this; yet I gave way, and my watcher was favoured with some references to the navy. Nor only that: *the other fellow* was annoyed—or I was annoyed—on two inconsistent accounts; first, because he had failed to make his meaning comprehensible, and second, because the nurse displayed no interest. *The other fellow* would have liked to explain further; but myself was much hurt at having been got into this false position and would be led no further.

In cases A and C the illusion was amorphous. I knew it to be so and yet succumbed to the temptation of trying to communicate it. In case B the idea was coherent, and I managed to hold my peace. Both consciousnesses, in other words, were less affected in case B, and both more affected in cases A and C. It is perhaps not always so: the illusion might be coherent, even practical, and the rational authority of the mind quite in abeyance. Would not that be lunacy?

In case A I had an absolute knowledge that I was out of my mind, and that there was no meaning in my words; these were the very facts that I was anxious to conceal; and yet when I succumbed to the temptation of speaking, my face was convulsed with anger, and I wrung my watcher's wrist with cruelty. Here is action, unnatural and uncharacteristic action, flowing from an idea in which I had no belief and which I had been concealing for hours as a plain mark of aberration. Is it not so with lunatics?

I have called the one person myself, and the other *the other fellow*. It was myself who spoke and acted; the other fellow seemed to have no control of the body or the tongue; he could only act through myself, on whom he brought to bear a heavy strain, resisted in one case, triumphant in the two others. Yet I am tempted to think that I know the other fellow; I am tempted to think he is the dreamer described in my Chapter on Dreams to which you refer. Here at least is a dream belonging to the same period, but this time a pure dream, an illusion, I mean, that disappeared with the return of the sense of sight, not one that persevered during waking moments and while I was able to speak and take my medicine. It occurred the day after case B and before case C.

Case D. In the afternoon there sprang up a storm of wind with monstrous clouds of dust; my room looked on a steep hill of trees whose boughs were all blowing in the same direction; the world seemed to pass by my windows like a mill-race. By this turmoil and movement I was confused, but not distressed, and surprised not to be distressed; for even in good health a high wind has often a painful influence on my nerves. In the midst of this I dozed off asleep. I had just been reading Scott's "Life of Dryden," had been struck with the fact that Dryden had translated some of the Latin hymns, and had wondered

that I had never remarked them in his works. As soon as I was asleep I dreamed a reason why the sound of the wind and the sight of the flying dust had not distressed me. There was no wind, it seemed, no dust; it was only Dryden singing his translated hymns in *one direction*, and all those who had blamed and attacked him after the Revolution singing them in *another*. This point of the two directions is very singular and insane. In part it meant that Dryden was continuously flying past yet never passing my window in the direction of the wind and dust, and all his detractors similarly flying past yet not passing towards the other side. But it applied, besides this, both to the words and to the music in a manner wholly inauspicious of expression.

That was a dream; and yet how exactly it reproduces the method of my *other fellow* while I was awake. Here is an explanation for a state of mind or body sought and found in a tissue of rabel, complicated, and inexpressible folly. Yours very sincerely,
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

[This "other fellow" is, perhaps, after all not a very unusual phenomenon. Very slight fever causes me to become fanciful, but I know of my own fancies and quite recognise that "other self" which is mixed up with the "self" of ordinary life, though the separation is not always complete. When delirium sets in, as it has done in one or two severe illnesses, I am perfectly well aware of the presence of that delirium and remember afterwards what I thought during its continuance. Being seriously ill in the spring of 1891, having a very high temperature and suffering intense pain, I remember perfectly well how I fancied myself in a large field which I was trying to clear from huge deposits of filth; at the same time I knew quite well I was in my bed, and recognised the help my nurse was giving me. All through that illness I was sensible of a double consciousness, in which sometimes one "self" prevailed and sometimes "the other." "One self" thought that half my teeth had left me, and it was not till very near convalescence that the "other self" knew it was not so through the very common place means of using a looking glass.—Ed. "LIGHT."]

ELEMENTALS.

There is in the current number of "Lucifer" the first of a series of articles by the late H. P. Blavatsky, with this heading. We do not propose to enter into the question of the existence of Elementals, further than to say that the late Stainton Moses was in the habit of asserting that he had once seen one in the form of a little old man, who lived upon the almost immaterial emanations arising from the food of our ordinary humanity. This being had not yet been incarnated, but was shortly to undergo that change. Madame Blavatsky, however, makes some assertions which we have seen before, but which, as they concern the Spiritualistic interpretation of certain phenomena, it is necessary once more to notice. The following quotation from the article will show what we mean:—

If, turning from Greece and Egypt to the cradle of universal civilisation, India, we interrogate the Brāhmins and their most admirable philosophies, we find them calling their Gods and their Daimonia by such a number and variety of appellations, that the thirty-three millions of these Deities would require a whole library to contain only their names and attributes. We will choose for the present only two names out of the Pantheon. These groups are the most important as well as the least understood by the Orientalists—their true nature having been all along wrapped in obscurity by the unwillingness of the Brāhmins to divulge their philosophical secrets. We will speak of but the Devas and the Pitris.

