

# Light:

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

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon.)"

Mr. John G. Priegel writes in the *Spiritual Offering* as follows:—

"Spiritualism has prostituted itself long enough to the rough and cold embraces of materialistic infidelity, so much so that many have no eyes nor ears for anything else but the phenomena that appeal solely to the senses, caring nothing for the esoteric teachings, the ethical training, the moral culture, the spiritual refinement, which are so essentially necessary to a preparation for a higher existence, and to which phenomena are only a primary introduction, and as such only are they valuable helps to a great end and purpose. As a scientific religion and religious science, Spiritualism satisfies the intellect and the affections, through the blending of the Divine Wisdom or spiritual light, and Divine love or spiritual heat, in illumining our minds and inspiring our souls with the love of humanity, both working together for the redemption of mankind through this new Divine outpouring and baptism."

These words substantially express the attitude which "LIGHT" takes up with regard to Spiritualism in this country. Spiritualists, by which term for the time I include all who concern themselves with any part of the vast field of occult, or mystical, or psychical inquiry, have been on the one hand too finicking in the views they have taken, too groovy in their interest in the results of the investigations of others on lines different from their own, too ready to accept an all-round surface theory and to turn away from one distasteful to their preconceived ideas. On another side they have neglected, to a large extent, the stores of knowledge of varying merit accumulated by those who have preceded them in ages past. I do not say that these contain all knowledge and all truth: but I do say that all knowledge on these matters has not come into the world during the past half-century. On yet another side they have very largely ignored the philosophy, the religious teaching, the esoteric guidance that those who reach the penetralia find for themselves. These latter, it is not needful to say, are they only who have got beyond vexed questions such as trouble many Spiritualists who concern themselves with what appeals only to the senses which they are accustomed to use in daily life. These must have spirit and the things of spirit brought down to the level of material cognisance and proof; they are not able to raise themselves to the plane of spirit. "Spiritual things are spiritually discerned," and it is vain to tell men "whose eyes are not open" to use what they have not got—if only they be sure that they have not got the spiritual sense, and are not wilfully burking it.

These causes have contributed, in conjunction with a lack of organisation and cohesion amongst us, to prevent

the spread of the beliefs that we hold, and not only that, but also to dwarf and cramp them, to make them mean and stunted, and even to present them in an absurd and sometimes repulsive light to the minds of men of culture, familiar with philosophical thought, reverent and religious at heart. There will never be a lack of persons whose interest will concentrate itself on the objective phenomena. For these it is only to be desired that they may apply to what they do the strict methods of scientific investigation. If we are to have this investigation, by no means profitless in itself, though not profitable in the highest degree, by all means let us have it well done. But there are others, and among such "LIGHT" counts many of its readers, who aspire to something better than this; who desire to search out the causes, to master the explanations of things so new and strange, and to learn what may be learnt by finite minds of the mysteries and problems of spirit. This seems to me the direction in which we are tending slowly but surely. And it is of happy omen that it should be so. It will be of still happier omen when Spiritualism shall connote some degree of spiritual-mindedness, and when a Spiritualist shall consider it a duty to translate his beliefs into acts and deeds; so to live as to make the world better for his faith. It is to this crucial point in the history of Spiritualism that we are coming, if we have not already come. We shall see of what stuff we are made. For public spirit, self-sacrifice, high-mindedness are needed, if we are to prosper. If we find disunion, self-seeking, petty vanity, it needs no prophet to declare the future. I, at least, recognising the work to be done, have no fear but that men will be forthcoming to do it; and, keeping in view what we have written, it will be the policy of "LIGHT" to further these ends in the future as it has done in the past.

In the course of an inspection of a mass of newspaper cuttings collected by the late Benjamin Coleman, which passed into my hands on his decease, I find some rare and forgotten matter which is in a high degree interesting to Spiritualists. I propose to rescue some of these fugitive letters and records from oblivion by placing those of importance before our readers from time to time. Here, for example, is an authentic bit of history. The letter was addressed by Mr. D. D. Home to the *Star* in reply to some criticisms. It gives authentic and interesting facts. The concluding paragraph refers to the correspondence in the *Pall Mall Gazette* respecting Tyndall and Faraday. It may be well, perhaps, to recur to these letters, and place them in abstract before the Spiritualists of the present generation.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "STAR."

SIR,—My attention has been called to a paragraph in the *Star* of this date, and as it is untrue in every particular, I would request your publication of this my contradiction. I have on more than fifty occasions met his Majesty the Emperor of France, and could not have dictated whom I should meet. I never on any occasion declined an invitation or request to meet any one named by the Emperor. In 1857 I dined with the Prince Napoleon, and after dinner there was a séance. As there were between twenty and thirty guests present, and I never

have a séance with more than nine, I was left to select the persons who were to be present. By chance, I selected a gentleman well known to be one of the most clever conjurers in France, and this gentleman gave testimony that, whatever the power might be, it was not a conjuring trick.

I have written to the *Pall Mall Gazette* in reply to Professor Tyndall's letter. The séance for Professor Faraday was to have been the 24th of June, 1861. I was then with my family lodging with Mrs. Crawford Parks, of 7, Cornwall-terrace, Regent's Park. I send you an extract from her diary:—"June 24. . . . A scientific gentleman who had written to disprove spiritual manifestations was to have joined the party; however, he requested to have a programme, which he said was due to him as a scientific man and to his position. It being impossible to give a programme, he declined to join the séance."

—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

Cox's Hotel, Jermyn-street,  
May 6th.

D. D. HOME.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* of December 17th, 1869, contained the following paragraph. It had then more affinity with "ghosts" than it now has, and perhaps less acquaintance with the alternative to a belief in ghosts which it has recently put forward.

"We have heard of a most mysterious and disagreeable occurrence at the Tower of London which is enough to set the nerves of the whole nation on edge. For some days, or rather nights, past the shadow of an axe has appeared on one of the walls of the building; this shadow made its last appearance, unless we are misinformed, in 1848, but what it has been doing since that time we cannot say. There is no shyness whatever about it now; it does not object to be stared at, and excites the curiosity of all who have the privilege, if not the pleasure, of inspecting it."

The subjoined account is taken from a contemporary record. It is within my knowledge that Mrs. Swifte confirmed, in answer to inquiries made by a friend of mine, the testimony given by her late husband. The letter cited is contributed in the year 1869 in the form of a letter to the editor of a daily journal.

"Mr. Edmund Lenthal Swifte was in 1817 keeper of the Crown jewels in the Tower of London. He lived in the jewel house, and on a certain Saturday night in October, 1817, was in his sitting-room. The door was closed, the windows shut, and heavy curtains excluded the air. It was about midnight. Two candles were on the table. The rest I give in his own published words:—"I sat at the foot of the table, my son on my right hand, his mother fronting the chimney-piece, and her sister on the opposite side. I had offered a glass of wine and water to my wife, when, putting it to her lips, she paused and exclaimed 'Good God, what is that?' I looked up, and saw a cylindrical figure like a glass tube, seemingly about the thickness of my arm, and hovering between the ceiling and the table. Its contents appeared to be a dense fluid, white and pale azure, like to the gathering of a summer cloud, and incessantly rolling and mingling within the cylinder. This lasted about two minutes, when it began slowly to move before my sister-in-law, then following the oblong shape of the table before my son and myself; passing behind my wife, it paused for a moment over her right shoulder (observe, there was no mirror opposite to her in which she could then behold it). Instantly she crouched down, and, with both hands covering her shoulder, she shrieked out, 'Oh, Christ! it has seized me.' Even now, while writing, I feel the fresh horror of that moment. I caught up my chair, struck at the wainscot behind her, rushed upstairs to the other children's room and told the terrified nurse what I had seen. . . . Neither my sister-in-law nor my son beheld this appearance. . . . I am bound to add that shortly before this strange event some young lady residents in the Tower had been, I know not wherefore, suspected of making phantasmagorical experiments at their windows, which, be it observed, had no command whatever on any windows in my dwelling. An additional sentry was accordingly posted so as to overlook any such attempt. Happening, however, as it might, following hard at heel the visitation of my household, one of the night sentries at the jewel office was, as he said, alarmed by a figure like a huge bear issuing from underneath the door. He thrust at it with his bayonet, which stuck in the door, even as my chair dented the wainscot. He dropped in a fit, and was carried senseless to the guard-room. His fellow

sentry declared that the man was neither asleep nor drunk, he himself having seen him the moment before awake and sober. Of all this I avouch nothing more than that I saw the poor man in the guard-house prostrated with terror, and that in two or three days the fatal result, be it of fact or fancy, was that he died.' . . . To this it is only necessary to add that the boy was seven years old. He did not see the ghost. The sister-in-law likewise did not see it, and attributed it to the joint hallucination of her sister and brother-in-law. The soldier died, as stated, whether after trial by court-martial, as recorded by Dr. Gregory in his *Letters on Animal Magnetism*, or not, I do not know. Dr. Gregory received his account from Sir David Brewster, and it is incorrect in many particulars, or rather it differs from Mr. Swifte's, which was the result of personal experience."

