

# Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

The new Report of "The Cremation Society of England," has nothing but congratulations for its friends. It is evident that the rational alternative of cremation is steadily making way in England. In 1885, at Woking, there were only three cremations; last year there were one hundred and one (in addition to thirty at Manchester). The increase has been steady. Here are the figures for each year since 1884—3, 10, 13, 28, 46, 54, 99, 104, 101. The only wonder is that the increase is not more rapid, as on the Continent.

From every point of view the arguments for cremation in preference to burial are overwhelming. It is infinitely sweeter both for the dead and living, and, once over, no sickening associations remain, as is the case with burial. The only objection that causes any anxiety relates to poisoning, but that only suggests strict legal attention to the certificates which the Cremation Society already requires before cremation, in regard to which a Select Committee of the House of Commons lately reported that "with the precautions adopted in connection with cremation as carried out by the Cremation Society there is little probability that cases of crime would escape detection."

Spiritualists ought to be among the first to favour cremation. Nothing would more effectually wipe out the unclean and utterly irrational superstition concerning the resurrection of the body, and compel the imagination and the mind to take refuge in the great fact of spirit-life. The London office is at 8, New Cavendish-street, W.

The "Astrologers' Magazine" made a rather bad shot. In its article on "Mr. Gladstone's Directions" we have no indication of the great surrender. On the contrary, we have the statement that as something is "elevated," and as something else "receives good aspects during the summer and early autumn of this year, considerable parliamentary success may be anticipated then." Alas! the grand old soldier is out of it—and so is the "Astrologers' Magazine." It predicts dire evils for Mr Gladstone towards the end of the present year and during 1895. But he has not much to fear, judging from its earlier forecast.

Father Ignatius seems to know all about it. Lecturing at Norwich, he said:—

People had come to him because of the trouble and distress they had experienced through engaging in Spiritualism. Forms and voices they saw and heard were those of devils, and not of their departed friends. This was one of the signs of the last days.

This is every whit as foolish as the credulity of the crude Spiritualists who believe that the unseen beings who give the names of Moses, Jesus Christ, and Swedenborg

are the persons they profess to be. It would be interesting if the good Father would give us his proofs—if he has any. Would he come to a meeting of the Alliance and lay these proofs before us? He might do important service. At present our opinion is that he does not like what "the spirits" teach, and therefore calls them demons; just as, not liking the teachings of certain churchmen, he denounces them as traitors and liars. That is the worst of being a fanatical and over-sure theologian. But the value of Father Ignatius' generalisations may be gauged from the following test. He was lecturing on the last days, which he believes these to be, and one of his proofs was "the great increase of travelling," for does not the Bible say, that in those days "many shall run to and fro in the earth"?

The "Literary Digest" draws attention to the fact that a German paper, "Das Echo," has been defending Professor Falb against the accusation that he has predicted the end of the world in 1899, in consequence of its collision with a planet which was discovered a few years ago. The defence is based on the fact that what Professor Falb referred to was the coming amazing display of "falling stars" in 1899 (November 15th). Says the "Digest":—

A swarm of meteorites called the Leonides, which travel around the sun in about thirty-three years, will cross the earth's path. But we are assured that there is no danger from the Leonides; for we have often passed through them, and have always come out unsinged and unsmashed. Since A.D. 902, the record has been kept of our meetings with these frail wanderers of the heavens, and we have had fourteen collisions, and hardly knew it. Hence, the possibility of the earth being destroyed by a meteorite or meteorites in 1899 is a hundred thousand times more remote than the possibility of winning the great prize in the Turkish Lottery and getting the money.

The "Religio-Philosophical Journal," which, under Mr. and Mrs. Underwood's scholarly and experienced guidance, is becoming increasingly true to its name, gives us a very thoughtful essay on "Goodness independent of Dogma." Not enough is allowed for the immense impetus given to mercifulness by the ideal we know as "Christlike," but the main contention, that human goodness has no necessary connection with dogma, is surely right, as the following historical glimpses show:—

The notion that sympathy, generosity, and charity were unknown before the Christian era is very absurd, and is positively contradicted by what we know of Pagan antiquity. Provisions for the relief of poverty were quite abundant, although not always wise; in some cases, as in the gratuitous distribution of corn in Rome, leading to indolence and improvidence—the same results that followed the encouragement of indiscriminate almsgiving by the Christian Church in later periods. The history of all ancient nations abounds in examples of generosity, charity, and disinterested devotion to humanity. They all had institutions for the unfortunate, however inferior to those of this age. They were not due to the influence of Jesus. And when Lyons was nearly destroyed by fire, and Rome supplied the wants of the people in grateful return for assistance received from Lyons when a little earlier a similar calamity had befallen Rome; when Antioch was half-destroyed by an earthquake, and



the other Asiatic Greeks "sent from all sides provisions, by land and sea, to the unfortunates who clung to their ruined home"—as one who was living there wrote—it was not because of the example or the influence of the Nazarene reformer, but because the heart of the Pagan was touched then as the heart of the Christian is now by spectacles of distress, and because natural sympathy and benevolence prompted them then as they do to-day to efforts for the alleviation of human suffering.

The practice of disparaging and defaming the old Pagan nations, exaggerating their vices and utterly ignoring and even denying their virtues—contrasting them, thus misrepresented, with the most enlightened nations of modern times—and then ascribing not only the real but the imaginary differences between ancient and modern civilisation to the influence of Christianity, was once almost universal among theologians, and is not yet entirely abandoned. A larger view of the subject shows that all civilisations have their peculiar excellencies and defects, the result of temporary influences or local environments; that civilisations, when compared at all, should be compared as wholes; that modern civilisation is the complex product of all past thoughts and acts, that it has been evolved from pre-existent conditions with as little break as the man is developed from the child, and that the differences between the age of Pericles or Augustus, or Constantine or Queen Elizabeth, and the nineteenth century, are due, not simply to one person or theological system, but to a multitude of causes, the respective influences of which in the production of the grand result can be properly estimated only by the man who has profoundly studied the nature and the history of our race.

"The Speaker," with but little knowledge of the subject, nevertheless sees far enough into it to detect the queer ground occupied by Mr. T. J. Hudson in his book, "The Law of Psychic Phenomena." In that book, with an evident bias against the Spiritualist and his simple explanations of certain occult phenomena, Mr. Hudson, nevertheless, strains arbitrary ingenuity to the cracking point in accounting for them. He is restive under the suggestion that an unseen being presents a picture or suggests a thought, but he can believe, and urge us to believe, that thoughts can wander about like policemen, and that mental pictures can fly across the seas like swallows. We do not say there is no foundation of truth in that; all we say is that Mr. Hudson's explanation is a little more difficult than the Spiritualist's.

"The Speaker" has just enough knowledge to see this, and, while it tepidly edges away from both Spiritualism and telepathy, it cuts up Mr. Hudson in the following pleasant fashion:—

Mr. Hudson makes the interesting observation that the medium's own belief that the communications he receives come from the dead is due to the suggestions derived from his own education; and the equally suggestive remark that the reason why phenomena so often do not take place in the presence of sceptically minded persons is that their scepticism acts as a contrary suggestion, which the medium is unable to resist. Granting that telepathy is proven (and this is a very large assumption at present), we must admit that there is a good deal to be learnt from Mr. Hudson's treatment of those problems as well as of those of mental therapeutics. But he very soon adds to his original hypothesis other elements which make it quite valueless except as a method of recalling the facts to be explained, or rather to be investigated and checked. Thus, to account for the "physical" phenomena of Spiritualism, he has to suppose that the subjective mind of the medium is endowed with certain extraordinary physical powers (such as writing in between two slates); which is no explanation at all. The hypothesis becomes still more audacious when he comes to deal with ghosts or with phantasms of the living. Ghosts, he thinks, are not spirits of the dead, as Spiritualists say, but they are creations of the subjective mind of the dead person, the embodied thoughts of men, produced at the moment of death as the most favourable time, and especially if the person was under the influence of strong mental agitation—as a murdered man may be supposed to be. A ghost, in fact, is a vision projected from the mind of one person which becomes visible to others. Mr. Hudson goes so far as to say that the photographs alleged to be

taken of apparitions are photographs of visions which the medium actually creates. Here is hypothesis with a vengeance. If Mr. Hudson were not so shrewd and suggestive a critic of Spiritualist and many other phenomena, it would be legitimate to ridicule the lengths to which he has pushed his theory, but it is strange that he has failed to recognise that he has replaced facts of doubtful authenticity by assumptions which really are astounding in our present state of knowledge. If only Mr. Hudson were as sceptical about his own theories as he is about Spiritualism, he might have produced a work of much greater value.

#### FATHER CLARKE IN A NEW LIGHT.

Mr. Stainton Moses once made to me a very striking remark. He said that some seventeen years previously he had made a prophecy. This was that in seventeen years Spiritualism would have conquered the world.

"This shows," he went on, "the danger of prophecy. Nothing has turned out as I thought. But the unexpected has occurred. Its subtle essence is everywhere; in the pulpits, even the lecture rooms of science."

This is very true. I heard the other day of a clergyman in Belgravia questioning a lady of title on her inward progress. I heard of another announcing from the pulpit that hell was a state of the soul. Is there not also a "Christo-Theosophical Society," "Christian Magians," an "Esoteric Christian Union"? all trying to revivify the dead bones of the Valley. And now a little sixpenny book of great interest has just been issued by Messrs. Kegan Paul and Trübner.\* It bears testimony to the fact that many Catholics were induced by their experiences, when dabbling with modern Spiritualism, to take refuge in the Roman fold. The authoress, some years back, knew nothing of Roman Catholic practices and teachings. She worked what she calls an "Indicator" (probably a planchette) with some friends. And a Spirit came, a dead priest named H—, who unfolded to her these teachings one by one.

This book has a quaint preface by the celebrated Father Clarke of the Society of Jesus: This gentleman, as the readers of "LIGHT" well know, has attributed all modern Spiritualism to Satanic agency. To say that he has changed his mind would not, perhaps, be fair. "Spiritualism belongs," he says, "to the domain in which the Prince of Darkness holds sway." But he goes on to give the "rules" which, in his view, ought to "guide us in forming our opinion as to what is unlawful in the method of intercourse with those who belong to the invisible world."