The former aerial beings are some of them superior, others inferior, to man. The term means literally the Shining Ones, the resplendent; and it covers spiritual beings of various degrees, including entities from previous planetary periods, who take active part in the formation of new solar systems and the training of infant humanities, as well as unprogressed Planetary Spirits, who will, at Spiritualistic séances, simulate human deities, and even characters on the stage of human history.

As to the Deva Yonis, they are Elementals of a lower kind in comparison with the Koumic "Gods," and are subjected to the will of even the worcer. To this class belong the gnomes, sylphs, fairies, djinn, &c. They are the Soul of the chaotic, the capricious forces in Nature, acting under one immutable law, inherent in them control of force, with undeveloped consciousness and bodies of plastic mould, which can be shaped according to the conscious or unconscious will of the human being who puts himself *en rapport* with them. It is by attracting some of the beings of this class that our modern Spiritualists in the medium invest the fading shells of deceased human beings with a kind of individual force. These beings have never been, but will, in myriads of ages hence, be evolved into men. They belong to the three lower kingdoms, and pertain to the Mysteries on account of their dangerous nature.

We have found a very erroneous opinion gaining ground only among Spiritualists who see the spirits of their disembodied fellow creatures everywhere—but even among several Orientalists who ought to know better. It is generally believed by them that the Sanskrit term Pitris means the spirits of our direct ancestors; of disembodied people. Hence the argument of some Spiritualists that fakirs, and other Eastern wonder workers, are mediums; that they themselves evidence being unable to produce anything without the help of the Pitris of whom they are the obedient instruments. This is in many than one sense erroneous, the error being first started, we believe, by M. L. Jaccoliot, in his "Spiritisme dans le Monde" and Govinda Swami; or, as he spells it, "the fakir Krishna dasami's" phenomena. The Pitris are not the ancestors of the present living men, but those of the human kind or primitive races; the spirits of human races which, on the great scale of descending evolution, preceded our races of men, and were physically, as well as spiritually, far superior to our modern pigmies. In "Mānava-Dharma Shāstra" they are called the Lunar Ancestors. The Hindu—least of all the proud Brāhman—has no such yearning to return to this land of exile after he has shaken of his mortal coil, as has the average Spiritualist; nor has death for him any of the great terrors it has for the Christian. Thus the most highly developed minds in India will always take care to declare, while in the act of leaving their tenements of clay "Nachapumarāvartī," "I shall not come back," and by this very declaration are placed beyond the reach of any living man's medium. But, it may be asked, what then is meant by the Pitris? They are Devas, lunar and solar, closely connected with human evolution, for the Lunar Pitris are they who give their Ohhāyis as the models of the First Race in the Fourth Round, while the Solar Pitris endowed mankind with intellect. Not only so, but these Lunar Devas passed through all the kingdoms of the terrestrial Chain in the First Round, and during the Second and Third Rounds "lead and represent the human element."

Now putting aside the calm assertion that "planetary spirits, whoever they may be, can pretend in the way Madame Blavatsky said they could, what evidence is there that at any Spiritualistic séance there ever has been an attempt at a simulation of "human deities?" We believe John the Baptist, and it may be others of like prominence, have been "raised" by some mediums, but Jupiter and the Olympian crowd, who are presumably "late human deities, have not, as far as one can recollect, ever put in an appearance. "Characters on the stage of human history," being men, mediums do declare have come back.

Passing by all the usual farrago about capricious forces in Nature, acting under one immutable law, with the reverential wonder one feels for a capricious force which obeys a changeless power, complicated mysteriously by centres—not "one" centre, be it noted—of force, we find that Spiritualists have gone wrong in the excellent company of certain Orientalists, who also believe in the existence of their disembodied ancestors, but have mistakenly thought they were Pitris, whereas Pitris are greater and grander than the spirits of our immediate ancestors, being spirits of men of a loftier race now long disappeared. So the fakir is not a medium, but something else—what is not stated.

Undoubtedly we have much, perhaps nearly everything to learn about the appearances which purport to be the

spirits of those gone over; nevertheless these dogmatic assertions without proof give but little help towards the knowledge we want.

GLEANINGS FROM THE FOREIGN PRESS.

MONS. P. G. LEYMARIE.