The shadow of the axe is new to me, as is Mr. Swifte's personal account of the luminous appearance. The sentry and the bear are familiar. The cylindrical figure, with its incessantly rolling vapour like the gathering of a summer cloud, I take to be analogous to the floating masses of luminous vapour which I have so often described. These are present to the clairvoyant eye at all séances. When they condense so far as to become objective, they usually take the form of "spirit-lights." The vapour is always in motion, exactly as Mr. Swifte described it, and swirls round and round in varying degrees of luminosity. It is to be noticed also that careful observation of the phenomenon of materialisation shows that this luminous matter is the pabulum out of which the drapery and the form are made. Even when it assumes that character, close observation shows that it is still in a state of flux and reflux, constantly in motion. This, I believe, is invariable, and may throw some light on the reason why it is usually necessary for these temporarily materialised beings to return at short intervals to the medium, in order, as is alleged, to refresh their strength from the fountain of psychical power. Authentic cases will occur to the mind where a too prolonged absence has resulted in sudden collapse of the figure.

Mr. F. W. H. Myers has dwelt so forcibly on the possible blessings derivable from mesmerism that he obscures somewhat the conceivable dangers that attend the promiscuous practice of the art. In this little tractate\* the writer condemns strongly the attempt to draw subjects from an audience and exhibit their antics on the public platform. He thinks that some susceptible persons may "in a few short moments receive an impression that may materially and injuriously influence the whole of their future lives." Some statements I was not prepared for, and am hardly now disposed to accept—"It has been found impossible to mesmerise an idiot." Does the recent experience of French physicians confirm that statement? And if a person (as has been proved) can be mesmerised from a distance, and by an unseen operator, would that not show that the imagination does not, at any rate, sometimes, enter into the question? The best subjects, our physician thinks, are drawn from the large class of "ne'er-do-weels," vain and unstable characters, lacking ballast. But this is certainly a hasty and insufficient generalisation. Some simple rules and directions for mesmerising and demesmerising are appended.

Commenting in a leading article on the recent religious census, the *Daily News*, which would not be disposed to treat lightly such a question as the hold that the Churches have on the people, estimates that "if one-half the people of London wished to go to church or chapel on any given Sunday morning or evening more than 800,000 of them would fail to find seats." As to those who actually do try

\* *The Secret of Mesmerism*: with full instructions how to mesmerise, and an account of its dangers. By a Physician. Price One Penny. John Heywood, Manchester, 1886.

to find seats "the places of worship are a world too wide for the shrunken congregations." "There must be many a 'beggarly account of empty benches' before London preachers to whatever church they belong." After going elaborately into the statistics, and showing the fallacious methods by which they have been treated, the writer draws his impressive conclusion:—

"In whatever way these figures may be regarded, they show an immense and startling alienation of the London public from the regular organisations of religious worship. It is in this aspect of the census that its true significance comes out. Either these figures are deficient and misleading, or the lesson they convey to all religious bodies is one of the most serious importance. They are losing their hold on the population. They are failing in the primary purpose of gathering the people together to public religious instruction and religious worship. In presence of this striking and significant inference from figures which show no sign of manipulation or incompleteness, the merely controversial aspects of the census fall into insignificance. If all the Churches together are in a minority of less than one and a-half to two and a-quarter it matters little whether, in the minority, Church or Dissent is represented most. . . . The figures will bear and deserve much further analysis. But their chief interest is in their general bearing, as indicating a certain failure of religious organisations to keep their hold on the Metropolis, and as suggesting very serious considerations as to the future of religion in London."

### THE NEXT LIFE.

The question which more than any other arises in all our minds at some time of our lives is that which involves the reality and the nature of our state after death. This was shown in the interest excited by two articles in *Macmillan's Magazine*,\* and by the comments they called forth in other periodicals. The *Spectator*, referring to the articles in *Macmillan*, appears to consider all descriptions of the next life to be the work of poetic fancy or philosophical speculation, surmising that a tradition, coming down to us from very ancient times, has formed the groundwork of all later representations; one of the earliest being Virgil's description of the Elysian Fields; and the *Divina Commedia*, the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and the *Little Pilgrim in the Unseen* being all imitations at greater or less distance.

But, we may ask, if the idea of the *Little Pilgrim* and that of the *Pilgrim's Progress* were taken from Dante, and if Dante copied Virgil, whence did Virgil get the first suggestion of the Elysian Fields, and the Sybil, and the descent into Tartarus? The last appears to be a portion of the representations in the Eleusinian Mysteries. To find who was the first "dreamer" who imagined the progress of the soul to a future blessed state, we might search the oldest records of Egypt and Chaldea, and we should then be remote.

But none of the recent speculators have mentioned Swedenborg, the most systematic and, inasmuch as he declares himself to be an eye-witness of what he describes, the most remarkable "dreamer" of all; perhaps, too, the least understood by his own followers, for they often interpret literally statements which could only be understood symbolically, in accordance with the law of correspondence laid down by their teacher.

Swedenborg said that all he saw came to him while in an entranced state. Dante, in the *Vita Nuova*, claims distinctly to have had the *Divine Drama* given to him in a vision, although this is overlooked by commentators, probably from their ignorance of the nature of inspiration. Bunyan says the *Pilgrim's Progress* came to him in dreams in Bedford Gaol. Milton says that *Paradise Lost* was given to him by the Muses, in dreams. And, looking into far back times, we find Ezekiel on his face by the river

Chebar, and Zoroaster listening to "the choir of the archangels, who sang the Gáthas to his mental ear when, in a state of ecstasy, his mind was raised to Heaven." \* Another instance of the belief that knowledge or vision of spiritual things, i.e., inspiration, is given in the state of trance, is found in the Yogis of India, who, Max Müller says, "maintained that in an ecstatic state man possessed the power of seeing God face to face." †

It is a question for psychologists, what is the nature of the experience which goes by the name of entranced vision; and for physiologists to find what, if any, change is effected in the nervous system in this state. As far as I know it is much like the condition of a sleep-walker, but not always. The eyes are generally shut, and, on raising the lids, the pupils are found to be turned back in the head. The breathing, too, is scarcely perceptible, and on coming out of this condition the seer often forgets what he has described. It is in this state that many persons declare their perception of things and persons in another life, often confirming the truth of their assertions by description; while their general accounts bear such a family likeness that, as the writers above mentioned affirm, they seem to have all come down, like tradition, from the same source.

Of all the revelations which have been made by persons in the state of trance Swedenborg's are the most numerous and coherent. His interpretations are not equally good, neither can his deduction from his own philosophy be always depended on. We must separate the *thinker* from the *seer* in his case, taking as much or as little as we please of the system he has deduced from his visions.

But before reasoning on his visions into another world, we should glance at the proofs that he gave of possessing an inner sense or a perception of things in this world transcending that of the bodily eye. Many such instances of clairvoyance have occurred in our time (I have met with three in my own experience).

The first story is told by Immanuel Kant, the transcendental philosopher, who, two years before, had spoken of Swedenborg's writings as "Dreams of a Ghost-seer."

"On Saturday at four o'clock," says Kant, "when Swedenborg arrived at Gottenburg from England, Mr. W. Cassel invited him to his house, together with a party of fifteen persons. About six o'clock Swedenborg went out, but returned to the company quite pale and alarmed. He said that a dangerous fire had broken out at Stockholm, in the Sudermalm (Gottenburg is 300 miles from Stockholm), and that it was spreading very fast. He was restless, and went out often. He said that the house of one of his friends, whom he named, was in ashes, and that his own was in danger. At eight o'clock, after he had been out again, he joyfully exclaimed: 'Thank God, the fire is extinguished at the third door from my house.' This news occasioned great commotion through the whole city, particularly among the company in which he was. It was announced to the Governor that same evening. On the Sunday morning Swedenborg was sent for by the Governor, who questioned him concerning the disaster. He described the fire precisely, how it had begun, in what manner it had ceased, and how long it had continued. On the same day the news was spread through the city, and as the Governor had thought it worthy of attention the consternation was considerable, because many had friends and property which might have been involved in the disaster.

"On the Monday morning a messenger arrived at Gottenburg, who had been despatched during the time of the fire. In the letters brought by him, the fire was described precisely as stated by the seer. On the Tuesday, the royal courier arrived at the Governor's, with the melancholy intelligence of the fire, of the loss which it had occasioned, and of the houses damaged and ruined, not in the least differing from that which Swedenborg had given immediately it had ceased, for the fire was extinguished at eight o'clock."