But if A can have private "views" on the subject, B and C can have private views likewise. It is difficult to see where the Jesuit Father and the ordinary Spiritualist are really at issue.

"It may be," says Father Clarke, "that all who respond to those who invoke the spirits of the dead are really devils, but that God, in some cases, compels them to teach the truth in spite of themselves."

Here, again, we seem only confronted with a verbal distinction. If a "dead priest named H—" is compelled (of course by some moral inducement only) to come day after day and patiently spell out, on Ouija or planchette, elaborate expositions of the doctrines of purgatory, saint invocations, auricular confession, and the other points where Protestants differ from Catholics—in order, as Father Clarke puts it, to save "souls that are dear to God"—we may call this spirit a "devil," if we like, but we should have then to considerably modify the definition of the word "devil":—

All invoking of the spirits of the dead (or necromancy) is forbidden by positive precept to Catholics, and not to Catholics only, but to all who accept the Bible as the Word of God. It is also a violation of the natural law, not indeed of its primary precepts, with which all are familiar, but of those secondary precepts, of which non-Catholics are often inculpably ignorant.

\* "A Convert through Spiritualism." (Kegan Paul, Trübner and Co.)



This may be so, but then what about the Credo, "I believe in the Communion of Saints." It is generally thought that the Catholic Church has interpreted this communion to mean a communion of saints on earth and saints in Heaven. What also about the Litanie Omnium Sanctorum which Father Clarke has often read in public, no doubt?—

Sancte Dominice, ora pro nobis!

Sancte Martine, ora pro nobis!

Of this last saint it is recorded that he was able to carry on long conversations with the dead, "with Thiele and Agnes and Mary." Was Thiele a "devil?" And if all communication with the spirits of the dead is "forbidden by positive precept," why has the Church canonised St. Martin?—

It is quite possible that God may permit some soul from Purgatory to answer the summons of one who is an honest seeker after truth, just as he permits the Holy Souls to go unsought on messages of mercy to those on earth. There are well authenticated stories without number of appearance to the living of those in Purgatory. Why should we regard it as impossible that they should be sent to warn, instruct, or advise one, who, amid the mists of ignorance, was longing and praying for more light, and who in all good faith sought to obtain it through their instrumentality?

All this is possible, no doubt, but how are we to "authenticate" the soul from purgatory, and discriminate him from a devil or from St. Dominic or St. Martin when he comes to our Ouija, if all four seem bent on doing us pure good?—

In the case of those outside the Church, who, amid the mists of heresy are earnestly seeking for light, God often uses means strange, and to us unaccountable, to help them in their quest. In His mercy He brings good out of evil, and adapts Himself with Divine condescension to their weakness, ignorance, and superstition. The fact that there have been converts to whom Spiritualism has been the agency that led them into the Church, is not in any way inconsistent with the farther fact that Spiritualism and Spiritualistic practices are in themselves unlawful and abominable.

This opens up a much broader question—What is the Roman Catholic Church? It is simply an apparatus of magic. This is not denied in the writings of the early Fathers, as Bishop Warburton has shown. Its priests were called Mystagogues, Mystes, Hierotelestes. Its mysteries, like those of the pagan school of magic, were called orgies, teletas, &c.

In a clever novel by Cherbuliez, "La Vocation du Comte Ghislain," a French Bishop from Tonquin is made to give an eloquent exposition of Catholic mysticism. He divides humanity on earth into three groups:—1. Sinners (those living a purely animal life). 2. The just (laymen living clean lives). 3. The Saints (monks and nuns).

I have been told by many Catholics that this classification is quite accurate, and that only Class No. 3 can enter heaven without going to purgatory. It is impossible to deny the importance of this, for of what does Class No. 3 consist? Of those who have given up the joys of earth and the family life to develop the soul growth, the "Christ" in the breast, as St. Paul puts it. They live secluded lives, in the cells of buildings specially constructed for the purpose. They practice what the Catholics call "contemplation," and the Indians, "Yoga." They use the "Spiritual Exercises" of Ignatius Loyola, which differ in no essentials from the Indian treatises on magic.

I have gone into all this at length in my little work "Modern Mystics and Modern Magic," to which the reader is referred. And how is the "Saint" to be detected? Simply by his miracles: that is the test when the question of canonisation surges up. Migne's excellent "Dictionnaire du Mysticisme" gives us a list of these miracles:—1. Mystical seeing. 2. Mystical hearing. 3. Mystical smelling. 4. Discerning of spirits, like the modern Clairvoyant. 5. Flight through the air. 6. Mystical preaching. 7. Com-

munication with the spirits of the dead. 8. Raising the dead.

Surely, instead of considering spiritualistic practices "abominable," the Church really points to them as the sole path of safety.

ARTHUR LILLIE.

THE  
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL EXPERIENCES  
OF  
WILLIAM PROCTER,  
THE BLIND MEDIUM OF BARROW-IN-FURNESS.\*

(NUMBER 130 OF MRS. BRITTEN'S UNPUBLISHED "SPIRITUALISTS' ENCYCLOPEDIA.")

[NOTE BY MRS. E. H. BRITTEN.—To the educated and thinking portion of those who read with interest, and support with pride, the excellent paper entitled "LIGHT" I earnestly commend the perusal of the following sketch; not only because it presents many an instructive and—it may be hoped—an inspiring lesson to pleasant home and drawing-room circle holders, but it also narrates some invaluable experiences and unanswerable facts in the history of the World's Spiritual Pioneers, which the scientific should study, and the thoughtful should honour. I may add that the narrator still lives, can be seen and questioned; and though dependent upon the help and guidance of those who are "eyes to the blind," still lectures for such Spiritual societies as seek his services. Consequently his statements can be tested and proved by all who desire to sift the evidence herein set down.—E. H. B.]

Mr. Procter—dictating through an amanuensis, for the "Spiritualists' Encyclopædia"—says:—

"On Christmas Day, 1871, at the close of a certain Christian revival service, which I had been conducting at a village called Horgrove Mills, near Dalton, one of my friends, Mr. John Crellin, on returning from Barrow, brought to me the astounding news of Spirit Communion, telling me that he had been to Barrow and had received communications from his son, who had departed this life nineteen years before. When hearing this story I exclaimed: "My dear friend, do not believe it; it is not true or possible. If John is in Heaven, its joys will be too good for him to leave, and come back to a sin-blighted world like ours; and if in Hell, the Devil would so control his subjects as to make it impossible to escape." I then drew his attention to the Bible account of Dives and Lazarus, and solemnly entreated him not to mention the subject again. But all my arguments were of no avail; John was filled with new life and light, and was anxious that all should hear the story which he had to tell. He introduced the subject to the members of my class, and it became the topic of conversation, some doubting, others saying, "God has permitted the Devil to come as an angel of light to deceive the elect." While we were holding this discussion, Mr. George Garnett, of Barrow, a Wesleyan local preacher, came in and confirmed every statement which our friend had made.

At this point the question was asked, If they can obtain such communications at Barrow, can we not have the same at Horgrove Mills? I, with others, answered, "No, we cannot," but Messrs. Crellin and Garnett exclaimed, "You can, if you try." At once a proposition was made that we should form a circle, and carry out the instructions given by our two friends, and we arranged to meet at the house of Mr. Crellin on the evening of New Year's Day, 1872. The expected hour arrived, and a circle, nine in number, met together.

Our first séance commenced by singing a hymn and our friend, Mr. Crellin, offering an invocation. He told us then to sit round the table and lay our hands upon it. Eight o'clock came, but the table never moved. Nine and ten followed, and our faith was dead. Tired with holding our hands in one position, and exhausted with singing, we resolved to give it up, but Mr. Crellin entreated us to try it for "ten minutes longer," and we consented. The table then began to oscillate, and our friend said, "Lift it up, please," and the table at once was lifted to the ceiling of the room and held suspended there. Several of the party tried to pull the table back to the floor, but they could not succeed. One of our circle, placing a Bible on a piece of board which was fixed between the legs of the table, exclaimed, "I believe in God," and at once the table descended. We placed our hands upon its surface once again, but no sooner

\* Mr. Procter's address is—Care of Mr. T. Holden, 26, Shakespeare-street, Barrow-in-Furness.



had we done this than it was snatched from us and suspended again in its former position. Our friend at once placed the Bible on as before, but it had no effect, and the table did not come back at our wish, and could not be pulled down by the united force of four strong men. In a few minutes, however, the table began to spin round, and gradually descended to the floor, and at once began to tilt. Mr. Crellin asked the questions, and such proof of spirit identity was given that many of our friends became converted that night. The table at length gave four distinct knocks upon the floor, which signified "Good-night."

We thus concluded the first circle I had ever attended. We resolved to meet the next night at the same hour. Placing our hands upon the table at seven o'clock prompt, we did not remove them until ten, our second meeting breaking up, however, without any results. We continued thus to try twenty-one nights, for three hours at a sitting—without any results, and at length we resolved to make it a matter of prayer. The whole of our prayer was, "Lord, we desire to make a covenant with Thee; if this be Thy work let the table move to-night, and if it be the work of the Devil may it remain still for ever." One after another our friends rose to their feet, and said, "I believe it is the work of God, and the table will move to-night"; but I remained still on my knees, feeling too much afraid to say anything. Our friends then took their seats around the table, and asked me to come and take my usual place, but I begged to be excused. After sitting for two hours they again asked me if I would kindly oblige them, if only for five minutes. I consented to do so, and the moment I placed my hands upon the table it began to move, and I to shake and tremble. After that sitting there was no difficulty in getting the table to move, neither had we any difficulty in getting our spirit friends to give messages. Perhaps some of our present-day Spiritualists will think, when I tell them that the table was moving several hours per day for three months, that we were absurd and foolish; nevertheless, it is true.

At that time I was introduced to a lady medium named Mrs. Pope. She made an engagement with me, and we arranged for a meeting at Dalton. This was in the month of April, 1872. Mrs. Pope was a writing medium, and when under control did not speak a word, but answered all questions on slips of paper. At that meeting she answered one hundred and sixteen questions. Many of the answers I have in my possession at the present day. She also told me that I was a medium, though I did not know then what she meant. She made many prophetic statements in reference to me, and the whole, without one exception, have come true. She gave me instructions in reference to circles, and I at once commenced to carry them out, sitting three times per week month after month.