"La Irradiation" contains an interesting account of the career of M. P. G. Leymarie of "La Revue Spirite." His life has been an eventful one, and runs through a period of sixty-seven years. When he was fourteen he lost his mother, and through the failure of a banker the family was ruined. As there were five of them, daily bread was a matter of serious importance. The eldest brother became a sailor and ultimately a captain in the navy, but P. G. Leymarie passed his youth in very hard work endeavouring to procure sustenance for the rest of the family, and means to educate them so that they might have the chance of filling honourable positions. In 1851 the Government dismissed him, although he had not occupied himself with militant politics, and in forty-eight hours he had to betake himself to Brussels. In 1858 he returned amnestied to France, and after a time became a Spiritualist. He subsequently made the acquaintance of Allan Kardec, and was his intimate friend until death parted them here. In 1865, along with Camille Flammarion, the astronomer, and others of more or less distinction, he assisted in founding the "Teachers' League" which later presented to Government a petition having 1,500,000 signatures, asking for free, secular, and compulsory education, a proposition which was afterwards sanctioned by law. At the death of Kardec in 1869 Leymarie became the leading man in the movement which the former had inaugurated. When Mr. Crookes was making his investigations in London with regard to spirit photographs M. Leymarie obtained some of them, and also some of those which Buguet claimed to have procured, and in referring to these experiments in the "Revue" the Minister of the Interior, Dufaure, caused the police to arrest him, and he was manacled and sent to prison like a brigand, under a clerical accusation of having spoken of "imaginary and fantastic things." Twenty years have not elapsed since this ignorant and abominable prosecution was initiated, and which resulted in a sentence of a year's imprisonment and a fine of several thousand francs. The clerics of that day had not apparently forgotten the man who had been helpful in obtaining for France free, secular, and compulsory education. They offered him his liberty, if he would seek pardon for his offence; but he was a person far above the influence of degrading traffic of that kind and served his time like a man, leaving all the obloquy that gathered around that scene on the miserable shoulders of those who incited or helped forward such a contemptible exhibition of unmanly hatred and pusillanimity. When he left prison in 1870 he founded the "Scientific Society for Psychological Study," whose beginnings were very brilliant, as it numbered among its associates academicians, scientists, doctors, legists, and artists. In 1888 the Supreme French Tribunal after a minute examination of the proceedings taken against him in 1874 rehabilitated him with all his rights.

A PRODIGY.

"Le Messenger" of Liège, quoting "L'Etoile Belge," gives an account of a little Chinese prodigy of four years old who has presented himself to the authorities at Hong Kong as a candidate at the examinations for literary honours. He has astonished the professors by the extent of his knowledge, and has written on a given subject a concise essay which as soon as the Chancellor has published his verdict will place this child among the number of Chinese illuminati. "L'Etoile Belge" recalls the circumstance that John Stuart Mill knew Greek and read Aristotle at six years of age. "Le Messenger" calls attention to the first application of the new law in regard to hypnotism. A Royal decree has been published in the "Moniteur" authorising M. Astère Denis, of Verviers, to practise hypnotism. This gentleman is the first who has asked for this authorisation. He is a merchant, a poet, and a journalist, who has been very successful in dealing with drunkenness and other vices, besides curing children of a disinclination to go to school. He has published a book on the science.

MINNA DEMMLER.

"The Spiritualistisch Weekblad" contains an account of a séance with the materialising medium M. a Demmler. It is

quoted from the "Uebersinnliche Welt," the séance having been held in Berlin on the premises of the Sphinx Alliance. The preliminary phenomena should be quite sufficient to convince the medium and her friends that she is victimised by some spirits whose society she would be much better without. The sitters first of all heard the back of the medium's chair creak, and then at brief intervals out from the cabinet flew her stays and shoes! These are not articles which should be found on every drawing-room table, and spirits who take such unwarrantable liberties with a medium's wardrobe are unquestionably too deficient in the matter of good taste to be entrusted with her control. After this manifestation, the spirit having requested music, the company sang a portion of the 130th Psalm, and the séance proceeded in less objectionable fashion. The hand of one of the ladies present shone as if it had been rubbed with phosphorus, and some of the sitters observed early in the evening a kind of luminous smoke, which subsequently disappeared. The third manifestation was the form of a fine looking young woman in a long white robe and having a starry crown on her brow. She spoke *rixa voce* as follows:—"Love builds a golden bridge between this world and the next, and permits you now to enjoy here a foretaste of Heaven." Shapes also formed on the right and left sides of the cabinet, and one of these said in English, "Good evening," moving towards Herr Schl—who supplied the report—and shaking hands with him. The other phenomena were equally astonishing, and, altogether, Mrs. Minna Demmler—judging from the phenomena described in this report—appears to be a medium capable of inducing manifestations of a character which calls for expert investigations of the most rigorous kind.

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.]

Origin of the Society for Psychical Research.

SIR,—I have seen the promotion of the Society for Psychical Research attributed to Professor Barrett; I have seen it attributed to Mr. Stainton Moses; and now I learn from a "Note by the Way" in last week's "LIGHT" that "H. S. O." (Colonel H. S. Olcott, I presume) has described the Society for Psychical Research as an "offspring" of the Theosophical Society, promoted by that Society's "own members."