Kant says that this occurrence is perfectly well attested and the evidence for it unimpeachable.

The above took place in 1759. In 1761,

\* Swedenborg was consulted by the widow of Lewis Von

\* Haug. *On the Gáthas*, pp. 41—46. † *Selected Essays*.

\* *The Little Pilgrim in the Unseen*. By Mrs. Oliphant. This article was written shortly after those referred to appeared.

Marteville, formerly ambassador from Holland to Sweden . . . Her husband had paid away a large sum of money, and the widow, being applied to, could not produce the receipt. She asked Swedenborg to find her husband in the other world, and to ask him about the receipt. Eight days after Von Marteville in a dream told her where to find it, as well as a trinket which she had lost. This was at two o'clock a.m., and the widow rose at once, and found the articles as the dream directed. At eleven o'clock Swedenborg was announced. He said, before the lady had time to open her lips, that during the preceding night he had seen Von Marteville, and wished to talk with him, but he excused himself on the ground of having to go to his wife to whom he had to discover something of importance. . . . This account, attested by the lady . . . was noised through all Stockholm."\*

The next well-attested account of Swedenborg's communication with the departed is told by Captain Stahlhammer.

A short time after the death of the Prince of Prussia Swedenborg came to court. He was at once questioned by the Queen as to whether he had seen her brother in the spirit-world, to which he replied in the negative. . . . Eight days afterwards, he came early in the day into the room where the Queen was sitting with her ladies, and whispered something in her ear. The Queen, struck with astonishment, was taken ill, and remained so for a time. When she came to herself she said to those about her, "*There is only God and my brother who can know what he has just told me.*" It appeared that the seer had spoken of her last correspondence with the Prince, the subject of which was known to themselves alone.†

A curious statement is found in the diary of Swedenborg. Many such instances occurred at the time when Spiritualism first appeared, both in England and America, but no single one in later times is so worthy of belief as that of the Swedish medium, whose character was unquestioned and his powers well attested.

"Polheim," he says, "died on Monday, and spoke with me on Thursday. I was invited to his funeral. He saw the hearse, the attendants, and the whole procession. He saw them let down the coffin into the grave, and conversed with me while it was going on, asking me why they buried him when he was still alive. And when the priests pronounced that he would rise again at the Day of Judgment, he asked why this was, when he had risen already? He wondered that such a belief should obtain, considering that he was now alive. He also wondered at the belief in the resurrection of the body, for, he said, he felt he was in the body, &c."

Swedenborg's description of the entrance of a spirit into the next life, agreeing fully as it does with the statements of mediums and spiritual clairvoyants who have never heard his name, are among the most interesting parts of his writings. Many persons, he says, on waking, which takes place sooner with some than with others,‡ suppose that they are still in this world, and will not believe that they have passed through the change called death. Everything around them seems like what they have been used to; their dearest friends and relations are with them, and it takes some time before, by gradually recalling memories, and comparing the circumstances of their present state with those of their recent past, they become aware that they have entered into a new state of existence. We may understand how it is that the things of the new life seem familiar, by remembering that in dreams old friends, long passed away, seem to be present, and converse with us, without exciting astonishment. The waking up described by Swedenborg must be like coming back to

consciousness after a long swoon or very deep sleep, and the familiarity of the awakened spirit with the surroundings of his new home is because all these are in perfect correspondence with those he has left, and so are, to him, what their prototypes had been in this world. The waking is watched and tended by angels, who have themselves undergone the same process. These keep the newly-born being asleep till its body has gained strength to understand and move in its new surroundings. When this time arrives, they tell him he is a spirit,\* and, according to the law which governs earthly as well as spiritual relations, he takes his place among those who share his sympathies and affection. These are those whom he has most loved: and they have not to come to him from a distance. They are near him, and could not be otherwise, for affinity and sympathy form spiritual nearness, and dislike or antipathy spiritual remoteness.

As to the future progress of the risen being, it follows as a necessary consequence of the foregoing that he will continue to consort with his "likes," and to follow out the *correspondential* sequence of his studies and pursuits upon earth; and thus his state on rising, and its improvement or deterioration, will depend on what Swedenborg calls his ruling loves. There is no arbitrary punishment, and no Judgment Day; for the *vastations* or judgments which he undergoes are the inevitable results of the clearing away of all material disguises, and his appearing to himself and to others exactly as he is. This quickening of the conscience, and the intense contrition caused by the perception of himself as he has been, and how far he falls short of what he should be, are in themselves penal sufferings, but every pang is a purification. If, even while giving way to temptation, he has frequently striven to overcome it and to do right, the effort will be encouraged, and he will be helped to rise to a state of purity and happiness. Swedenborg says, and the best clairvoyants I have known say the same, that it is often an immensely long time before sinful spirits can cast off their sin, and take delight in goodness. Hence, according to the law of association by sympathy, these "darker" spirits congregate together, as on earth, and thus the hells are formed; states in which the atmosphere is cold, because the warmth, which is God's love, is rejected; and dark, because the light of Heavenly Wisdom does not penetrate them. Hell-fire, according to all the Spiritual seers, is that lurid and scorching flame which is the correspondence of earthly passions, the antithesis of pure love and kindness.

With the greater strength and freshness of the new body is a corresponding change in the movements of the new being. Not being of the earth, he is no longer subject to gravitation, which is an attraction to its centre, and the spirit passes rapidly from place to place, guided only by his will. The philosophy of Swedenborg, which in its chief points resembles that of all mystics and seers, is, when fully carried out, one of emanation and development. The spirit, or life, emanates from the Supreme Father, and the universe is its work in ultimates or manifestation. Each individual spirit is a ray constantly emanating from its Divine Centre, and attracting to itself during its earthly existence those particles of which soul and body are formed. The material body is thus the outer shell, enclosing within itself the soul-body, which permeates the whole frame, and is vivified and nourished by the living spirit; which being from God cannot die or be destroyed.

The soul-body, thus forming and fitting to the earth-body, resembles it in all essentials, and the thing of the outer world, the body, *corresponds* with the thing of the inner world, the spiritual form. These seem to be the two spoken of by St. Paul, as the animal body and the spiritual body. Throughout all creation the *correspondence* of the

\* All these stories are taken substantially from Wilkinson's *Life of Swedenborg*.

† Both of this story and that of Von Marteville it may be said that sympathetic brain action, or thought-reading, would explain them. In the case of the dream, I imagine Swedenborg, being the medium, brought the widow into rapport with her husband. If the instance of the Queen were *thought-reading*, why did eight days pass before it occurred? There are many instances of clairvoyance which thought-reading will not explain.

‡ "Usually," he says, "this takes place on the third day." It is said by clairvoyants to be earlier when the body is wasted by disease.

\* See *Book of the Dead*. The newly-born Egyptian spirit says, "I am an Osiris."

outer form with the formative spirit follows as a necessary consequence from the fact that spirit, or life, works from within and not from without, and that which it attracts to itself, which appears as matter, is the effect of the action of creative power, constantly ultimating itself.

When the earth-body has grown to maturity and has done its work in the world, the animating spirit, with the soul-body, is withdrawn. "God taketh away their breath," and the outer body, ceasing to be vivified and upheld, falls away like the shell of a fruit, or the seed-pod when the seed is ripe. Then the more highly organised body, vivified by the spirit, comes forth a perfect man or woman, ready to take its place in the next world, for the purer atmosphere of which it is now conditioned. This instance of *correspondence* between spirit and body will give some idea of what is meant by the doctrine generally. Every object in this world must *correspond* essentially with that which is its cause in spirit. Thus we must look for the centre of all objectivity in the next world, in correspondence with that which is the centre of life in this. This is the Sun of the spiritual world, which has its source in the focus of Divine power, called by Swedenborg, *the Lord*;\* as its emanation, which ultimates in matter, is called *the Word*.†

And as all life in all worlds depends on the central sun of each, so life in the world of spirit depends on the rays of the Spiritual Sun, and every object in that world is receptive of his warmth and light in a way corresponding with that in which the solar efflux nourishes and vivifies everything on earth. Hence that which, meeting some object on earth, produces the appearance and sensation of *light* has its correspondence in that effect of the rays of the Spiritual Sun which is manifest as *Wisdom* or intellectual light, in the spiritual world. Warmth or heat, in this world, is the Correspondence of *Love* in the higher world; and all the chemical and optical effects of the solar efflux here, are shown in their correspondential effects in the scenery which surrounds the spirits, which scenery, with their dress, is the outcome of their internal state. Every good spirit receives Love and Wisdom in different degrees of intensity, and reflects the combinations according to reception as warmth, or as different coloured light. The red ray of the spiritual prism represents the Love, the blue ray the Wisdom, of the Divine. All seers and clairvoyants see the dresses of the spirits according to the law here indicated, and their representations become coherent and intelligible when explained by the law of correspondence. It also helps the interpretation of those dreams which have a deeper meaning than the confused workings of the brain produced by fatigue, fever, or indigestion. Perhaps, too, those utterances which have usually been considered the effects of delirium may be sometimes induced by the spiritual state of the speaker, and may, if taken correspondentially, have a deeper meaning than the literal one.