Very soon I became the most notorious character in the town of Dalton. Ministers warned their young men to have nothing to do with me, and the people, who once loved me, manifested a perfect hatred, and it was no uncommon thing to hear twenty or thirty voices crying out "Spirits," "Devils," &c., as I passed along the streets. Children came to me with buckets, cans, &c., asking me to fill them with "spirits" for their fathers and mothers, and more than once I was hooted by the Sunday-school teachers and scholars belonging to the school which I had been associated with from a boy. One night I was returning from my circle when I was attacked by a band of ruffians, who called themselves Christians. They placed a bag over my head, tied a cord round my legs, carried me about the distance of a hundred yards, and deliberately threw me into a pool of very deep water; pulled me out again, and left me to take the bag off my head and the cord off my feet and to get home the best way I could. At length the churches took it up, and the minister of the chapel to which I had formerly belonged, before preaching his sermon, said: "The Lord hath given me this charge: Hearken unto this solemn declaration. You who are in the habit of attending Spiritualist séances, and associating with devils, demons and damned spirits, go! and you will find your eternal home in hell with them; but you who are anxious to go to Heaven with us, and live with God, and His beloved Son, keep your seats." I at once rose to my feet and made this statement: "If I have to go to hell for seeking truth, I must go." Turning to seven of the brethren that were sitting with me I said, "Come, let us go!" And in the midst of a volley of hisses and groans I left the chapel, but there was not one out of the seven who had courage to follow. Our circle was then reduced to three, my friends Mr. and Mrs. Crellin and myself. We continued our sittings until March, 1873, and we were told one Monday evening

that on the following Saturday I should be entranced. We made special effort to augment our numbers, and succeeded in getting six to come and sit with us. We commenced our sitting at 7 p.m. prompt, and had not sat very long when I began to feel exceedingly strange. Everything in the room seemed to be in motion. Gradually I lost power over my own faculties. I could hear every word which was spoken, but I could not speak myself. I heard them say, "He is dying," but one old man said, "Don't be alarmed; he is in the keeping of angels, and they will see he takes no harm." At that moment I fell to the floor, and became entirely unconscious to my surroundings, and remained in that state until five a.m. the next morning. During the night they brought pictures, epitaphs, etc. I described the pictures, and read the epitaphs, although I had not been able to see to read or write for over eight years. The news soon spread through the town, and men of all ranks and professions visited the house of Mr. Crellin, and night after night I was occupied in debate with ministers and local preachers, combatting some of the doctrines I had once believed in as the fundamental principles of my religion. This continued week after week. Steps were taken by my own family and others to try and stop me, as they had come to the conclusion that I was not only a Spiritualist but an Infidel. I then made acquaintance with Barrow Spiritualists, and we arranged to obtain the services of Mr. Morse, who had at that time commenced his career as a public speaker. Our first meeting was held in a sitting room owned by Mr. George Garnett. We continued to engage speakers at intervals during the year 1873. The first public expounders in Barrow were Messrs. Morse, Dobson, Dr. Sexton, Mrs. Scattergood and Miss Longbottom. I held my first meeting in Barrow, in 1873, in the house of my old friend Mr. Crellin, who had removed from Dalton to Barrow, but in a few weeks, the room becoming too small, we removed to 153, Dalton-road, where we held meetings every Sunday. We had then taken steps to organise a society, and on Saturday, February 24th, 1874, we inaugurated the Barrow-in-Furness Spiritualist Society. I was at that time engaged in the occupation of a mineral borer, and used to go to work six days per week, and still attended six meetings. It was no uncommon thing for me to walk to Barrow twice a week after leaving my day's work, and up to the year 1880 I continued to work and hold meetings at both Barrow and Dalton, amidst fiery opposition.

I spoke every alternate Sunday at Dalton and Barrow until the year 1882. We were obliged to give up Dalton through the death of our chairman, who was the owner of the room which we occupied. Then my almost undivided energies were devoted to Barrow. In 1886 I was left alone in the work at Barrow. The trade of the town being in such a depressed condition, we could not afford to engage mediums from a distance, neither could we afford to pay local talent, therefore I used to walk four times per week from Dalton to Barrow and back, with one aim only in view, namely, the promulgation of Spiritualism and the moral elevation of the people. In 1888 the Barrow friends decided that I should come and live among them. I came, and since that date up till now—upwards of twenty years—I have been working for a cause that I love dearer than my life, and by the help of friends on the terrestrial and celestial planes of being, I mean to continue in this great work to the end.

#### SOME REITERATION OF FACTS IN MY OWN EXPERIENCE WHICH CANNOT BE REFUTED.

- Fact I. My reading the pictures and epitaphs, first time under control, proves beyond doubt that there was an intelligence outside of myself, possessed of the sense of sight, which I have lost.
- Fact II. I preached a doctrine and quoted works which I had never read, and never heard of, and which I myself did not previously believe.
- Fact III. The controlling intelligence gave his name, also the cause of his death; incidents from his life; references which we investigated, and proved to be true, all unknown to me.
- Fact IV. In the year 1873 an intelligence controlled me which could read any chapter in the Bible; and if asked to read a special chapter, would open the book at the exact place, without turning the second leaf over.
- Fact V. In the year 1874, I was engaged in conducting a séance in the town of Ulverston. They requested me to stay all night, to which I consented. Partaking of supper, I instantaneously went under control, rose to my feet, wished



the company "good night," and at once left the house, without hat or overcoat, leaving my old friend, my walking stick, behind me. I then journeyed to Dalton. The Local Board was engaged laying down a system of main sewer, which I had to pass over at five different points. The men who were on watch said that I, the blind man, stepped over them better than anyone who could see. And, to my astonishment, I found myself in my own bed at Dalton the morning following.

Fact VI. I am blind, and have not been able to see since I was thirteen years of age. But I have experienced this thing over and over again. Whilst sitting in circle, I have been put into a deep trance, my spirit has for the time left the body, and I am able to see distant surroundings, and when restored to consciousness I have given a minute description of every scene I have passed through.

Fact VII. In the winter of 1880, the depression of trade was felt keenly in this district, and many persons were robbed on the roads. I became somewhat uneasy, fearing robbers might attack me. To my surprise and satisfaction, I was met on the road night after night by a large dog. The dog used to walk by my side, but would not allow me to touch it, and when I arrived at my own home it used to walk away from me. These are a few facts only. I could give scores of others, which go to establish Spiritualism, and make me a Spiritualist. If anyone can refute them, or explain them on any other basis, I, for one, would feel very much obliged to him.

### THE STORY OF THE FOUL FORDS.

We are indebted for this story to Miss Warrender's recent interesting piece of family history, "Marchmont and the Humes of Polwarth":—\*

At the beginning of the century, a blacksmith, named John Neale, lived with his family in the secluded and romantic village of Longformacus, on the Border. He was by that time a man of middle age, with sons approaching to manhood. He was known all through the country for his dissolute habits and intemperate language. One day he went to Greenlaw, about eight miles off, to attend the funeral of a sister, fully intending to be home in the course of the afternoon. As time wore on and nothing was seen of him, his wife and family became somewhat alarmed, and they sat up all night to wait for him. In the early hours of the morning a heavy weight was heard to fall against the door of the house, and opening to see what was the matter, Neale was discovered lying in a fainting fit on the threshold. He was put to bed and means were used for his recovery, but when consciousness returned he was raving mad, and talked of such terrible things that his family were horrified. He continued till next day in the same state, but at length his senses came back, and he desired that the minister might be sent for, and when he came insisted on seeing him alone. After a long conversation with Mr. Ord, Neale called his family round his bed, and required from his wife and children, in turn, a solemn promise that none of them would ever pass over that particular place on the moorland track between Longformacus and Greenlaw, known as the Foul Fords. He assigned no reason for this demand, and the required promise was given. After this he spoke no more, but died the same evening.

About ten years after his death his son, Henry Neale, who had succeeded to his business of blacksmith and farrier, and had led as bad a life as his father had done, had occasion to go to Greenlaw. It was late in the afternoon before he was ready to return home. The last person who saw him as he was leaving the little town was John Mickie, the Spottiswoode shepherd. Neale tried to persuade the latter to accompany him home which Mickie refused to do, as to do so would take him several miles out of his way. Neale begged him most earnestly to go with him, as he said he must pass the Foul Fords that night; and then used the strong expression that he would rather go through hell-fire than do what was before him. Mickie asked him why he said he must pass the Foul Fords, when by going a little to the east or to the west he might easily avoid the place altogether; but Neale persisted, and the other left him at last, a good deal surprised, for the circumstances of old Neale's death and the promise he had exacted

from his family were well known throughout the country. Henry Neale was never seen alive again. Next morning a labouring man named Adam Redpath, who was on his way from Cattleshiels, the nearest farm, to his daily work, digging sheep-drains on the moor, found him lying stone-dead at the Foul Fords. There was no mark of violence on his body. He appeared to have run for his life, for his hat, coat, and waistcoat were lying about a hundred yards' distance on the Greenlaw side of the Fords. His death made a great stir in the neighbourhood; and Mr. Ord, the minister of Longformacus, feeling that since the son's death his pledge of secrecy was removed, told what the father had related to him, which was as follows.

Neale said, that just as he had reached the Foul Fords on his return from Greenlaw after attending his sister's funeral, his attention was suddenly roused by hearing the trampling of horses behind him. Looking round, he saw a large company of riders coming down the moorland track, two by two. As they approached, what was his horror to perceive that one of the two foremost was the sister whom he had that day seen laid in her grave! Among other riders he recognised many friends and relations long since dead. When the two last horses came up he saw that one horse was ridden by a dark man, whose face he had never before seen. He was leading the other horse, which, though saddled and bridled, was riderless; and on this horse the whole company tried to compel him to mount. Neale struggled violently, he said, for some time, and at last only purchased his freedom by promising that the first of his family who should cross the Foul Fords should go instead of him.

Years have passed away and nothing remains—says the writer—to tell of this ghastly struggle but a tall grey stone set up by my great-grandfather, Mr. Spottiswoode, to mark the place.