As I had some share in the promotion of the Society for Psychical Research, perhaps I may be able the more effectually to show the purely mythical character of Colonel Olcott's statement by a brief narrative of the circumstances which led to the formation of that Society. *So far as I know* I was myself the first to suggest it. It occurred to me that—while the Spiritualists continued their work in their own way by means of their own societies—a new Society might be started—to be called Psychical or Psychological—for the sake of the many persons of culture and of good social position who, while really interested in Spiritualism, held themselves aloof from all active association with the movement because of the odium which at that time was supposed to attach to the name. In the autumn of 1881, in conversation with Professor Barrett, I suggested that the experiment should be made. He cordially concurred, and it was agreed that we should each invite friends to a Conference with the view of giving effect to the proposal.

Being in constant personal intercourse with Mr. Stainton Moses, I naturally desired his co-operation; and he gave it—though he did so with great reluctance. The Conference was held at the rooms of the British National Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell-street, on January 5th, 1882, Professor Barrett in the chair—when Mr. Stainton Moses drafted and moved the first resolution:—

That it is desirable to organise a Society for the purpose of associating together those who are interested in Psychological Research.

The following resolution was also passed:—

That the meeting nominate a Committee for the purpose of reporting on the best means of carrying this resolution into effect, and that the Committee consist of the following, with power to add to their number: Professor W. F. Barrett, George Wyld, M.D., Walter H. Coffin, Edmund Gurney, E. Dawson Rogers, Morell Theobald, Alexander Calder, W. Stainton Moses, F. W. H. Myers, Mary Boole, H. Wedgwood, Walter R. Browne, Desmond G. FitzGerald, Henry Sidgwick, H. J. Hood, C. C. Massey.

The Committee met several times and presented a Report to an adjourned Conference in the following month (February

20th) The Report was adopted, and the first meeting of the Council thereby appointed was held on March 3rd, 1882.

Such is a brief history of the formation of the Society for Psychological Research, and I submit that it sufficiently disposes of Colonel Olcott's suggestion that the Society for Psychological Research is an "offspring" of the Theosophical Society, promoted by that Society's "own members."

Mr. F. W. H. Myers writing in the "Proceedings" of the Society for Psychological Research for December last, said that "When Professor Barrett consulted Mr. Stanton Moses as to the possibility of founding a new society he warmly welcomed the plan." This statement is at variance with what I have said above—that he gave his co-operation with great reluctance; and I think that Mr. Myers must have written under a misapprehension. When Mr. Stanton Moses had moved the resolution at the first meeting of the Conference and consented to be placed on the Committee then appointed, there is no doubt that he threw himself heart and soul into the work; that was his custom in regard to anything he undertook. But when I first asked him to attend the Conference he resolutely refused, because, as he said, he had a shrewd guess that the men who were likely to come to the front in the new Society were not the men to bring impartial minds to the investigation of the phenomena of Spiritualism. This attitude he maintained up to the very day on which the Conference first met, when, yielding to my repeated solicitations, he came up from Bedford for the special purpose of attending the meeting. Heartily as he worked—or endeavoured to work—with the Society after he had once committed himself, he never found reason to doubt that his original judgment was correct, and he frequently, in conversing with me on the subject, blamed himself for having been so weak as to yield to my importunities. The end was that having become increasingly dissatisfied with the Society's attitude towards Spiritualism he withdrew from membership in 1886. I endeavoured to dissuade him from doing so, but this time my "importunities" were of no avail. E. DAWSON ROGERS.

The Visit to Uranus.

SIR,—Allow me to point out that your comments on my letter are constructed from an entirely different scientific standpoint from your original article. I refrain from further criticism for the simple reason that I fail to understand your remarks. But as to the calculations of the energy in every cubic foot of ether, although I entertain profound respect for both Dr. Lodge and Professor Crookes, I cannot accept clever speculations as verified scientific facts.

J. H. MITCHINER, F.R.A.S.

The Sun.

SIR,—In your impression of the 26th ult., Mr. Mitchiner has very properly dealt with the subject of the light and heat derived from the sun, or rather generated by the sun in the atmosphere of the planets. His letter is, however, simply an epitome of an essay on "The Astronomy of the Future" contributed by me to "Fraser's Magazine" for November, 1876, and afterwards expanded in my small work, "The New Principia," the first edition of which was published in 1883. Of course I do not for a moment insinuate that Mr. Mitchiner was aware of the existence of my publication. I am far too obscure a person to suppose that my theories were recognised by the public.

As my little book is out of print, your insertion of this communication cannot be an advertisement in disguise.

NEWTON CROSLAND.

The Cure of Deafness.