*Time* and *place* in the world of spirit are said by seers to be *states*, depending on the relation of the individual to the Spiritual Sun. A little consideration will make this clear, but I will not enter into it now, because it involves the metaphysical considerations as to how far both measurements (time and space) in this world depend on our own mental formation and perception, as well as on the heavenly bodies and their movements.

There is less difficulty in understanding what the animals which are seen in visions, symbolise to our spiritual sight.

\* Swedenborg's "Doctrine of the Lord" is not very easy to understand. It is easy to see that, according to his philosophy, every recipient of the Word in the higher parts of his spirit is thereby rendered a son of God. But Swedenborg speaks of Jesus as the One only God instead of according to him the *Sonship* which was the result of the gift of the Spirit "without measure."

† There has lately been some dispute about Swedenborg's idea of *matter*. I may be mistaken in my representation of this part of his system, but it seems to me to result from his principles. In the *Word* we are reminded of the first chapter of St. John, the Logos of Plato, and the Psalms.

Animals are far more simply organised than we are, and two or three feelings, in their case called instincts, and one or two intellectual faculties, make up their character. I believe that there is no difference between the elements of human and of animal character, but in the case of human beings various feelings, having higher objects for their exercise, and many perceptions in greater combinations, are super-added to those of the animal. When, therefore, animals are seen in the visions of seers and prophets, each symbolises the affection or faculty which is its attribute. In this way we may interpret some constantly recurring symbols; especially those of the lamb, the dove, and the horse. We can see that the lamb is the type of purity and sacrifice; the dove with its soft voice and flight and its \*brooding and nestling character, the Holy Spirit; and the horse, passing rapidly from place to place on earth, typifies. Intelligence passing rapidly from *state* to *state* in the spiritual sphere. In the Revelations the *pale horse* bearing *Death*, is intelligence ill-directed, and the white horse with its rider, whose name was *Faithful and True*, represents the intelligence of the spirit bringing to mankind the meaning of God's message, the sword of the Word of God.

There is one image finer and more universal than any of those I have mentioned. It is that of a *child*, found in all Eastern religions, and forming a prominent object in Hebrew prophecy and Christian revelation. The Child represents a manifestation of the spirit in vision or oracle. It is the embodiment of an inspiration, or instance of the utterance of the Word. The Child, whose name was to be called "Wonderful," "Counsellor,"† the "Prophetic Spirit," the "Prince of Peace," is the Gospel or message given from Heaven by the incarnation of the Word in Jesus of Nazareth; it is not necessarily the Child Jesus Himself.

I have departed somewhat from a literal statement of Swedenborg's teaching; but all here said may be deduced from his first principles, the production of all things from the Spiritual Sun, and the correspondence of the outer, or manifested, universe with its central source.

Swedenborg has been chosen as perhaps the clearest and most highly educated seer of modern times to elucidate the nature of correspondence and the character of all inspired teaching. When we read the Bible with this key to its meaning we shall see what relation subsists between it and what is now called Christianity.

S. E. DE MORGAN.

The Plymouth Spiritualistic Society hold their meetings on Sundays at the Assembly Rooms, Royal Hotel. There was an audience of 600 persons last Sunday.

The Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society are arranging to hold a bazaar some time in February.

THERE is some talk of a children's Lyceum being started in London.

"LED BY THE SPIRIT."—Aunt Charles Fox told us of an American Friend who once felt a concern to go somewhere, he knew not where. He ordered his gig, his servant asking where he was to drive. "Up and down the road," said his master. At last they met a funeral. "Follow this funeral," said the master. They followed in the procession until they came to the churchyard. Whilst the service was being performed the Friend sat in his gig; at its conclusion he walked to the grave, and exclaimed solemnly, "The person now buried is innocent of the crime laid to her charge!" and then returned to his gig. An elderly gentleman in deep mourning came up to him in great agitation, and said, "Sir, what you said has surprised me very much." "I can't help it, I can't help it," replied the other; "I only said what I was obliged to say." "Well," said the mourner, "the person just buried is my wife, who for some years has lain under the suspicion of infidelity to me. No one else knew of it, and on her death-bed she again protested her innocence, and said that if I would not believe her then, a witness to it would be raised up even at her graveside!"—*Journals of Caroline Fox. Edited by HORACE N. PYM. (Smith, Elder, and Co.)*

\* In the first chapter of Genesis "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," the Hebrew translated *moved*, is, "brooded as a hen broods." (See Lexicons.)

† The Hebrew words will be far more intelligible when interpreted by the light that Spiritualism sheds.



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16, CRAVEN STREET,  
CHARING CROSS, W.C.

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## Light:

Edited by "M.A. (OXON.);" and E. DAWSON ROGERS.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 1st, 1887.

### NEW YEAR, 1887.

"The Christmas message of peace and good-will is this year proclaimed to a world resounding with the tramp of armed men and deafened with the din of preparation for war. After nearly nineteen centuries of Christianity the anniversary of its birth finds every Christian nation in the old world busy in perfecting its drill and improving its armaments, under the influence of the dismal conviction that neither peaceful industry nor military precautions can long avert calamities greater than Paganism ever knew. It needs but the most cursory glance at what is going on in Europe to bring home to the mind the bitter irony of the occasion. Amid all the contradictory rumours that perplex the public mind, one thing stands out with unmistakable clearness, and that is, the growing uneasiness in every European capital and the growing apprehension of imminent mischief in the best-informed quarters at home and abroad."

In these terms the journal which occupies the proud position of chief organ of opinion in the civilised world expresses itself on the outcome of our Christianity and civilisation. This is the prospect which the *Times* sees as it looks over the face of Europe. We are no better than our fathers. Our religion, our culture, of which we so loudly boast, have not availed to lead us to throw aside the barbarous methods by which the primitive savage settled his disputes. Diplomatic differences are still composed by pouring out the life blood of thousands of our fellow creatures, who know nothing of the merits of the dispute, and by the expenditure of vast masses of treasure, the while the starving poor at home are crying for bread. "Bitter irony," indeed! Can the force of contrast further go than between the angel-message of peace and the bloody horrors of universal war: between good-will to man that was to be a note of the Christian dispensation and the state of a large majority of the dwellers in our great cities, the victims of our vaunted civilisation?

Abroad and at home the outlook is gloomy. Perplexity and distress everywhere in the minds of men. A depressed trade, and a still more depressed agriculture. The people perishing for lack of bread, while the leisured classes (with notable exceptions) wax fat, revel in ease and luxury, and bring forth such fruits of their idleness as the world has lately heard too much of. Anything more wholly Pagan, less near to the teachings of the Christ, than we witness in London, and witness without a blush, can hardly be con-

ceived. In the face of this, the presence of this or that number of persons in a certain number of places of worship on a given day is not a very weighty contention. It is unfortunately true that a desire to stand well with society makes it imperative on respectable people to go to church, if they would not be "talked about." But even that mandate is not obeyed as once it was. The old truths, those that *are* true, and not figments of man's invention for the furtherance of his own purposes, have lost their power on many of the best minds, and need restating if they are to hold their own.

But even more than this revival of a waning faith there is needed among us some serious attempt to live up to its profession. Scandals such as disgrace society, and make it impossible, by reason of the reports of their foul details, for decent folk to read their daily newspaper, should be impossible. It should not be that within a stone's cast of palaces, where wasteful, prodigal luxury reigns, men should be starving, women and children pining for bread, housed in hovels, where decent living is impossible, with barely enough rags to cover them. This should not be in the face of our talk about "the brotherhood of man." It should be unheard of; a disgrace that such a nation as England would not for a moment endure. "But this is Socialism." Is it? Then are we Socialists; then was Jesus Christ a Socialist; then are all men who walk in His steps, and would lift their fellow-men from the gutter, and make them live self respecting lives, Socialists too?

But apart from the question which supplies its own inevitable answer, How far would this state of things be possible among a people truly and really Christian? we may view matters from our own special standpoint as Spiritualists. Admitted that we stand as we do, in spite of church and chapel, can our knowledge as Spiritualists avail to support and strengthen this waning influence? We believe that it can. We have always contended in these pages that the higher Spiritualism with its revelation of truth, with its recognition of man's true position in the present state and assured destiny in a future one, comes to the solution of these problems with an inestimable advantage. Take a single instance. Does any thinking man believe that the state of things which we have inadequately sketched would be permitted to continue if men knew and believed that their daily lives were framing a character which will, by inexorable law, place them in the coming life? If they knew that their real self, the permanent part of that composite entity of which they and we know so little, will be revealed under the touch of the great solver of all human problems—Death—precisely as they have made it, no better and no worse, in no way different, and that it would "go to its own place" as surely as the magnetic needle turns to the north,—would they be better or worse men and citizens?