### A LITTLE OMEN.

Here is a striking story in the "Speaker."—"As I waited in the corridor while a friend was getting me an order, Lord Rosebery came along with his little daughter, and there occurred under my eyes one of those trifling incidents which make an impression upon superstitious people. With firm, quick steps the young Prime Minister, authority and honours blushing on him, marched up the corridor upon that House on which, in his new office of leader of the democratic army, he might be said to be advancing as an invader. Just as he planted his heel upon the strip of marble which marks the threshold his foot slipped. Luckily he did not fall, he righted himself in a twinkling, but he was within a twinkling of coming a bad cropper; and as he passed in to hang up his coat, two perturbed policemen rushed forward to look at the spot where his foot slipped, as if some new interest had been added thereby to the floor. I am a bit superstitious, and I confess the occurrence struck me sharply. Lord Rosebery, being a Scotsman, is probably superstitious too; and I am sure, had he fallen outright, like Caesar landing in Britain, he would have been equal to the occasion, and would have managed, however surreptitiously, to kiss the soil and proclaim it his own, so as to invert the omen. But he did not fall outright, and the puzzle was, What did the omen signify? There is no puzzle about the matter now. Everybody knows that in the speech which Lord Rosebery delivered immediately afterwards he made one serious slip—the utterance of a certain cryptic sentence, which has been the talk of the country from that hour to this. But may not my threshold incident be called to witness that it was no more than a slip?"

"TEACHINGS ON THE SOUL."—Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond announces that "her guides have now consented to the publication of the entire series of the Soul Teachings, which will make a volume of five or six hundred pages, and will include all the series of lessons given to private classes up to the present time. To enable her to publish this work, many members of her classes have already subscribed for, or promised to take copies, thus affording a guarantee fund. The volume will be five dollars in cloth, and will be issued as soon as three hundred names have been subscribed."

### SPECIAL NOTICE.

We beg to remind those Subscribers to "Light" and the London Spiritualist Alliance who have not already renewed their Subscriptions for 1894, that they should forward remittances at once to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke Street, Adelphi, W.C.

\* "Marchmont and the Humes of Polwarth. By one of their descendants." (London: Blackwood and Sons.)



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

# NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria Lane, London, and all Booksellers.

# ADVERTISEMENT CHARGES.

Five lines and under 3s. One inch, 5s. Column, £2 2s. Page, £4. A reduction made for a series of insertions.

# Light:

SATURDAY, MARCH 24th, 1894.

**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.

# THE TRUE EASTER.

In a few hours, Christendom will keep its great festival of the year in memory of what it calls "The Resurrection"; and Nature has already commenced to keep its sweet Easter Day, the resurrection of her roses, lilies, and forest trees. The Church will sing its triumph-music to celebrate a liberated redeemer, and millions of birds are astir, to celebrate the restoration of smiling mother-nature to her own.

We will keep both, with both devotees and birds, and think with joy of Nature's "sweet and clean returns," and with greater joy of something else, greater than all—the universal Easter Day, kept every day, when the mortal is exchanged for immortality, the sigh for the song, the dying for the everlasting life.

Be glad and gay,  
O heart of mine, for this is Easter Day!  
With strong pulsations count the hours away  
Of Easter Day!

Where is the doubt  
That chilled thy fervours, checked the vital flow,  
Made the cheeks pale and bid its roses go?

'Tis driven out  
From thought's

Recesses, while, with song and shout,  
We welcome hopes too lovely to betray:  
'Tis Easter Day.

The Resurrection, as usually understood, can give, to the determined thinker, but little joy. What is it to us that Jesus rose with his murdered body from the dead? That, if anything, accentuates our doubt; for we know that our dead bodies do not and cannot so rise again. That one tremendous exception, within the lines of Christendom, is no help to us. To that, Reason can only say, "It is not true, or if it was ever true, it casts a doubt on your chance of persistence into any life beyond. He must have been exceptional." And to that there is no valid reply.

But we have better news—a veritable gospel. The resurrection of Jesus was, we say, purely spiritual: that is to say, it did not depend upon the physical body, though we admit that the story looks a little the other way. It seems to assert the rising of the body, and yet he appears and vanishes suddenly. He appears in their midst when the doors were fastened. He finally passes behind a "cloud" and disappears. That does not look like the possession of an ordinary body. Our explanation is that the risen Jesus was able to push past all the hiding veils of death, and appear to those who were *en rapport* with him. He demonstrated that death did not mean annihilation, but emancipation—that in fact, there is no such thing as death.

It is this stupendous faith that makes the resurrection of Jesus available for us as an indication of our own. He

was son of God and son of Man in a transcendental sense: that is to say, he belonged to heaven and earth. But is not that true in a measure for every one of us? Did he not teach us to pray to "Our Father" who is in "Heaven"? and did not his beloved disciple say that "now are we the sons of God"? Did not the Master himself say that he was only going to prepare a place for us; and that in his Father's house were many homes? So, then, what happened to him is what will happen to us. His ancestry is ours, his hope ours, his hold upon the Father ours, his destiny ours, his home ours. What a change passes over the whole scene when we so apprehend and understand him! Well, indeed, might he say: "He that believeth in me shall (know he shall) never die."

It is a world of extremest sorrow because of death. Even now—

Sad eyes are lifted up to hope and pray  
On Easter Day.

But here is the message, a veritable Gospel for all who are heavy-laden:—

Do not despair,  
O heart of mine, since He who made thy needs  
So vast, so urgent, sure His creature heeds.  
Make life more fair,  
Then thou wilt have an answer to thy prayer,  
And love and faith shall have their Easter Day,  
Now and alway.

MRS. HARDINGE BRITTEN.

We have pleasure in informing our readers that arrangements are in progress for the celebration of the forty-sixth anniversary of Modern Spiritualism by an address to be given in London by Mrs. Hardinge Britten on the evening of Sunday, April 8th. It is hoped that the Spiritualists resident in the metropolis will combine in an effort to make the occasion a conspicuous success. Further particulars will be given in future issues of "LIGHT."

# DIRECT SPIRIT WRITING.

With your consent I should be glad to record an interesting experience of direct spirit writing obtained through the mediumship of Miss Everitt, of Hendon. I and a friend, the Rev. J. C. G., sought permission for inquiry of Mr. Everitt, who kindly offered us every facility in our investigation. An ordinary writing-desk having been procured, I initialled and dated a sheet of clean note paper, and placed it, without a pencil, in one of the compartments, my friend likewise inserting an envelope which he had brought for the purpose. We then locked the desk and retained the key, and for the satisfaction of others who have not the opportunity of knowing Mr., Mrs., and Miss Everitt and their high integrity we took the additional precaution of tightly binding the desk with tape in various directions, forming in the process (including the lines of intersection) thirty-eight knots, the important ones being sealed and stamped with our signets, one of the seals covering the division or opening of the desk, thus rendering it impossible to be opened without fracturing the seal.

After an interval of a few days, intimation was received by raps that a message had been written; and it was subsequently arranged to open the desk in the presence of several ladies and gentlemen, including Mrs. Hardinge Britten. Finding the seals intact, and the desk otherwise in the same condition in which it was left, we proceeded to open it, and found on my initialled paper the following communication, written in a small and regular hand, apparently with a black lead pencil, and without producing the slightest indentation in the paper:—

"We cannot comply with any more writing in this way; it is only proof to those who witness it, none whatever, you will find, to those minds who want proof for themselves.

"J. WATT.  
"KATIE ROGERS."

On the envelope were the words: "There is no power for any more."

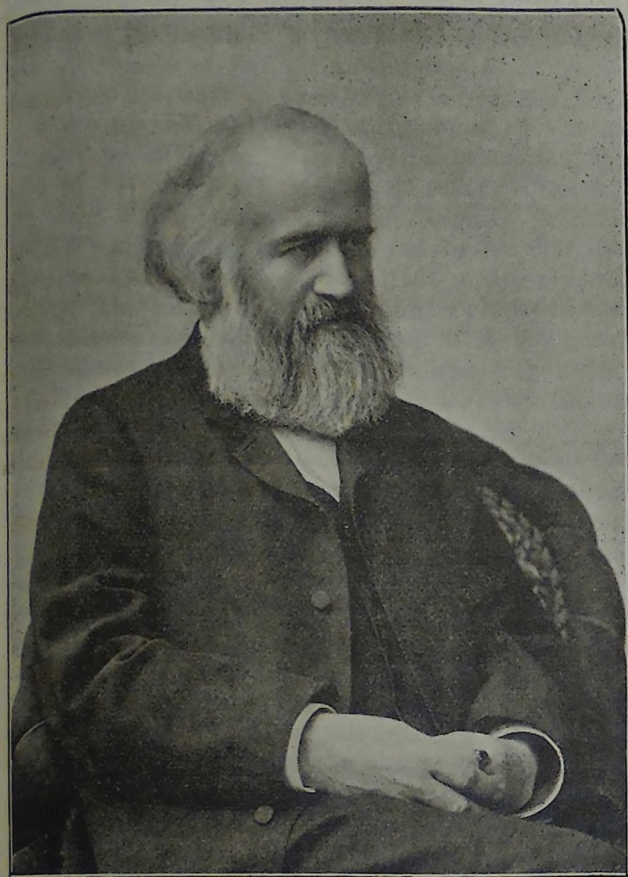
What a problem to solve!—Faithfully yours,

"Chartreuse," Vineyard-road, Richmond. J. BRAUND.



## THE HON. ALEXANDER AKSAKOF.

Alexander Aksakof was born in the year 1832, at Repiofka, an estate and village the property of his father, in the Government of Penza, Russia. After completing his course of studies at the Imperial Lyceum of St. Petersburg—an institution devoted to the use of the ancient nobility of Russia—he entered the service of the Government, in which, with but little interruption, he remained till 1880. He is a descendant of an eminent literary family. His uncle, S. Aksakof, is the author of many works which are regarded as classical productions; and his two cousins are also able writers. The first, Constantine, has published works on History and Philology which constitute a distinguished feature in Russian history; the second, Ivan (John), was one of the most distinguished *littérateurs* and publicists in the country. Notwithstanding these predisposing circumstances, and his love of the classics, the studies in which Alexander Aksakof most delighted were not those relating to literature and politics. In his early youth, owing to some exceptional family circumstances, his attention was attracted to religious and philosophical questions. The Science of Man he regarded as the science *par excellence* and, as the fundamental basis of this science, he placed the grand problems of the reason of human existence and the wherefore of life.



THE HON. ALEXANDER AKSAKOF.