SIR,—In my letter inserted in the last number of "LIGHT," answering the many inquirers who addressed me about the cure of deafness, I mentioned, with other two cases, that of Miss R., in the service of one of the Royal Princesses of England, who, after having been for a few years under the treatment of several of the first aurists of the day and not been cured, called upon me, and I cured her in seven days. Seeing that, most probably by a mistake, it has been printed seven weeks instead of seven days, I beg you kindly to give publicity through your valuable paper to this rectification. And I avail myself of this opportunity of saying that I only mentioned three cases of cure of deafness as being sufficient to satisfy the inquirers. Otherwise, I might have named other cases of a similar character—for instance, that of Miss Jimenez, of six years of deafness, whom I have cured in eight visits.

3, Bulstrode-street, Cavendish-square, W. F. OMERIN.

Idealism.

SIR, In "LIGHT" of August 26th, "C.C.M." has spoken of himself as an old "Idealist." "C.C.M." always shows himself willing to help, and it might be helpful to others, as well as to myself, if he would explain the position of an Idealist as such. Does it imply a denial of any objective reality whatsoever of the seemingly external world, or merely an association that it is totally different from its sense-mediated representation in human consciousness—thus allowing our conceptions something other than *an idea*? This latter position, as implicitly represented, is fundamentally Realism, though of a transcendental order. Wherein does Idealism, as understood to-day, differ from that phase of it against which Kant wrote under the heading "On the Refutation of Idealism," in the second edition of his "Critique of Pure Reason"? C. Y. L.

Kama Loka.

SIR,—With your kind permission, I should like to add a postscript to my letter which appeared in a recent issue of "LIGHT" (pp. 406-7).

If I am right in assuming—and the experience of myself, and others, I think justifies me in doing so—that properly constituted circles of Spiritualists, sitting with the best intentions and highest aspirations, can, and do, promote the upward progress of the denizens of "Kāma Loka," what would follow? Surely, a more speedy regeneration of both worlds! This would proceed in geometrical progression. Every progressive spirit, instead of contaminating others, either in this world or the next, by "endeavouring to utilise them for their own gratification," would aid them, to the best of their ability, in their onward march to a better life.

It is often said that, "I am only one, what can I do to aid in the reformation of society?" These persons seem not to recognise the powers of geometrical progression. May I illustrate it thus? Suppose—at the lowest computation—that every convert produces one other convert; then we should have the following order of progression:—

- A—1 2 4 8 16 32 64 128 256 512 1024 2048
- B—0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

In the first ascent, one would become two; in the second ascent, two would become four; in the third the four would become eight; until at the eleventh the number of converts would amount to two thousand and forty-eight as the product of the first spirit convert. Multiply this by the number of such circles as might be held, and the vast amount of reformation that would take place in the region of "Kāma Loka" must be apparent.

But the good effects would not end there; a like progress would be made in this earthly sphere, and the combined efforts of the spirit and mundane workers would speedily produce such a very marked effect upon the religious, moral, and social character of humanity, that "Kāma Loka" would become almost tenantless, and we should no longer have so many inquiries as to whether or not life is worth living; and surely the best mode of flying from the ills we have, to others that we know not of.

ARCANUS.

A Brahmin Priest.

SIR,—Having heard of the extraordinary powers of a Brahmin priest (High Priest of Tangore, S. India) now in Colombo, I resolved to pay him a visit. In company with my husband I did so the other afternoon, finding him a hale and good-looking man, who, owing to seventy-six years, looks fully twenty years younger. The temple (Hindu of course) to which he is now temporarily attached is one of the finest in Colombo, but it was to an outer verandah we were invited, mats being spread for us to sit upon had we been so disposed. After a graceful salutation the priest inquired of my husband what he came for, to which he replied "to see the priest who possesses such remarkable gifts, as we are told." This was received graciously, but the priest replied that if we had a special object he was sorry this was not the time of day for its attainment. Having kept in the background I now stepped forward, and (my husband interpreting) told him how intensely interested I am in such rare gifts, and asked would he inform me of his method? was it astrology, psychometry, or quiescent impression, &c.? Addressing my husband again, the high priest cancelled his former objection as to the hour, saying the "lady" was "so nice" he would endeavour to answer any inquiry she would wish to make (mentally), only stipulating to be advised of the nature of it. I immediately wished to know concerning a *banian* of my husband which was

not forthcoming, and which I had spent some very hot moments in making, flannel work being no joke in the tropics. "Something lost," was communicated. I was then asked to put my finger on one of the signs in a figure of the heavens printed in what I detected at once to be an Almanac and Ephemeris (of the Raphael or Zadkiel order) in the Tamil language. Feeling forcious about the missing *banian*, I brought my finger down on *Leo*. The Brahmin then proceeded apparently with some calculations, touching different parts of the diagram meanwhile, while we remained silent for a few minutes. "It is an article," he said, "longer than broad, and of two colours" (right). "The distinguishing mark is something which looks like a patch and makes it look gay like a flower. You will never get it again; it was taken by a man between eighteen and twenty-four years of age, with a mark on his leg or back; he has passed it on to someone else; no, you will not get it back." This was decisive, and struck us as remarkable, as it favoured my husband's suspicion respecting a servant who was in charge of the house during our removal. It was only on driving home, however, that I could understand about "what looks like a patch," &c. It was the gusset in the sleeve, which I had first forgotten to put in, then, having no more of the same flannel, had to make up with some other of very fanciful colour, which certainly did make it "look gay," if not exactly "like a flower." Our friend, the high priest, was to set out on a pilgrimage next day, but will return in a month, when we said we would go to see him again and take my horoscope, which he says he will read. We are also promised an introduction to a learned Brahmin who divines by the aid of a crystal.