We can but suggest lines of thought; and this is appropriate to the occasion and to the situation. For, if we do not mistake the signs of the times, we have reached a period when it will be necessary to lift Spiritualism out of the sphere in which it has stayed too long. We have fought the battle of phenomena, and have fought it successfully, in spite of the fact that may be at once admitted that some very able and painstaking persons, whose honesty of intention is beyond suspicion, have not succeeded in convincing themselves of what we hold to be true. We wish them every success in the accumulation of facts, more facts, and more still: and will aid them by all means in our power. We shall have to fight our battle again and again, and we have no fear of the result. But public attention is not now fixed exclusively or even primarily on the question of phenomena. It is concerned largely with the philosophy of the subject. It asks not so much, Are these things real? as, What do these things mean? What is the philosophy of them? What educational influence have they on men? It behoves us to

seek an answer to these questions. For we are here only on our way, passengers through this life, gathering up its experiences, making our future thereby.

We strike what we believe to be a true note when we say that the knowledge implied in a profession of belief as a Spiritualist is one of the highest educational influences to which a man can be subjected.

It will be our endeavour in the conduct of this journal to do what we can to keep this view before our readers. We shall desire to give a candid and impartial hearing to all forms of belief. We trust that "LIGHT" has fulfilled its mission in the past; and, progressing with the changing order of events, we see that in the future our work is plain before us. The public aspects of Spiritualism are changing. It is to be expected, and not to be deplored. What above all is, in our judgment, needed now is that the savour of it should be sweet; that it should be recognised by its adherents as the fruitful instigation of good works and noble thoughts.

And so we heartily wish all a HAPPY NEW YEAR.

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### GEORGE MILNER STEPHEN.

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We have already announced the arrival in London of this gentleman, who has attracted a large amount of attention both in Australia and America by the cures that he has effected. His method is simply the laying on of hands, supplemented, if at all, only by administering magnetised water, or using some vehicle for magnetism to the patient.

Mr. Stephen comes of an old stock that offers some antecedent presumption against charlatanry; and he has had a legal training and a wide experience of men and things, which are some guarantee against mere emotional enthusiasm and credulity.

He was born in Somerset in 1812, and is one of the eminent family of lawyers of whom Mr. Justice Stephen is the best known just now. No less than eight of Mr. Stephen's family have raised themselves by energy and ability to the Bench in England and Australia. His brother, Sir Alfred Stephen, C.B., G.C.M.G., is now Lieutenant-Governor of New South Wales. He claims Leslie Stephen and Sir James Fitzjames Stephen as his cousins, to say nothing of many others of the Stephen family, all of whom are known to the world in some way or other.

Mr. G. M. Stephen himself has had a long and honourable career as a public man, in South Australia, in Melbourne, and in Sydney, where he now has fixed his residence. He represented the largest constituency in Victoria, and sat in Parliament for some years.

Evidently an able, cultured, and versatile mind. It is, however, with the healer of disease that we are now concerned. From a long list of certified cures which lie before us in the *Chicago Sunday Morning Press*, July 25th, 1886, it is at once apparent that Mr. G. M. Stephen claims to have extended his healing operations beyond the sphere of imagined ailments or hysterical complaints into the realm of organic disease, and to have grappled successfully with cancer. Some of the cases adduced do not reach the standard of certainty which we have always made a *sine qua non* in recording cases of psychopathy. For before it can be certified that a given person has been cured of cancer in the stomach, it must be certified by competent authority that such cancer undeniably exists; and that we believe cannot be accurately sworn to except after an examination of the alleged cancerous growth under the microscope. Again, before a case can be rightly and strictly certified as cured, a sufficient amount of time must have elapsed in order to show that there is no recurrence of the disease, as is too often the case with these malignant growths.

Be this, however, as it may; whether the diseases treated were veritably cancerous or not, there remains no doubt that

Mr. Stephen has successfully treated several persons who believed themselves, on the faith of medical diagnosis, to be suffering from this terrible disease. The following certificates, selected almost at random from a considerable number, tell their own story. There seems to have been no dearth of skilled medical opinion in all these cases, though one would desire, in a matter so vitally important, to have had a sworn professional affidavit. At any rate, whatever the ailment was, Mr. Stephen seems to have grappled with it successfully.

CANCER.—Mr. Joseph Walters, Melbourne, June 23rd, 1882, cancerous tumours in the windpipe.

Five months Suffering—His sworn testimony states: "I had two surgeons, who both agreed that the disease was so violent that it must prove fatal. \* \* \* As a last resource, therefore, on June 23rd, 1882, I left Storwell, in company with my wife, and the same evening was under treatment by Mr. Stephen. \* \* \* This day's treatment will complete my third week under Mr. Stephen, and I am now about to return home, as I believe, thoroughly cured."

[N.B.—Shortly Mr. Walters returned with another cancer growing in the windpipe; which with three more, besides the roots of the first, he coughed up, and they are now in Mr. S.'s possession. But he then left the colony, and Mr. W. accepted the aid of a mesmerist friend, who could not subdue another cancer, which killed the sufferer.]

CANCER IN WOMB AND LIP.—Mrs. M. A. Prysk.

Had five doctors at Christchurch, N. Z.; treated 5th and 7th March, 1883. Testimonial, dated 4th October, 1884, (19 months after), states, "She has had no pains since from the cancers," and "she hopes and believes that the cancers are killed."

CANCER IN THE BREAST.—Mrs. Porcini, Brisbane, Queensland, November, 1883.

Three doctors had removed a cancer from her breast, but it would not heal, and the cancer commenced to grow again. The doctors decided that another operation would prove fatal, owing to her extreme prostration; and one of them advised that Mr. Milner Stephen should be consulted. He came and instantly removed her terrible pains, and the wound rapidly healed up. After eight visits she had grown plump in figure, and declared herself "perfectly well," and she came no more.

Turning to another sphere of operation, Mr. Stephen claims that he can cure cases of which the following is a type:

TOTAL BLINDNESS OF ONE EYE.—Miss Sarah Russell, Sydney, N.S.W., 10th August, 1880.

Her testimonial states:—

"I was blind with one of my eyes for nearly three years, through the bursting of a bottle of soda water. In three minutes I regained my sight, in presence of 150 people." She went home and threaded a needle with that eye alone! Confirmed by a letter dated November, 1885 (five years afterwards).

Space forbids us to transfer more of these certificates to our columns. We append a final one from a duly qualified physician:

STIFF SHOULDER AND SORE THROAT.

San Francisco, Cal., April 17th, 1886.

In October, 1885, I had a severe fall, and dislocated my right shoulder. The dislocation was at once reduced, but for some months I had a very limited use of my arm—could not lift any weight, or dress myself without assistance.

I had known Mr. Milner Stephen for very many years, as a lawyer in large practice, member of Parliament, and as a member of several scientific bodies, and I was a good deal surprised to see him in San Francisco, practising the healing art by means of some vital power, or magnetic agency. Of course, I looked upon his professions of belief in his power as humbug, and it was with considerable reluctance, and after much persuasion by a friend, that I consented to try Mr. Stephen's power, with a view of having the stiffness removed from my shoulder joint.

About January 13th I visited him, and after one minute's treatment was so restored that I was able to put on my overcoat

without any assistance, and with very little pain. *This beneficial effect was permanent*, as I left the city for a couple of months, and while away was riding, hunting, and in all ways freely using my arm. At the time I visited Mr. Stephen I had a sore throat (tonsillitis) for a few days, and, although greatly better, I was unable to swallow without great pain. Mr. Stephen applied his hands to my throat, and an hour afterward I had a very hearty lunch, and the pain on swallowing had entirely disappeared.

JOHN W. HOOD, M.A., M.D., &c.

Licentiate State Medical Board, California.

P.S.—Dr. James Kilgour, of New Zealand, who has given a letter to Mr. Stephen, is a well-known and celebrated surgeon. I have had the honour of meeting him, and can therefore testify that there is such a person.

J. W. HOOD.

Mr. Milner Stephen seems to have offered his services to the Melbourne Hospital. He desired that a ward of patients should be placed under his charge to test his gift of healing. He specially desired to have obdurate cases that had resisted orthodox treatment. His offer, it does not surprise us to hear, was declined with thanks by the committee. It is too much to hope at present that the governing body of any hospital would consent to have its precincts invaded by such an audacious despiser of orthodox practice as Mr. Stephen is. We doubt if any hospital or infirmary in this country would prove an exception to this rule. We wish, however, that he would try, and of one thing we can assure him, that every day we live brings us nearer to the time when claims such as his will be fairly dealt with, submitted to exact examination by competent judges, and openly acknowledged as valuable, if found, as we do not doubt, to be so. We are much nearer to that time in consequence partly of the brave avowal of his opinions by Dr. Elliotson, and more recently by the experiments of the French physicians of which our columns have recently contained a brief account.

### LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

#### SPECIAL FUND.

The amount asked for by the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance is far from having been reached at present. The Council beg all intending subscribers to communicate at once with Mr. Morell Theobald, 62, Granville-park, Lewisham, S.E. The list of sums given or promised up to date will appear in next week's "LIGHT."

MR. DONALDSON, late of Croydon, who did much useful work in that district, has left England for Wellington, New Zealand.

OUR American contemporary, the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, issued an edition of 40,000 copies of its Christmas number. The best service our readers can render to "LIGHT" in the new year is to obtain fresh subscribers.

THE average Sunday attendance at the meetings held at the Exchange Hall by the Blackburn Spiritualists, is 400, but the average attendance of the Burnley Society's meetings reaches the large number of 700.

MESSRS. WARD, LOCK AND Co. have recently published a new book on palmistry under the title *The Science of the Hand*.

THE *Daily Chronicle* says that the Rev. C. N. Barham, of Whitstable-on-Sea, member of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, who has so successfully treated cases of paralysis and St. Vitus's Dance by animal magnetism, has been equally happy in treating an obstinate case of chronic rheumatism. The patient, a Mrs. Parker of that town, having suffered severely for upwards of five years, was induced to place herself under Mr. Barham's treatment. In three weeks she had lost all pain in her limbs, and is now, according to her own statement, able to do a hard day's work.

THE *Bradford Daily Telegraph* gave a very fair report of Mr. Schutt's reply to the Rev. T. Ashcroft.

LONDON OCCULT LODGE AND ASSOCIATION FOR SPIRITUAL INQUIRY, Regent Hotel, 31, Marylebone-road.—The meetings will re-commence on January 9th, when Mr. Sinnett will deliver an address on "Re-incarnation." Mr. Price has kindly consented to take the Sunday mornings alternately with Mr. Hopcroft, for mesmeric experiments. He will commence on January 16th.—F. W. READ, Secretary, 79, Upper Gloucester-place, N.W.

### ARACHNE.

Upon the Branch She sits,  
Throwing out threads in fits,  
A leaf now here; now there, a twig, she wins.  
Patient and firm of will,  
Ever persistent, still  
She sits,—and spins.

Snarers 'midst the twigs and leaves  
Concatenate she weaves,  
To catch, so as she may, each heedless fly;  
Along the threads she moves  
Of human lives and loves—  
Such a poor life am I.

Of whom is it you sing,  
Poor feeble, quivering thing—  
Some woman is it who your love betrays!  
Something,—were you not blind,—  
You might perceive behind,  
That preys on her; even as on you she preys.

Are you so clear and clean!  
Nothing is there between  
You and that life none see except the pure!  
Nothing is there that feeds  
Base and ignoble needs  
Through you, and yet not you! Are you so sure,

So steadfast in the will,  
Conflict of good and ill,—  
Its failures and its shame,—as not to know it?  
'Twere base to Her than you—  
Harder to be! Be true,  
And hold the scales aright for both, O Poet!

All may be as you deem;  
It may be all a dream  
Of phantasy that oft deludes the senses;  
Nay! the facts at a glance  
You see, you say; perchance  
You may, and yet may miss the inferences.

Not in a day like this  
All that is done amiss,  
By souls themselves weak may be judged with sternness;  
The tares and wheat are tied  
In bundles, side by side,  
Waiting their doom,—the threshing-floor or furnace.

Strange contrasts all may see  
Within all hearts that be,  
Feel in themselves this internecine trouble;  
Despite what may appear  
Few are there insincere,  
But fewer are there still that are not double.

One thing alone is sure,  
So, only Love endure,  
Watchful and steadfast on one side or other,  
Patient, and pure, and brave,  
Each shall the other save;  
Love on, and fear not,—all is well! my brother.

MR. GERALD MASSEY has been lecturing at Keighley.

MR. DAVID YOUNGER's new book on Mesmerism is nearly ready.

SUBSCRIBERS RESIDENT ON THE CONTINENT will greatly oblige if, when they send remittances through the Post-office, they will kindly forward to us, at the same time, a notice that they have done so. We frequently receive "orders" through the Post-office without any intimation as to whom they come from, and do not know, therefore, to whose account to credit them.

THE work of Spiritualism, its sublime use in the world, is not confined to the limits of avowed believers in the New Dispensation. Wherever human hearts aspire, wherever sculptor carves, or musician executes, or poet sings, or limner seeks to portray, or preacher to expound, there the latter-day evangelists wend their way seeking to uplift, to purify, to enlighten. The sculptor, the musician, the poet, the painter, and least of all the preacher, will not acknowledge (in most cases) that they have been overshadowed by angelic presence and power, but such is the fact. All these gifted minds can be, and are brought in varying measure under the control of unseen helpers, and the mighty work for the betterment of human conditions is thus going on constantly on every hand.—*Banner of Light*.



## CORRESPONDENCE.

[It is preferable that correspondents should append their names and addresses to communications. In any case, however, these must be supplied to the Editor as a guarantee of good faith.]

To Old and Young Spiritualists.  
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Before saying my say to Spiritualists generally, I desire to commence this 1887 by earnestly wishing a joyous and useful New Year to the corps of "Spiritualists," who more than thirty years ago, shoulder to shoulder, faced the masses of the people and the Press on the simple assertion,—life after physical death proved by modern phenomena. As death has kindly called so many of us to the ethereal life, and as more than one will this year enter that life, let those of the corps remaining, gladly be usefully and joyously busy in using the weapons of *facts* against our old foes, so as to give knowledge and courage to the younger soldiers of our army.

As knowledge ought to have more power than opinion, I think it desirable that the modern race of Spiritualists should have exact information as to the numerical position of British Christians, persons who have as ardent confidence in life after physical death as we have, though only through testimony, and whose deeds of philanthropic daring are world known as practical works through their faith and affections. I therefore desire that the pages of "LIGHT" may not be sullied by the untrue and, therefore, unfair assertions of book-makers and article writers that Christianity is fading out and may come to an end.

The following is the result of the census for the Metropolitan districts—taken on October 24th, 1886, by 4,000 persons—of those who went into the churches and chapels morning and evening on that day, not including mission-halls connected with them. The population embraced by the census at this date is 4,000,000, the attendance was 1,000,000, but by deducting 250,000 as likely to have attended morning and evening, we have actually present 750,000, and those detained by home duties and in sickness, say, 750,000; revealing a total of 1,500,000. We may fairly take the under-age children at 2,000,000, which leaves a balance of non-churchists at 500,000, consisting of British and *foreign* adults residing within the radius of the Metropolitan census:—less, say, 100,000 persons at mission chapels.

It is to be regretted that the primary word "Spiritualism," which originally was considered to mean simply, Belief in spirit and its continued life in a spiritual body, is now often used as a general term for Occult theories surmised by men and women from their several standpoints of knowledge or belief; these theories so often grounded on very limited practical experience of all the divisional branches of nature seen and unseen,—theories that so effectively repel persons from the examination of "Spiritualism" pure and simple.

J. ENMORE JONES.

January 1st, 1887.

Mr. Percy Wells in Reply to Mrs. Sidgwick.  
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—My attention has been called to Mrs. Sidgwick's comments in the December *Journal* of the Society for Psychical Research on Mr. Wedgwood's report of his interview with me respecting writing produced in my hinged and padlocked slate through the mediumship of Mr. Eglinton. I purpose narrowing the issue to a very small compass.

With Mrs. Sidgwick's opinion of Mr. Eglinton I have nothing to do. Those who are really interested in psychical research will estimate it at its true value. But what I claim from everyone who has any faith and belief in humanity is credence for my plain statement, vouched for by three reliable witnesses. If I live for twenty years more and my faculties remain unimpaired I could not forget every detail of my sitting, and I now state positively and without evasion or equivocation, that Mr. Eglinton *never had my hinged and padlocked slate in his hands and up to the present moment has never seen its inside*. When, in broad daylight, I opened my parcel containing the slates, it was in an ante-room in company with Dr. X., where I wrote a letter consisting of eighty-five words asking certain questions. I then locked the slate, put the key in my pocket, and we returned to the room where we had left Mr. Eglinton talking to Mrs. X. and Mrs. Wells. Immediately after we sat down to the table, I, holding the slates all the time,

opened the padlock (once only, and not twice, as stated by Mrs. Sidgwick), and held the slate with its back to Mr. Eglinton, who dropped a mite of pencil in. I then again locked the slate, put the key in my pocket, and kept it under my arm until it was asked for, when I placed it in front of Dr. X., who sat between Mr. Eglinton and myself. Mr. Eglinton simply put the points of the five fingers of his left hand on it. From the time of our sitting down about five minutes had elapsed, and I never took my eyes off the medium. Every movement of his hands, which were always visible, was closely watched. It is simply absurd to suggest that Mr. Eglinton, with four pairs of eyes upon him, could have reached over a table 3ft. 2½in. square, have taken my slate from under my arm, unlocked it, read the contents, and have written a reply, relocked the slate, and replaced it without our seeing him. We all heard the writing on my slate most distinctly.