In the Lyceum he became familiar with many of the works of Swedenborg. He had as a comrade the Prince A. Sh., of a family unique as partisans of Swedenborg's doctrines. The first book of Swedenborg read by Mr. Aksakof was "Heaven and Hell," in the French translation of Moët. Opposed to mysticism, he was surprised and captivated by the practical sense of these revelations of a world of spiritual forms, movement, and activities: the only foundation of happiness being a life of goodness according to the knowledge of the truth. The rational solution of the grand problem of spiritual existence claimed his attention, and he entered on its investigation, devoting himself, with the same ardour which in youth he gave to his studies, to the new world which opened itself before his enraptured senses.

Endowed by nature with a character pre-eminently positive and systematic, he is never content, whatever he studies, until he thoroughly masters the subject in all its details. Hence, when he entered upon this new current of thought, he became determined to know all that concerned Swedenborg, and to that end he procured, though with great difficulty, not only all the works of that author, but also the best German, French, and English books on the subject. The revelations of Swedenborg in relation to the Spirit-world are closely allied to his theological doctrines. It was therefore natural that these doctrines, in view of the extraordinary psychological faculties by which the author penetrated the mysteries of creation, should engage the entire

attention of Mr. Aksakof. Although brought up in the faith of the orthodox Greco-Catholic Church, the doctrine of the "New Jerusalem" appeared to him to be a true and rational interpretation of the Christian religion. He was delighted with the light which it poured over the whole domain of religion and philosophy. For a better understanding of this new truth, he made a special study of the "Science of Correspondences," on which is based the spiritual sense of the Bible, this sense being, according to Swedenborg, the only proof of the divine inspiration of the Word.

Mr. Aksakof studied this "science" and this "sense" in Swedenborg's greatest work, the "Arcana Coelestia," which contains an explanation of the spiritual sense of Genesis and Exodus. Swedenborg had applied this method only to certain parts of the Bible, but Mr. Aksakof extended his research, and applied the science to the interpretation of the Evangelists, word by word.

To prepare himself to extend his researches in all directions, and the better to test the Old Testament, he studied the Hebrew language. He found in the work of Fabre d'Olivet, "La Langue Hebraïque Restituée," the elements of a philosophy of the Hebrew grammar, of which he availed himself for his purpose. An acquaintance with the language of Virgil and Cicero was also of advantage to him. Swedenborg himself wrote in Latin, and Mr. Aksakof, when rendering the ideas of his author into Russian, found the knowledge of the original absolutely necessary. But here a new difficulty presented itself. The style of Swedenborg is peculiar, abounding in unique forms. To make a perfect translation into simple Russian, Mr. Aksakof pursued for many years a thorough course of special philological studies of his native tongue. He began with a study of the living language of the people; and to aid him in this research he had the assistance of an eminent literary man of his country, Mr. Dahl, the lexicographer of Russia. Little by little this eminent scholar exchanged his previous faith for the doctrines of Swedenborg, and became one of his most devoted disciples. It was for him that Mr. Aksakof wrote his first work, in 1852, on Swedenborg: "A Consistent Exposition of the Spiritual Sense of the Apocalypse, after 'L'Apocalypse Révelée' of that Author"—a work written in French, but immediately translated into Russian by Mr. Dahl.

The grand design to which all the studies of Mr. Aksakof converged was the translation into Russian of that work of Swedenborg's which he regarded as solving the supreme problem of our existence. In 1863 his translation of "Heaven and Hell" was published at Leipsic, but it will have to wait for more propitious times for its appearance in Russia.

Swedenborg being the chief of seers, it was natural that Mr. Aksakof should take up the study of animal magnetism, and of all works on spiritual revelations obtained in this manner, agreeing, as they all did, in essential points with Swedenborg. In 1854, while searching the libraries, he came unexpectedly on "Nature's Divine Revelations," by A. J. Davis. The title did not attract his attention, but the designation of the author as "The Seer and Clairvoyant" at once impressed him, and he was rejoiced to find in the book some remarkable confirmations of the principal points in the revelation of Swedenborg concerning the Spirit-world. These authors differed in dogmas concerning Christianity, it was true, but they agreed in the great facts of Spirit-existence.

In order to form a correct judgment of both physiological and psychological phenomena, Mr. Aksakof at once saw the necessity of a better understanding of the exact sciences; the perfect comprehension of the spiritual man necessitating the understanding of man physically. With this object in view, in 1855, he inscribed himself as free student of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Moscow, and for two years pursued the studies of anatomy and physiology, and, as supplementary, chemistry and physics.

He readily understood and comprehended in all their remote bearings the accounts he received of "Spiritual Manifestations" in America. The first book on the subject, which reached him was Beecher's "Review of Spiritual Manifestations," in 1855, and he there found palpable evidence of the truth of the grand doctrine he had accepted by intuition. This, with the French works on magnetism, gave him the first, but incomplete, information on the Spiritual Movement in America, and, with his accustomed habit, he at once sought all works treating on the subject; but found in Russia an absence of all such books, and great difficulty in procuring them; and not until the end of 1857 did he succeed in pro-



curing the works of Edmonds, Hare, and the "Great Harmonia" of Davis. The tendency of his emancipated intellect had been progressive. Begun by Swedenborg, this tendency received new impulse from the "Revelations" of Davis, and all the corresponding revelations from the ecstatic realm of the human soul.

He studied with particular attention the works on magnetism, philosophy, and Spiritualism, of Cahagnet, whom, in 1861, he met in Paris. The perusal of the consecutive volumes of Davis, and the most important works on Spiritualism, completed the emancipation of his mind.

In his preface to the Translation of Swedenborg, he gave the status of Modern Spiritualism in its relations to the revelations of the great seer, whereby he justified its publication. The following is an extract from this preface:—

"The theological works of Swedenborg have engendered a sect—a common occurrence, and unfortunate for the promulgation of great ideas—so much does man love the 'jurare in verba magistri.' Notwithstanding all the spirituality and all the broadness of his philosophy, his disciples rest with the letter; astounded by the immensity of his revelations, they will not go further; for them it is not a step advancing to higher altitudes, but a finality. In the present work the theologico-dogmatic side is not presented, but the more important information given by Swedenborg in regard to his personal experience in the Spirit-world; for us he is not a theologian, but a seer and medium."

This preface drew on Mr. Aksakof from the little circle of devotees to the doctrines of Swedenborg—of which circle he had been a member—the most violent recriminations. He was thus compelled most explicitly to give the reasons for his apostasy. The result of this discussion was the publication of "The Rationalism of Swedenborg: a criticism of his doctrines on the Bible; Leipsic, 1870." To this work was attached as an appendix, "The Gospel according to Swedenborg; five chapters of the Gospel of St. John, with an exposition of their Spiritual Sense according to the Doctrine of Correspondences." Mr. Aksakof devoted himself during the years 1853 to 1857 to this exegetical labour, which became a powerful lever of criticism for the perfect understanding of Swedenborg's theology. The object of his final work on Swedenborg was to prove that his rationalism was imaginary; that the principal argument of Swedenborg to prove the divinity of the Bible was not rational, for this same method of exposition which proved the exclusively divine character of the Word, according to Swedenborg, was alike capable of application to many other books of poetry and prose. In illustration, Mr. Aksakof presented Dante, and the history of Nestor, of which he gave the "spiritual sense"; and furthermore, not only on this cardinal point, but on other important positions, he showed, on the ground of his own propositions, Swedenborg to be irrational, refuted by himself, and consequently logically inconsistent. We quote the last lines of this work:—

"My only object has been to excite research after truth; to cast into the minds of the disciples a first spark of doubt as to the infallibility of their Master, and to deliver them from the magic circle, in which they are bound by their faith in the divinity of his revelations, which is the principal cause for their melancholy immobility, and engenders intolerance and fanaticism."

With all his studies of Swedenborg, Mr. Aksakof did not cease to investigate the fundamental principles of religion in general, and of psychology in particular; one thing he regarded as incontestable, that if the mystery which enshrouded the human soul was ever penetrated, and the fact of individual immortality admitted into the ranks of science, it must be by the assiduous study of the phenomena of Spiritualism.

The works of Kardec began to penetrate Russia, and, although written in a foreign language, they had a wide circulation. Mr. Aksakof wished to give his countrymen something more positive. The materialistic tendency of the times led him to attribute a higher value to facts. With this object in view he translated the work of Professor Hare, and published it in Leipsic in 1866; but its publication in Russia was prohibited. Through this means he discovered the translator of Davis's works (Mr. Wittig), who, at the prompting of the eminent naturalist and philosopher, Nees von Esenbeck, had translated many of Davis's works, but had not yet found a publisher. The impossibility of providing anything for the Spiritualists of his own country induced him to offer Mr. Wittig to publish some volumes of his translation, and thus began his efforts to propagate Spiritualism in Germany.

The first volume published was the "Reformer" of Davis, in 1867. The preface of this volume contained the history of

the introduction of the "Harmonial Philosophy" into Germany. An abridgment of this preface was given in "Memoranda." The first letters of Mr. Aksakof to Davis are there reproduced. In 1868 the "Magic Staff" was published, followed in 1869 by the "Revelations." In 1873 the "Physician" appeared, with a lengthy preface by Mr. Wittig, and another by Mr. Aksakof. Impelled by his zeal to propagate the doctrines of Spiritualism, he secured the services of Mr. Wittig to translate the principal works on that subject of Hare, Crookes, Edmonds, Owen, Wallace, and the "Report on Spiritualism of the London Dialectical Society."

Finally, in order to inform the German public of the progress of the movement, he, in 1874, began the publication of the "Psychische Studien," a monthly magazine, published at Leipsic, devoted to the presentation of the facts and theories of Spiritualism. This journal has been favourably received, and it is one of the most able philosophical and scientific exponents of the cause it advocates. It has just entered on its twenty-first year of existence.