I have been much interested lately in the *Vale*, Hindu festival, and the Mohammedan *Hobson-Jobson*.
Darley-road, Colombo. CAROLINE CORNER-OHLMÜS.

Personality—Individuality—Influence.

SIR,—The Records of Mrs. S. are very valuable. I read them with all the attention I can command. They compel my profoundest respect.

The statement of the spirit Kabbila has much significance for me. He says, "It is difficult for me to say if such a person as Kabbila really exists, and my memory of earth has almost passed away." He seems to think of himself more as an influence than as a person. My theosophical teaching inclines me to think that his personality has passed into individuality, differentiated into the influence, part of which he has become. This conjecture is supported by his assertion—"I see also that I was the founder of the 'Sankeer' philosophy." He may mean that the influence on the tide of which he rose set forth that system. And I am much moved towards accepting the genuineness and authenticity of his communication; because the medium through whom it came spells "Sankeer" as I find it printed. Mr. Stainton Moses knew naught of Sanscrit; and to the ear of his intelligence the Sanscrit word "Sankya" or "Sankar" would sound very like "Sankeer" which is indeed almost the right pronunciation. I, for one, accept Kabbila's statement and believe it to be true; and none the less so because it is an Eastern Theosophical teaching that "Sankaracharya" was an incarnation of "Siddhartha Gautama Buddha," who came back to earth about sixty years after his death to fill up a gap and to correct certain errors in his own teaching; and that he was incarnated again in the fourteenth century in Tibet as Tsong-ka-pa, in order to arrange affairs of the adepts. I find no difficulty in reconciling these apparent inconsistencies, and in understanding what the spirit Kabbila meant when he says that he was Sankya 2,678 years ago, which was a time about two centuries before Siddhartha Gautama Buddha was born in 423 B.C. First, there was the personality "Sankya"; afterwards the individuality had become a part of the influence of which the Buddha was a part; and it is not at all to my mind irreconcilable with the circumstances, that the spirit Kabbila goes on to state that he, in his individuality "Sankya," once met the Buddha in spirit life, who, he states, has progressed very high, so high that his work is not concerned with this earth. This is not past understanding by the light of the explanation of the influences into which individuality becomes merged.

September 1st, 1893.

GILBERT ELLIOT, F.T.S.

Madame Blavatsky.

SIR,—In reply to "Gilded Coach" respecting the ashes of Madame Blavatsky, I beg to say that what he states is absolutely false, and has not a grain of truth in it, either as basis or

R.C., F.T.S.

In Reply to "C.C.M."

SIR,—"C.C.M." so entirely misunderstands, not my position but that of the ordinary philosophic Spiritualist, as regards the unproven and unprovable theory of Reincarnation, that I should like to state it from my point of view.

Spiritualism is the study of spirit and the laws of spirit. It is a science depending upon ascertained facts and legitimate inferences derived therefrom. Any person may be a Spiritualist and believe in Reincarnation; in communion with the so-called dead; in Christianity, Protestant or Catholic, Buddhism, Idealism, Mormonism, Mahomedanism, or any other 'ism that is not inconsistent with belief in spirit, and the study of its nature and laws; or he may disbelieve in all of these.

Spiritualism, being a science and not a religious or moral system, permits the same latitude of belief as all sciences do to their students. As regards theories, these, as in all sciences, must be based on ascertained facts, and even when so evolved are subject to constant revisal and reconsideration, and even may be laid aside as no longer tenable without in any way affecting the value of the study of the science.

I need hardly say that I take serious exception to the definition of Spiritualism as given by Mr. Page Hopps in your issue of August 26th. It is, I admit, the popular one, but it is obviously philologically and scientifically inaccurate.

"C.C.M." thinks I set up successive states of consciousness as an alternative theory of Reincarnation. I do not. I think *the time for theories has not yet come*, because our knowledge of nature is so slight, and more particularly our knowledge of spirit in man and nature is so small.

The analogies on which "C.C.M." relies are much too far-fetched, and are capable too readily of a variety of interpretation, to satisfy any person of scientific or philosophic mind.

When "C.C.M." refers to my expression "state of consciousness," he has evidently a different idea of the words than I have. I mean a deeper and more introspective seeing, that would sense all objects without having any perception of what we call the physical, although such seeing would be as real as, nay more so than, our present seeing. The objects seen would not be less, but more, objective than what our present senses perceive. But the objectivity of this next state of consciousness would be invisible to those in the state of consciousness below it, unless, by some such condition as the clairvoyant, they had become able to transcend their natural mode of seeing. Of course, as "C.C.M." says, each state of consciousness would sense each object objectively, but the objectivity would be different in each state.