The foregoing is a plain statement of facts, and we are all told that facts are stubborn things; and I challenge Mrs. Sidgwick to prove that under the circumstances it was possible for the cleverest conjurer in the world to deceive us. I do not ask for assumptions or innuendos; I have made a plain, straightforward statement, which is vouched for by others, and I know it is true. I am prepared to meet Mrs. Sidgwick at the Society for Psychical Research, and repeat what I have written; and I can convince any honest person who believes in the integrity of his fellow-creatures that my statement is correct in every particular.

I have only seen Mr. Eglinton three times; twice in 1884, and the third time on the 17th December last, when I called on him to obtain the measurement of his table; and as I am not a professional Spiritualist, I hope Mrs. Sidgwick will not venture to suggest that there is any collusion between us.

In conclusion, I desire to state that my companions agree in the correctness of the foregoing details.—Yours faithfully,

PERCY WELLS.

26, Cambridge-gardens,  
North Kensington, W.

A Seance with Mr. Eglinton.  
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—So far as I can recollect, the following is a brief *résumé* of a deeply interesting séance which took place some time ago in a house in Jernyn-street. The sitters were all ladies, and Mr. Eglinton was the medium. I think we were six persons, viz., Mrs. G., Mrs. O'H., Mrs. W., Miss W., myself, and a lady whose name I do not remember. The rooms used for the séance consisted of a front sitting-room and a bedchamber, opening into the former by folding-doors. Mrs. G. and I carefully searched every corner of the bedchamber before the sitting; and the doors of both rooms (opening on to a passage) were locked, and their keys removed. Mr. Eglinton lay on a sofa which was placed immediately inside the bedchamber, across the communicating entrance. The folding-door was thrown wide open, and a shawl was nailed up over the opening, covering the sofa and concealing it and the medium from our sight. We sat in a semi-circle round the opening thus veiled. Two gaslights and a fire were burning throughout the sitting, and the room was by no means obscure, but quite light enough to see clearly all that occurred.

Mr. Eglinton was but a very short time behind the curtain, and had only just begun to breathe heavily when the voice of "Joey" was heard in the bedchamber. Very soon after this the shawl was pushed aside, and "Joey" came out. He was attired in muslin, and, while speaking to us, sat on a small cane chair placed in the midst of us. He remained there a considerable time, answering many questions, and during the greater part of this time he sat poised on the back of the chair, a feat which I think no ordinary individual could have accomplished without tilting the chair, on account of its lightness. While sitting there and talking to us, Mrs. O'H. suddenly observed that his legs were becoming transparent, and mentioned the fact in an audible whisper to her neighbour. "Joey," hearing this remark, observed that he must return to his medium. He went behind the shawl, and after only a minute or two, came back with his legs more strongly materialised than the upper part of his body. Someone, noticing his drapery, asked how it was manufactured. "Joey" replied that he "drew it from the atmosphere," and proceeded to wave his right arm in a circular manner above his head. He presently appeared to pull folds of muslin out of the air. I begged him to give me a piece of this muslin. At first he refused, but Mrs. W. joined in the request,

and after a good deal of persuasion, a piece was cut out with a penknife, and divided between me and Mrs. W. The piece I had was square; not larger than an inch square. It seemed, when subsequently examined, to be ordinary coarse muslin or quite common manufacture. I cannot tell *how* the piece given to me disappeared. I put it into a drawer with some papers, and it was lost. *How* lost I cannot say. It *may* have disappeared in an occult fashion, but it certainly was not where I put it, ten days after the séance. Concerning the manner of its disappearance I know nothing.

"Joey," after discussing with us some time, dematerialised in the view of all of us, sinking down into the floor as it seemed, and becoming a mere undulating cloud. Out of this cloud arose a second form quite different from "Joey," clad in an Oriental fashion, and wearing a beard. This figure did not speak, but merely bowed to us solemnly and retired behind the curtain. It might be interesting to say that before dematerialising, "Joey" gave several proofs of his substantial nature; as, for instance, he ate a piece of apple before us, cutting it with a knife, chewing it audibly and swallowing it. We asked him where it would be after he disappeared, and he replied, "In the air, invisibly." Moreover, he gave me his hand, and it seemed quite human and solid. He withdrew it in a strange manner, the whole hand appearing to *flow* out of my grasp still tightly closed on it. After "Joey" had vanished, and after the Oriental form had retired, the curtain was drawn to exhibit "Theresa," a spirit said to be Mrs. W.'s "control." This form was arrayed as a nun, a cross was on the breast, and she knelt in view of us all with her hands clasped over the bosom, but she did not speak. There appeared to be a light about the head and shoulders of this figure. When "Joey" announced that no more could be done, we all joined in begging that he would make an effort to bring his medium out to us. He said he would try. Some movements and much deep sighing and "swishing" sounds were then heard behind the curtain, which was shortly afterwards lifted, and "Joey" and Mr. Eglinton (the latter in an apparently insensible condition) were seen side by side. A few steps forward were made, but Mr. Eglinton seemed unable to support himself, and the curtain was speedily allowed to drop again.

I think this is as accurate an account of this extremely interesting sitting as I am able to give. There may be one or two *slight* inaccuracies, but I am not aware of them. All of us saw exactly the same thing, and were all equally impressed.—Yours sincerely,

ANNA KINGSFORD, M.D. (Paris).

34, Wynnstay-gardens, Kensington, W.

#### A Remarkable Prophetic Warning.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Some few weeks ago at the Psychological Hall I fell in with two seemingly anxious inquirers into Spiritual truth. I introduced them to Mr. Hewitson, a promising healing and clairvoyant medium of this town (Leeds) and they made arrangements for a sitting the next night, which I attended. After some table-tipping to show them the A B C of Spiritual phenomena, we formed a circle and Mr. Hewitson gave each a striking test. Both of the sitters being engine drivers upon the railway one spirit was described who had been killed by a train running over him. The scene of the accident was described, the person who rendered assistance to convey the body away, and the fear of the engine-driver to look at the corpse, every particular being testified to by one of the sitters.

The sitters became so interested that they invited Mr. Hewitson to go to their houses some miles away upon the following Sunday, which he did and has continued to do every Sunday since. On Sunday, February 28th, at a sitting, one of the engine-drivers was cautioned about a part of the railway which had a sharp curve with a brick bridge over it, and was told to be very careful when he came to this spot. On Tuesday, March 2nd, this engineer had to take a *strange engine* with an express passenger train, and an *unusual route*, and was driving full speed when he felt the train oscillate, and the bridge appeared! Then he thought of Hewitson and the caution. Like lightning he applied the brake, the train glided into the station, and the engine was examined. It was then found that two pieces were broken out of the tyre of one of the driving wheels, one piece two feet, the other three, in length. Not a single traveller was alarmed, none knew what a narrow escape they had.

The officials were all amazed at the extent of the damage, and looked upon the escape as a miracle. The engineer has

had thirty years' experience and never knew the like; had he not been warned the train no doubt would have been wrecked, and an appalling catastrophe would have occurred.

I am often asked, What good the spirits do? Given good conditions they can do wonders. The narrative I have here given is sufficient proof.

E. E. PEARCE.

Goatland-place, Meanwood-road, Leeds.

#### Pears' Puzzle.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—No doubt many of your readers have seen a wooden puzzle sent by Messrs. Pears, the celebrated soap makers, far and wide.

The solution of this puzzle seems to be physically impossible.

It consists of two pieces of wood—one mahogany, and the other a close-grained white wood, so interlocked as apparently to realise the idea of matter through matter, and were such a puzzle produced by a medium no doubt many Spiritualists would at once accept it as a demonstration of that act.

We are assured, however, that it is only a mechanical puzzle, but that in its production the bits of wood are without any joining.

I have examined the wood with a magnifying-glass, and I have boiled the wood, in the hope of discovering glue or cement, if any, but without effect, and the puzzle still defies my ingenuity to solve it.

Possibly the white bit of wood when in a green state might have been compressed, and then thrust through the small aperture, but this seems improbable.