The status of Spiritualism in Russia may be learned from an article written by Mr. Aksakof in 1869, under the title of "Spiritualism in Russia," and published in "Human Nature" (London: J. Burns), and which was, after a time, reproduced by M. Pierart in his "Council of Free-Thought" (Paris), in

1870. Mr. Aksakof experienced no obstruction from the Russian Censor, either in regard to his many German publications or his journal, and, fortunately, the scientific class, to whom he appealed, were much better acquainted with German than English. Thus it was that he became acquainted with Mr. Yourkevitch, Professor of Philosophy in the University of Moscow, who was not only an admirer of Davis, but a zealous defender and ardent propagator of Spiritualism, never concealing his convictions, nor losing an opportunity of speaking of them in public, and in the midst of his colleagues in the University always urging the importance of the question. He took a deep and vital interest in the publications of Mr. Aksakof, but unfortunately for the cause this eminent man is no longer of this world. Mr. Aksakof paid tribute to his memory in an article which he published in 1876 in the "Revue Russe," under the title of "Mediumship and Science."

In 1870 he proposed to Mr. Boutlerof, Professor of Chemistry in the University of St. Petersburg, to form a circle for the investigation of Spiritualism by experimental methods. This noble scientist and lover of truth did not hesitate for a moment. This was Mr. Aksakof's first experience in practical Spiritualism, as he took no personal part in the excitement of table turning. The result of twenty séances, attended by Mr. Boutlerof, was the admission, by him, of the reality of the phenomena.

In 1871 Mr. D. D. Home arrived in St. Petersburg. Then for the first time in his life Mr. Aksakof obtained evidence of



the highest forms of spiritual manifestations, of the truth of which he had no doubt, having faith in the reliability of human testimony; but the facts of spirit presence were then placed before him in such a manner as to leave no room for question. He was not tardy in furnishing Mr. Boutlerof with an opportunity to assist at similar séances; and, as the result, the last-named gentleman was also convinced of the truth of the facts. A séance was given by Mr. Home to the Professors of the University of St. Petersburg, the details of which, and of the conversion of Professor Boutlerof, have been related by Mr. Aksakof, in the "Spiritualist" (London), No. 21, 1871.

When the experiences of Mr. Crookes were published in the "Quarterly Journal of Science," Mr. Aksakof immediately translated them; and at last, after all his long years of weary waiting, he had the extreme pleasure of presenting the Russian public with the first book on Spiritualism. Its title was—

"Spiritualism and Science: Experimental Investigations on Psychic Force, by W. Crookes, F.R.S.; Corroborative Testimony, by the Chemist, R. Hare—the Mathematician, A. De Morgan—the Naturalist, A. R. Wallace—the Physicist, C. F. Varley, and other Investigators; with 16 Designs. Translated and Published by A. Aksakof."

In 1874 a zealous Russian Spiritualist, Mr. Lvof, engaged a French medium, C. Bredif, to visit St. Petersburg. Mr. Aksakof profited by this occasion to arrange weekly séances for himself, in which Mr. Boutlerof invited his friend and colleague, Mr. Wagner, Professor of Zoology, to participate.

After six months, and many séances, some with Bredif, and some without him, Mr. Wagner, impelled by the force of evidence, opened the campaign by his celebrated letter, published in the April No. (1875) of the "Revue de l'Europe," one of the better class of Russian monthlies. Great offence was taken by the Press, and by the University, which nominated a committee to investigate the phenomena of mediumship. The honour of the nomination of the first committee, strictly scientific, for the investigation of this question therefore belongs to Russia. This committee, fully confiding in the ability of Mr. Aksakof, invited him to make the necessary arrangements for them. He was thus made to act, somewhat, the role of Dr. Gardner before the famous Harvard committee; only a far more difficult one, on account of the total absence of mediums, proper to be brought before such a body. He visited England in the autumn of 1875, but was not fortunate in finding mediums whom he considered sufficiently remarkable and reliable.

Hearing, however, favourable reports of the mediumship of the Petty family at Newcastle-on-Tyne—the manifestations occurring behind a pendant curtain, in front of which the mediums were seated—he visited the family, and his experiences were so satisfactory that he engaged the father and two sons. Unfortunately—owing to the change of conditions and the absence of the mother, who was the principal medium—the mediumistic forces were not sufficiently powerful to produce any result. After four seances, Mr. Aksakof, seeing the hopelessness of the attempt, discontinued the séances and returned the mediums. He then engaged an English lady, with remarkable mediumistic faculties, and offered her services to the committee. This lady, not being then a professional medium (the late Mary Marshall, afterwards Mrs. St. Clair), desired to remain unknown, and she was presented to the committee under the name of Mrs. Clayer. Prof. Crookes, on pp. 38-39 of his "Researches," relates his experiences with this lady; at his residence, Mr. Aksakof had the pleasure of making her acquaintance. The production of the physical manifestations in the plain light wholly answered his expectations, and he at last thought that the necessary medium for presentation to the committee had been found. She, at first, declined the offer, but yielded to his urgent solicitation, and arrived in St. Petersburg in mid-winter, accompanied by her two daughters, whom she would not trust to the hands of strangers.

The second series of the official séances commenced before the committee, in January, 1876. The manifestations began at the first séance. The rappings were plain and distinct, and of the same character as those which first arrested the attention of the world at Rochester, in 1848, in the presence of the Fox girls, and witnessed in London, by Mr. Aksakof, at the home of Mrs. Kate Fox-Jencken. The tipping and levitation of the table were also produced before the committee, being everything he expected for the commencement. Professor Boutlerof and Mr. Aksakof attended these séances for the purpose of acting as witnesses for the medium; but, alas! in this case from the beginning,

instead of impartial scientific investigation, the committee were determined to prove that the phenomena of mediumship had no existence. The medium, in the words of the judges—who had passed judgment before they met at the first séance—produced all the manifestations herself, and Professor Mendeleyef, one of the principal personages of the committee, declared that she had an instrument, concealed by her skirts, to the use of which she resorted. After that Mr. Aksakof suspended the séances for the committee, and their so-called investigations were brought to a close.

Awaiting the report of the committee, Mr. Aksakof continued his negotiations with different mediums, which resulted in bringing Mr. Slade from London to St. Petersburg, in December, 1878; but when he arrived the committee had ceased to exist, and Russia being engaged in war with Turkey, the public mind was occupied with other subjects. The experiences of Professor Boutlerof and Mr. Aksakof with Mr. Slade, in a purely scientific direction, were not satisfactory. Although his visit to St. Petersburg was not as productive as it might have been, his sojourn in Germany and its results form a memorable epoch in the history of Spiritualism. The experiences of Professor Zöllner and many other celebrated men of science with him, in December, 1877, and in May, 1878, were marvellous, and are already known throughout the world. The proud Germans, who, in their scientific presumption, would scarcely deign to speak of Spiritualism, were overwhelmed by the astounding character of the manifestations, and an unexpected impulse was given to Spiritualism in Germany. This success fully repaid Mr. Aksakof for all the sacrifices he had made in Russia, and the long and patient labours by which he had prepared the way in Germany for this gratifying result.

When we consider the great efforts of Professor Zöllner; the advocacy of Professors Perty, of Berne; Hoffman, of Wurzburg; of Fichte; and lately of Baron Hellenbach and Dr. Carl du Prel, who not only publicly defend the phenomena, but also the doctrines of Spiritualism, we feel that Mr. Aksakof must enjoy a deep satisfaction in a result to which he has, more than anyone else, contributed.

After having completed his work with the committee, Mr. Aksakof demanded, in 1876, permission to publish in St. Petersburg a Russian monthly journal, "A Review of Mediumship." This permission was refused by the Minister of the Interior, Timaschef. The petition was renewed in 1881, but with no better effect. Here is one of the great obstacles to the propagation of Spiritualism in Russia.

Mr. Aksakof was not idle, but prepared a reply to the report of the committee. This report was made by Mr. Mendeleyef, in a book bearing the title: "Materials by which to Judge Spiritualism," with a mass of ironical commentaries, in which he ridiculed Spiritualism in general, and his colleagues—Professors Boutlerof and Wagner, and Mr. Aksakof—in particular. On the appearance of this document, Mr. Aksakof—taking into consideration the bad spirit in which the investigation was conducted—prepared a reply, which appeared in 1883 in St. Petersburg under the title: "History of the Committee appointed by the Physical Society of the University of St. Petersburg for the investigation of so-called mediumistic phenomena, with all the minutes of the proceedings and other documents."

The following works have also since been published:—

1884. HELLENBACH—"Individualism in the light of Biology and Modern Philosophy." (In Russian—translated from the German.)

1885. HELLENBACH—"Man, his Essence and Destination, from an Individualistic Point of View." (From the German "Eine Philosophie des gesunden Menschenverstandes"—under which title it was forbidden.)

1886. A. AKSAKOF—"Positivism in the Domain of Spiritualism." (A Reply to M. Adolf d'Assier's work, "Posthumous Humanity.")

1887. E. VON HARTMANN—"Spiritism." (Translated from the German by Professor Boutlerof; and edited by A. Aksakof.)

1889. PROFESSOR R. HARE—"Experimental Investigation of Spiritistic Phenomena." (A Russian Edition, expurgated of the spiritual communications which were added to Mr. Aksakof's Russian Edition in Leipsic of 1886, which is still prohibited in Russia.)

1889. PROFESSOR A. BOUTLEROF—All his articles on Mediumism, with a portrait of the author. (Posthumous Edition by A. Aksakof.)



1890. A. AKSAKOF—"Animism and Spiritism: a Critical Examination of the Mediumistic Phenomena, with particular reference to the Hypotheses of Hallucination and the Unconscious." (In German. With ten Phototypes.)

1892. A. AKSAKOF—The same work in Russian, with corrections and additions.

1892. "The Milan Report of a Committee for a series of Experiments with Eusapia Palladino."

1893. "Phantasms of the Living and other Telepathic Phenomena." (Condensed translation from the English by Mr. W. Solovief; edited by A. Aksakof.)

1894. DR. CARL DU PREL—"Philosophy of Mysticism"—now in the press. (Russian translation from the German.)

In conclusion—we can call to mind the name of no other man who has devoted so much energy, money, time, and talent to the furtherance of our cause, as the Hon. Alexander Aksakof.

## AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW OF RE-INCARNATION.

### IV.—IDENTITY.

(Continued from p. 125.)

It has already been stated that the mode of objectivity or nature, related to the soul degree of consciousness, is light, which again has an occult correlated mode in thought. Soul-consciousness, therefore, while being itself thought, has light as its nature or mode of objectivity, hence it is spoken of in Occultism as illuminating thought.