As regards my alleged inaccuracy in using "nature" for "this physical world," I meant what both terms indicate, and do not see any inaccuracy at all. Of nature or the physical world all we know is the result of a mode of manifestation. "C.C.M." thinks, however, that a successive evolution of different kinds of consciousness does not contradict Reincarnation but is in harmony therewith. How can this be? I am told by Reincarnationists that I must be reincarnated in this planet, perhaps a hundred times or more, and that between each of these reincarnations I am in a state of purely spiritual existence for a considerable period, and then I return to the old condition of consciousness that I had left. I do not, and did not, mean by a new state of consciousness simply what would occur if I were to look at nature with another body of the same kind as I have at present. What I meant was that the new state of consciousness, and the new and more spiritual body, would be beyond the sphere of what we call the physical, would be a higher and more introspective mode of perception, and would be concerned with other aspects of the nature of all things than that indicated by the word physical, which is merely a present sense aspect, to be succeeded by another, that by a third, and so on. A physical re-birth is quite unnecessary. Experience is gained without it.

Then "C.C.M." never really meets a single argument I have adduced. For instance, I showed that there was no real analogy traceable between the lower forms of nature and man as regards rest, because, first, the rest of man was not dependent so much on external conditions but was largely voluntary. Second, he certainly jumps to the conclusion that the plant or the animal becomes extinct as an organism at death. Is it not far more reasonable to conclude that as man ceases to have an objective existence to our present senses after death, so does the mineral, the plant, and the animal? And just in the same way as man has an objective existence to other senses than ours, so have they. I may say that I demonstrated this in a most

effective way by the aid of the best clairvoyant I have ever seen. I took a newspaper which I had not read, crushed it into a ball in my hand, and thrust it into a very large fire, and stirred it till every semblance of a word or letter was obliterated. Then I asked him to tell me the word to be found in the ninth column from the beginning, the sixth line, and the third word on that line. No one in the house knew what the word was, yet the clairvoyant, after going forward to the fire, put his hands down quickly into it, and then holding them as if there was a real paper in them, he asked me to repeat my question; and he then read the word as "shall," which proved to be correct when I next day bought another copy of the paper. I know that the end of a thing to our present senses is the same in the mineral, the plant, the animal, and man, one universal law being clearly manifest. Hence my reason for saying that, as man rests daily with the plant and the animal, and again at death, before a true analogy can be traced it is necessary to account for the yearly rest of the plant and the absence of that rest in most of the lower animals and in man. "C.C.M.'s" argument is that the plant and the animal perish at death, but that death in man is the true analogy to the annual rest. If it is the true analogy in the case of man, why not in the case of the lower animals that have not this annual rest? If Reincarnation is to be proved by analogy, it must be a very much better analogy than any that has yet been indicated either by "C.C.M." or anyone else.

I should be glad to know all that Reincarnationists appear to know, but I am content to be ignorant rather than accept a system of belief supported by far-fetched and seemingly false analogies: even although this system comes from admittedly great philosophers, who, however, lived in a comparatively barbarous age, and were quite ignorant of the modern scientific method of only forming theories from a careful inquiry into facts and phenomena. We must be free and unfettered in our investigations into spirit and its laws, and not bound, as Reincarnationists are, to reject everything that does not square with their theory. R. DONALDSON.

Spirit Guides and Theosophy.

SIR.—I think your correspondent, "In Utrumque Paratus," is quite correct in saying that the return of Egos from planes higher than the Kamic is rare, according to the Esoteric Philosophy. But he forgets that communion with Devachanic entities is stated to be quite possible on the condition that the medium is sufficiently spiritual to rise to that plane. They only return here on the rarest possible occasions, but it is possible for us to rise to their plane and so hold real communion with them, and bring back the memory of it to the earth. The medium in the physical body and the entity in Devachan may both be completely deluded as to the circumstances under which the communion takes place but it is none the less real.

Finally, there are those cases where the deceased, not having yet entered Devachan, returns to earth and holds communion in the well-known ways.

From personal experience, I am inclined to think that sometimes when a medium is supposed to be controlled by some extraneous entity, he has really fallen into a trance of his own inducing and is not under any external influence, not even that of a spook. The clairvoyant, telepathic, and other powers of the incarnate Ego seem to me quite capable of explaining many phenomena often attributed to outside agencies. H. S. GREEN.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Several communications necessarily stand over till they have been seen by the Editor, who has not yet returned from the Continent.

E. T. (Portland, Oregon).—The communication which you send us, purporting to be a spirit message for W. E. Gladstone from "Mismach, your brother in England's rights and Ireland's woes," bears no internal evidence whatever of being what it professes to be. Indeed, the internal evidence is all the other way. No good, but rather much harm, would come of its publication: and we therefore return the MS.