When this principle has its existence in the physical and astral planes, it is enclosed in the astral aura already referred to, and is thereby discreted from the surrounding universal consciousness, or life, and is thereby limited and conditioned. In re-entering the soul-plane, it converts or transmutes this astral life to the soul mode, and is thenceforward no longer imprisoned, limited, by a vehicle of inferior, conditioned mode, while retaining individuation by the fact of the positive and negative circulatory spiritual polarity induced at nucleation by the Elohim.

The soul is therefore a sphere of spiritual light; of illuminating thought.

Mr. Sinnett, in his "Human Aura," says that "every principle of man throws out a vibrating radiation." He describes man as being "surrounded by an egg-shaped sphere, or aura; electro-vital and electro-mental and magnetic; each principle throws out its aura, and these all interblend in the same space, but are distinguishable by different modes of colour, or vibration. A person's character may be read therein by a clairvoyant; this vital aura may be made to act at a distance."

That this luminous sphere does actually surround man is confirmed by all clairvoyants, who describe it as a luminous aura, varying in colour with the character of individuals.

It is well known that light offers no resistance to light, the rays of which interblend and intermingle. If, then, the permanent soul of man is associated with a vehicle of light; if his soul aura radiates around him and may be made to act on other souls, without words; if other souls, being similarly constituted, offer no resistance when vibrating synchronously (thinking in the same principle entails similarity of vibration), then each may interblend and commingle; then each may share in the experience of others and of the whole.

This is already foreshadowed and illustrated in a very minor degree in man, in the sense of affinity or repulsion which we experience to strangers, when our auras come in contact, and without speaking. It is illustrated in psychometry, which shows that auric vibrations leave traces in things with which man has come in contact, by means of which records a sensitive can read the character of such person. (See Denton's "Soul of Things.") It is further illustrated in thought-reading and thought-transference, without the use of words. These are but the initial stages of the intimate fusion and interblending of mind with mind, of soul with soul, which will gradually unfold here, but which exist to a transcendent degree in the soul plane itself.

It will be of interest to point out in this connection that it is probably by this mode of auric interaction that communing between discarnate spirits and spirits incarnate, is effected. It is generally admitted now, that communion is between Ego and Ego and is limited to the states of consciousness unfolded in the recipient.

Mr. Sinnett shows, on the other hand, that every principle of consciousness has its special mode of vibration, and these

vibrations are stated to be luminous, viz., constituted of light more or less ethereal, or spiritual, in mode. Granting the interpenetrability of synchronous vibrations, or equivalent principles, this will account for, will supply, a comprehensive mode by which one entity may act upon another, and communicate thought.

Mr. Sinnett refers to some clairvoyant descriptions by A. J. Davis, of hypnotic experiments and of their effects as regards the aura, in which it is stated that the aura of the hypnotist gradually merged, conjoined, with that of the subject. There is a law in occultism to the effect that while the inferior can never bind or subjugate the superior, the superior will ever control and interpenetrate the inferior principle. It may, then, be possible, that a discarnate spirit entity, existing in a vehicle of light, may act upon the aura of an incarnate spirit entity by the projection of thought vibrations and induce similar vibrations in the aura of the sensitive, which would be perceived by the same principle of the sensitive acted upon; even as the receiving telephone vibrates responsively, in unison with similar vibrations from the transmitting telephone. Professor Bell's and Crookes' and Teale's experiments show that vibrations may be transmitted on a beam of light (without any wires).

But it is now admitted in occultism, that such communications are limited to the states of consciousness unfolded in the receiver. This finds confirmation in the above inference. If a principle is not unfolded in man, it will not emit its rays to the circumference of his sphere, hence it could not be acted on from without, it could not be made to respond. It is also well known that only vibrations of equal pitch or intensity will respond to an external stimulus. Therefore if the soul aura, or vibration, has not unfolded in man, but is imprisoned within his astral aura, or sphere, then vibrations of soul degree or mode, or from the soul plane, are intercepted by that circumferential astral sphere, which itself cannot respond to them. And it is because the soul principle is not unfolded to that degree in man; that it does not interpenetrate and radiate beyond his astral sphere; that he is not in communion with the soul-plane of the Universe. The astral aura encircles and imprisons his soul aura. Thus is he conditioned, limited, and discreted from the Universal consciousness which surrounds him. And thus also are the units of that Universal cut off from each other and from the other particularisations of the same Universal, who surround them.

This will explain why nearly the whole of spirit communications are of astral character and origin, as only that principle, in most of us, can be made to respond, can be acted upon.

With regard to these communications, it will be seen that the transmitting vibrations are caused by thought (as in telepathy), and when received by the sensitive, have to be converted by him into, or clothed by him in, words. The words will necessarily be those of the medium and will be limited to his vocabulary and tinged by his tricks of expression. Thought vibrations, carrying ideas with which the medium is unacquainted will either remain unexpressed or be converted into incomplete form.

There are many other aspects of this question, such as obsession; communion versus control; which cannot be entered into here. I have only touched on the subject sufficiently to illustrate the principle by the feeble parallels given. They are, however, sufficient, I think, to show that man is surrounded by a luminous sphere; that thought is accompanied by radiant vibrations, of various intensity and colour, according to the principle in activity; that equivalent principles are accompanied by synchronous vibrations; that these may interpenetrate each other; consequently that entities existing in a mode of light, might interblend, commune, and cognise the experiences of all other entities by whom they were surrounded in the same state or plane. The solidarity would be such as we can form no conception of. Yet that individuation may persist, when existing in a mode of light, is shown by the fact that a beam of white light, when analysed by the prism, is found to contain all the colours of the rainbow; also by the modern discovery that light is atomic and polarisable.

If each entity can thus share in the whole of experience, then that it should come back repeatedly to this particular plane of the Universe would be perfectly useless. As soon as we have learned any particular thing, we seek for fresh knowledge. If all of us were exactly alike, as we should be if we had all to go through the same experiences, we should get sick of each other, and of existence. It is the multiplicity of variety in unity that constitutes the value of existence.



DR. J. M. PEEBLES.

We are sorry to learn from a paper published in San Antonio, Texas, that a sad disaster has befallen our old friend Dr. J. M. Peebles. The doctor had a handsome Sanitarium, at West End, San Antonio, which had cost him between thirty-five and forty thousand dollars. In the early morning of Monday, February 26th, the main structure, containing sixteen rooms, together with two cottages and the invalids' bath-house, was burned to the ground. There were a large number of inmates in the place when the fire broke out, one of whom, Mrs. H. L. Thompson, of Bell County—being a paralytic and unable to move—was burnt to death, while another sustained serious injuries in jumping from the second floor to the ground, and one of the female attendants had a wrist broken from the same cause. All the other officials and inmates escaped uninjured. Dr. Peebles was in San Marcos at the time and did not learn of his loss till several hours after it occurred. Unfortunately the property was only insured to the extent of about fifteen thousand dollars. A valuable library, estimated to be worth five thousand dollars, was completely destroyed. The cause of the fire was not ascertained. We are sure that the Doctor has the cordial sympathy of his many friends in this country.

### 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.]

#### Misleading Messages.

SIR,—There is a feature of Spiritualism familiar to most investigators which is a greater hindrance to the growth of faith than all the impostures and trickery ever practised for gain by traders on the public credulity. I allude to communications received and apparently given in all soberness and sincerity, which are afterwards found to be misleading and altogether unworthy of credence. On this subject it might be interesting to compare notes and learn the ideas of the advanced.

A friend of mine when sitting with me a little while ago at a private séance of two, inquired of the spirits as to the whereabouts of a youth who had not been heard of for some years. About ten minutes afterwards my friend complained of an icy coldness in the air, which I did not perceive, and at the same time the usual movement of the table announced the presence of a spirit wishing to communicate. Partly through the table, and partly with my assistance in the capacity of inspirational medium, this spirit claimed to be the missing youth, said that he had left the body some months before, and asked my friend to give his love to his mother. Then another spirit took his place and gave an account of the circumstances occasioning the youth's exit from the body; and finally, a third spirit claiming to be a relative with whom we had been in constant communication, and for whom we had much respect, announced his presence, the change of influence being felt as usual. The new-comer, being anxiously interrogated, disclaimed all knowledge of the events just narrated, but vouched for the good character and general reliability of the last speaker as well as for the youth's identity, and further assured us by means of energetic affirmative movements of the table that what these spirits had said we had correctly understood, albeit I had had an inexplicable feeling throughout that something was wrong somewhere.

Now, that youth was then alive and well, and, as far as I know, he is so still!

Of course, unbelieving friends would simply attribute the whole business to lying spirits acting under the orders of the Prince of Evil; but it is not likely that intelligent spirits, were they ever so evil, would wilfully damage their own credibility by telling purposeless lies so very easy of detection. If you will kindly tell me how you explain this and other similar experiences, or at least, cause the matter to be ventilated in your paper you will much oblige,

Hamilton, Ontario.

TWO-YEAR-OLD.

Mr. Jesse Francis Shepard.

SIR,—Noticing in recent issues of "LIGHT" some articles about Mr. Jesse Shepard, I thought you might feel pleased to hear how this great mystic's gifts are appreciated in our country, and especially at the Hague, known for its critical abilities in music and art, and where the cultured classes are not very easily contented, accustomed as they are to hear all celebrities.

Mr. Shepard has been nearly two months in Holland, of which he spent one at the Hague, and after the eleven concerts he has given in different private houses, we think ourselves able to judge of the extent of his musical talents. As you know, all the great mediums who have visited Holland have resided for some time at the Hague, but none of them has made a deeper impression than Mr. Shepard, with his marvellous musical performances. He possesses greater inspirational power than any of his predecessors; and his arrival here has formed a real epoch in the history of Spiritualism in Holland. Our best families, having been always too orthodox or too indifferent to identify their names with anything of the kind, have now opened their houses for these concerts. To give the names of all the aristocratic people who were present would fill this letter.

After having heard Mr. Shepard's indescribable playing and singing, the people go home in a sort of ecstatic bewilderment.

The more one hears of it the more one penetrates the inner meaning of those inspired improvisations, and many are now beginning to realise the superiority of such powers over rough physical manifestations and over the nonsense so often flowing from so-called ecstasies or trance-mediums, pretending to be inspired by the most elevated spirits, and which cause so much inharmonious and do more harm to the logical study of psychical sciences than the opposition of the most hard-headed sceptics.