How often it is difficult to be wisely charitable—to do good without multiplying the sources of evil. To give alms is nothing unless you give thought also. It is written, not "blessed is he that feedeth the poor," but, "blessed is he that considereth the poor." A little thought and a little kindness are often worth more than a great deal of money.—ROBIN.

SOCIETY WORK.

[Correspondents who send us notices of the work of the Societies with which they are associated will oblige by writing us distinctly as possible, and by appending their signatures to their communications. Particular attention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions. No notice received later than the first post on Tuesday is sure of admission.]

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E. Meetings from every Sunday, at 7 o'clock. Speaker for Sunday next, Mrs. V. ELLIOTT.—J. RAINBOW, Hon. Sec.

SPIRITUAL HALL, 86, HIGH STREET, MARYLEBONE, W. Mr. A. J. Bradley gave a short inspirational address on Sunday on "Spiritualism, the need of the age." Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Miss Rowan Vincent on "Spiritualism and Morality."—H. R.

311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—On Sunday evening an address was delivered by Mr. Long, dealing with the conditions of life, suicides, and experiences in the spirit world. A thrilling address was listened to with evident interest. Wednesday, inquirers' meeting at 8.15 p.m.; Sunday, séances at 11.30 a.m. spiritual gathering at 7 p.m.—C. M. PAYNE.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W. On Sunday last Mrs. Mason's guides answered numerous Biblical questions to the entire satisfaction of all present, and an interesting discussion followed, Messrs. Portman, Francis, Norton, and others taking an active part. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Mason; Tuesday, at 8 p.m., open circle; September 17th, Mr. Francis.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—On Thursday, many friends were present at the open circle, and some very good tests were given by one of our lady members. On Sunday, Mr. Rogers gave an address on "Spiritualism the Centre of all Religions." He also spoke upon the many converts he had made through speaking in the parks, &c. On Sunday next, Mr. J. Vaughan, at 7 p.m., will give his experience of Spiritualism and how he first became a Spiritualist. Thursday, at 8 p.m., Mr. G. Cootes, on Psychometry.—J. B., Sec.

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. R. Palmer, 3101, North Broad street, Philadelphia; Australia, Mr. H. Junor Brown, "The Grand Hotel," Melbourne, Victoria; France, P. G. Leymarie, 1, Rue Chabanais, Paris; Germany, E. Schlochauer, 1, Monbijou-place, Berlin, N.; Holland, F. W. H. Van Straaten, Apeldoorn, Middelmeer, 682; India, Mr. T. Hatton, State Cotton Mills, Baroda; New Zealand, Mr. Graham, Huntley, Waikato; Sweden, E. Fortenson, Ade, Christiania; Russia, Etienne Geispitz, Grande Belozerski, No. 7, Lod. 6, St. Petersburg; England, J. Allen, Hon. Sec., 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or, W. C. Robson, French correspondent, 166, Epe Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne.—The Manor Park branch will hold the following meetings at 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park:—The last Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., reception for inquirers. Also each Friday, at 8 p.m. prompt, for Spiritualists only, the study of Spiritualism. And at 1, Winifred road, Manor Park, the first Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., reception for inquirers. Also each Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m., inquirers' meeting.—J. A.

MRS. SPRING.—A social gathering will be held on Monday evening, September 18th, at 8, Wilkin-street, Grafton-road, Kentish Town, N.W., commencing at 8 p.m. Tickets, one shilling each. The object is to help Mrs. Spring, a well known medium and clairvoyante, who is at the present time in urgent need owing to a sad affliction. Mrs. Spring's husband has been in hospital for four months past, suffering from paralysis of the brain, and he is quite disabled. A lady has kindly sent a donation of one pound, one pound has been received from "A Friend" at Brighton, a friend from Noel-park has sent ten shillings, and five shillings have been received from M. Dales of Dulwich, for which Mrs. Spring is truly thankful.

TRUE PROGRESS.—It is not in the monastery, in isolation from the world's temptation, that we make the most headway in spiritual life, but in the midst of the daily battles of life. We may place ourselves where the faults of our nature have no need to rear their heads, where they can slumber so long that the possessor forgets that he ever owned them, and perhaps believes they are conquered; but no one can know how far he or she is towards sainthood until trial comes. It is in the family life, in our business, in our amusements, that we most surely test our spiritual strength and pursue the best form of missionary work. There is no one whose life does not bring him into proximity with some fellow creature whom he can benefit mentally or physically. The one who positively wills to conquer self will acquire the power to influence others, for he will possess sympathy for weakness, knowing in his own person how difficult it is to conquer a pet fault. He will give strength, through the knowledge of having conquered. He will show truth, for he will unconsciously demonstrate in his own life the beauty of truth.—CHARLOTTE J. ARNEY, in "Lucifer."