I have myself heard Liszt, Rubinstein, the Pattis, Brambella, Nilsson, &c., &c., but I never heard any pianist or any singer produce such effects as Mr. Shepard does. Theosophy is trying hard to get a footing in Holland. Now, happily, Mr. Shepard tells me he is not a Theosophist, nor does he belong to any of its branches; happily I say, for otherwise the Theosophists would turn his talents to their own account, while now those talents belong to the realm of true genius, of sublime inspiration, and of splendid gifts, originating from the transcendental universe and given to this world as a light on our path to our heavenly home.

For the present I close my letter. Within a few days an extract from "Sphinx" (which will soon re-appear), and which I had prepared beforehand, will reach you, analysing more *in extenso* Mr. Shepard's performances, and which you may translate for your readers.—As ever yours,

The Hague, March, 1894.

A. J. RIJO.

#### "Belle and the Dragon."

SIR,—I have watched with interest the short and somewhat desultory discussion which has arisen in your columns about my last book. It is not as a rule a very wise proceeding for a writer to take exception to the remarks of his reviewer, and I should have liked to keep in the background, had any of your correspondents noticed what is the real grievance in the matter. Obviously, the writer of the notice which has been the ground of complaint has a right to any opinion which he chooses to form, and it is only when there is a glaring inconsistency in the criticism that an author does well to protest. In your notice of "Belle and the Dragon" it was remarked that fancy and imagination are conspicuous chiefly by their absence in my writings—that is, from all my writings taken collectively and generally. But why? Well, your reviewer proceeded to give a reason: it was because the characters of "Belle and the Dragon" are, in his opinion, commonplace, and the dialogue, in his opinion, poor. Is that a valid reason? What has "Belle and the Dragon" to do with my other works as an excuse for their indiscriminate condemnation? Again, to which of my other works did he refer? Was it to those dealing with the history and philosophy of mysticism, as "The Real History of the Rosicrucians," "The Occult Sciences," &c.? In that case it seems to me creditable rather than otherwise if the imaginative element be wanting. There has been too much of the imaginative element in too many books of this kind. But if he refer to "Prince Starbeam," to "Israfil," to "Lucasta," and to "The Golden Stairs," then it is reasonable to reply that precisely those persons of whom he is the self-constituted spokesman have, in other printed criticisms, differed altogether from his judgment—I mean those who do not pretend to an acquaintance with the inner meaning of mystic allegories. The conceit of a literary man is objectionable, perhaps, but that is not conceit which protests against a condemnation that does not fairly follow from the case cited. Allow me to express, in conclusion, my conviction, founded on a long and flattering experience at your hands, that the notice of "Belle and the Dragon" is not a "sample," or even



"typical" (to employ your reviewer's own curious distinction), of your usual mode of dealing with the many makers of books who are in sympathy with your views, and with whom you also are more or less in sympathy. ARTHUR EDWARD WAITE.

[This correspondence must now cease. A slight misunderstanding has led to the display of a quite unnecessary amount of feeling. As we ourselves read the Review it never occurred to us to take the words about the absence of "Imagination and Fancy" as having so wide an application as Mr. Waite supposes.—Ed. "LIGHT."]

Mr. Sinnett and the "Masters."

SIR,—I welcome Mr. Sinnett's letter in your issue of March 3rd as throwing some light upon the mysterious Masters of Theosophy. From it we may learn that it is possible to commune with Mahatmas without being members of the Esoteric Section, or without having had any dealings with H. P. B., or the successor on whom her mantle has fallen. This is a great point gained. For when we have before asked for proofs, the Esoteric Section either ignored us, or else, when cornered by our questions, answered that to reply in full would be to reveal secrets they are pledged to keep. Now I conclude that Mr. Sinnett is not bound by such strict pledges, and when years ago he lectured before the Occult Society I felt that he was more in touch with the Higher Spiritualism than Theosophists in general. I therefore ask him to kindly further enlighten us on these matters. He says anyone who will go through the necessary training will attract the attention of the "Masters." Will he tell us in what that training consists? Must we practice asceticism? I do not think that Mr. Sinnett has ever posed as an ascetic. What, then, is necessary? There are two points in the Theosophic creed, viz., asceticism, and its teachings concerning Spiritualism, which I cannot accept. The first of these is contrary to physiological science and to common sense, and the second is opposed to well proven facts in my own experience. If the Masters really teach these doctrines, then they certainly are not possessed of the Divine Wisdom attributed to them. It would greatly strengthen Theosophy if it could be shown that earnest students could come into communion with Mahatmas without joining the Esoteric Section. Then even poor, despised mediums, whose guides have been also despised as spooks, etc., may, after all, be in communion with the elder brothers of the race who still linger in the spiritual atmosphere surrounding the world so as to benefit humanity. I have often felt that the Wise Men of the East have had doctrines promulgated in their name by zealous disciples which they have never endorsed or have only done so for the sake of policy. But do let us have truth. It is this secrecy, and writing one thing and meaning another, which have ever been the bane of the occult schools. The Spiritualists in the West know that our departed do come back in *propria persona*. We know also the folly of asceticism. All truth is one. Therefore these verities must be in accord with any truths to be found in Theosophy. I write in no cavilling spirit, and trust that Mr. Sinnett may enlighten us further.

A. F. TINDALL, A.T.C.L.

President of the London Occult Society.

#### INTERESTING EXPERIMENT IN SUGGESTION.

M. Ernest Bosc, writing in the "Revue Spirite," gives a curious instance of an experiment with Mlle. Kreps. Last winter he was present at a séance given by M. Kreps and his daughter, in the hall of the Pier Promenade at Nice, and it occurred to M. Bosc to ascertain if the lady was susceptible to the influence of suggestion made by persons other than her father. For this purpose he asked that the number of his watch might be given. While showing the cap of the watch to M. Kreps, and while the latter with the aid of his glasses was examining the finely engraved figures, M. Bosc mentally suggested to the girl the figures 662, which the girl instantly repeated aloud. Then M. Bosc mentally corrected an error in his suggestion and thought of 666, which the young lady immediately uttered, but in a more hesitating manner than on the first occasion. M. Bosc could not divine the cause of this uncertainty until several days after, when looking at the dome, on which the figures were engraved, he found that they were really 999, and that he had read them upside down at the séance. From this circumstance M. Bosc concludes that the hesitation evinced by Mlle. Kreps arose from the fact that the young lady—who is also clairvoyant—saw a group of figures different from those which were suggested to her.

#### SOCIETY WORK.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S.E.—On Sunday evening we had a pleasant evening with Mr. Minns. Thursday, the 29th, Mr. Lewage; Sunday, Mrs. Stanley.—J.B.  
SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—Easter Sunday, Mr. Long on "The Resurrection of Jesus," at 6.30 p.m.—Chas. M. Payne, Hon. Secretary.

SHEFFIELD PSYCHOLOGICAL INSTITUTE.—We have made arrangements for a lecture by the celebrated authoress and elocutionist, Miss Florence Marryat (daughter of the late Captain Marryat), in the Music Hall, Surrey-street, Sheffield, on Monday, April 9th, on her marvellous book—"There is no Death: a stirring story of thrilling facts.—W. HARDY.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—Our service on Sunday was well attended; several strangers were present. Mr. Towns' Controls gave some very successful delineations of character followed by Psychometrical Readings, to the evident satisfaction of all present. Sunday next, at 8 p.m., Circle, Mrs. Spring; Tuesday at 8 p.m., Séance, Mrs. Mason.—J.H.B., Hon. Secretary.

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM LANE, STRATFORD, E.—The members and friends of this thriving society were well repaid for attending on Sunday last in such goodly numbers to welcome Mr. Butcher, whose guides dealt with the subject of "Side Lights of Spiritualism." The whole of the lecture was of a deeply interesting character, and with such an earnest spiritualist as Dr. Reynolds in the chair, the proceedings could not fail to have a valuable effect. Speaker for next Sunday Mr. Percy Smyth.—E. J. GOZZETT.

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. Junior Brown, "The Grand Hotel," Melbourne; France, P. G. Leymarie, 1, Rue Chabanais, Paris; Germany, E. Schlochau, 1, Monbijou-place, Berlin, N.; Holland, F. W. H. Van Straaten, Apeldoorn, Middelland; 682; India, Mr. T. Hutton, State Cotton Mills, Baroda; New Zealand, Mr. Graham, Huntley, Waikato; Norway, B. Torestonsen, Advocate, Christiania; Russia, Etienne Geispitz, Grande Belozerski, No. 7, Lod. 6, St. Petersburg; England, J. Allen, Hon. Sec., 13, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or, W. C. Robson, French correspondent, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne.—The Manor Park branch will hold the following meetings at 13, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park:—Sundays, 11 a.m., for inquirers and students, and the last Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., reception for inquirers. Also each Friday, at 9 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.

#### NIGHT LIGHTS.

In "Psychische Studien" for last month some additional particulars are given in regard to the lighted lantern, and the hand holding it, which so many people testified to having seen on a high road near Sömmerda, in Thuringia. The writer, W. K., who communicates the information, states that his grandfather once saw it while he was walking on the road late in the evening. It was so dark that he could not realise where he was, when he suddenly saw a light before him, and rejoiced in the thought that it was carried by some countryman who could put him on his right way. When he drew near enough he uttered a friendly greeting, but saw to his amazement that the light came from a lantern held by a hand only, no other portion of a body being visible. "W.K.'s" grandfather belonged to the so-called "intelligent" people, and therefore did not believe the evidence of his own eyes; so he struck with his stick at the light before him, and was at the same moment hurled with terrible force to the ground, where he lay for a while senseless. When he came round again, he could not find his way, and he wandered about a long time before he was able to set himself right. Thoroughly upset, he only reached his home well after midnight. On another occasion some eight or ten persons were returning along the same road from an excursion in a vehicle and were in high spirits. Suddenly they saw the lantern skip towards the waggon, and the merriment ceased. Not a word was uttered until the vehicle with its occupants, followed by the lantern, had reached the town at the Weissensee gate, where the phenomenon vanished as suddenly as it had appeared. It is said in this report that the lantern and hand have accompanied many people as far as this gate, but have never entered the town, and that there are many old folk still alive in Sömmerda who can remember it.