I called at Messrs. Pears' and Co., Great Russell-street, and was shown one of the puzzles, with the two pieces separate, and I was assured that they had been interlinked and afterwards separated; but the head man who told me so declined to take the specimen I had marked into his private room, and there separate it. Anyway, however, this puzzle of Messrs Pears deserves the investigation of Spiritualists, as showing how Spiritualistic phenomena may be simulated.

G. W., M.D.

#### Re-incarnation.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—If any who may read this have grieved over the glamour that the difference of opinion between the Re-incarnationists and those who differ from them casts over Spiritualism as much as I have done, I am sorry for them. This diversity, whereby one side must of necessity be wrong, throws a mantle of distrust over all communications on this question from the other side which cannot but be disheartening, whatever may be the character of the medium, or the apparent reliability of his general utterances. For, in countries where re-incarnation is generally believed, there mediums, I might almost say invariably, pronounce in its favour, and *vice versa*. This fact is, indeed, a block in the relations between the two worlds which is most anomalous, and yet, out of evil good may come.

There is one assumption which is matter of history. Re-incarnation was taught by the early Hindoos, the Egyptians, and early Greeks. Perhaps all Hindoos and Buddhists believe in it at the present day. Re-incarnation is taught in the Old Testament, and is a *sine quâ non* in the New (concerning Him Who was "before Abraham," and it is incorporated with the three creeds of the Roman and English Churches ("From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead"). And, what is most remarkable, it is now taught by spirits, almost without exception, in countries where people are brought up as Roman Catholics. It is so in France, in Spain, in Italy and South America, and is generally held by the Russian Spiritualists and others of the Greek Church; while the great array of messages received in countries where people have been bred as Protestants are in character non-re-incarnationist.

Now it is a fact that those who have been brought up in the Greek or Roman Churches have been taught that "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise"; "Fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee," are not vain words. And, in consequence, they have been taught to believe in a cleansing process for evil deeds done in the body, beginning directly they drop the flesh; and they find, therefore, when they learn, through Spiritism, about re-incarnation, that to have to come back again to earth (teeming as it does with processes which, if not

purgatorial, it is difficult to know what else to call them) is but one *new step*, to their intelligence, on the road of hoped-for improvement.

Now it is a fact, also, that a vast number of Protestants have been taught something quite different from the law of continuity of active life and sensation after the body's death. They have been taught that the soul from the moment of death goes to sleep for a very indefinite time indeed. And the experience of the past shows that it has not only gone on for a very extended period already, but that it may go on still for ages. What is the consequence of this long expectancy of awakening? Why, many excellent people who hold these views in these thinking days, are already amazingly perplexed and impatient on this subject, at the present time, waiting for the great event which is to rouse up the sleepers. Their patience seems all but exhausted. They are like the Jews, waiting still for a Messiah, only in a more precarious state. What an illustration of the proverb, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick"! No wonder that Shakespeare put into the mouth of one who, in speaking of a future life, remarked, "she was in hopes there was no need to trouble herself with such thoughts yet." What can such people understand about re-incarnation? And it is difficult to gauge how far this doctrine of the soul's long inaction may have contributed to the materialism of the present day, to the cold hopelessness of those who hold that the death of the body is the annihilation of the man.

Whatever the diversity of opinion among those who have studied Spiritualism may be, as regards re-incarnation, there is not a shade of difference of opinion on this other great point—that in the midst of death we are in life; and that, in casting off the burden of the flesh, we only cast off a shell; and are still alive when "dead." There is nothing taught by Jesus contrary to this; nor in the delineation of even a perfect man as subject to re-incarnation for a wise purpose.

So, then, I at least am one who thinks that those who believe in the continuity of living action after death are ahead of those who think that all but one who died from the beginning of the world are sleeping still. But those who have believed in the sleep of the soul and who study Spiritualism, and are convinced, see at once that, in formerly believing in the utter cessation of the faculties at death, they were wrong. And yet, by gaining this new conviction, through Spiritualism, they have but attained to the step which the others had attained all along. And it may be a spiritual law that it is best to go line upon line, *one step at a time*. And that may be the reason why those who already believed, under the old teaching, in a continuity of active life after laying aside the body, have been the *first* in Europe and in South America, in modern times, to be taught intimately by spirits the *next step*, that of re-incarnation, in the continuity of evolution.

T. W.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In reading over the various letters in the last issue of "LIGHT," I notice there are several points which have not been touched upon. To my mind these are important, and should be considered in attempting to solve this very difficult problem.

The various writers who argue in favour of re-incarnation speak in a manner somewhat positive; so much so in one or two instances (and, in fact, all in a degree) as to give one the idea that they positively knew they were right and their theories correct beyond all doubt.

For instance, "Nizida" says: "If a man wants to remember the sins of a former life, he can see them in the evils of nature he has had to fight against and conquer." Again, he says: "Some souls, self-devoted to helping backward brethren forward, return again solely for that purpose, and become leaders of men, great in science, in art," &c. If there are any such returned souls, holding such forward positions in life, they ought to come forward and speak plainly on this subject, because their voluntary return implies that *they have gained* their freedom over the chains of matter, and also over the veil of oblivion, which in ordinary lives cause the past to be a blank, that is, according to the theory of Karma.

And, referring to the evils of nature, I think hereditary tendency has much more to do with the existence of such evils than the follies of a theoretical pre-existence. We know for a fact that hereditary diseases do run through families, causing long life and misery, or cutting off life in infancy, and in some cases the result has been lunacy of such a character as to make the life of a person positively useless from birth to death.

What good, or chance of doing or getting good, can a re-incarnated spirit receive if the whole of the natural life is spent in a lunatic asylum, under the eye of a cruel keeper and in the strait jacket?

Another point to be considered on this question is the theory of Karma. Without Karma re-incarnation cannot stand, and *vice versa*.

The teachers or advocates of these theories have much to say about the astral body and also much to say against Spiritualism. If I understand their teachings correctly, they say the astral body after death is a semi-conscious vehicle or shell which exists upon the astral plane, and has affinities with the earth-plane according to the degree of intensity of natural desire, and that such astral bodies *do not* progress in knowledge; that they can be awakened to a full consciousness of their past life, if they become attached to a person living upon the earth-plane, and thereby remember all they knew in earth-life, and go so far as to be able to read the mind of another and detail it as their own. This may be consistent as a theory. But if we find and come across any astral spirits or intelligences who have gained knowledge since their departure from earth-life, it will be a *fact* pointing against this theory, and, as a fact, should have greater consideration than a theory when attempting to prove or illustrate a truth.

Now I have been a student of Occultism and its attendant philosophy for many years, and been very much prejudiced against Spiritualism, so much so that I would not sit at a *séance* on principle, because I considered it very wrong to awaken to consciousness these astral bodies (doomed to dissolution), as I was taught that when such was the case it interfered with the happiness of the Ego in Devachan, or some other sphere of existence.

All this has been upset in my mind by the controls of a personal friend, and it has also been proved to my satisfaction that what the Occultists call astral bodies *do positively progress*.

This spirit control or astral, if you like, gave his name. He was a doctor of medicine; his books and system of medicine are yet in existence. He published several, when on earth, and he now admits that his theories and practices were in a great measure a mistake. He has since his death gained knowledge upon the mysteries of the human frame and other forces of nature not yet fully recognised by us. He gives prescriptions for various diseases, through this medium, upon a system of medicine entirely different from that which he believed in and practised when in earth-life. He tells me that instead of his faculties being stunted or narrowed the degree of comprehensiveness is very much greater as a spirit than as a man, speaking personally both of himself and his spirit acquaintances.

He has inquired in the realm of his present existence as to the theory of re-incarnation, and he says he cannot get one fact or a trace of one as to the truth of it. He says that if high spirits can communicate with men in earth-life, they can much more easily communicate with spirits like himself, but all the spirits whom he has yet met deny the theory of re-incarnation. They know of the theories of Hindoo Occultism as spirits, and were quite able to comprehend and understand it as men on the earth-plane, and yet the theory of re-incarnation is denied by them all.

There is no progress without knowledge, and the knowledge of truth founded upon fact is progress of the highest degree, and if astrals progress, as this spirit says *they do*, the philosophy of Occultism in regard to re-incarnation is wrong upon this point; and how do we know that the many other points are correct, as they are without proof?

It seems to me that the time has come when we ought to object to so much abstract philosophy being uttered with the most determined positiveness of manner, implying absolute knowledge, when not the least trace of a real fact can be brought forward.

Let a few facts be published in your paper, proving that the astral body or spirit does gain knowledge and progress, and it will be difficult to establish the theory of re-incarnation upon a sound base, and more difficult to point out the limit of such progress, and where the knowledge shall stop.

A man who has studied chemistry has a right to an opinion, and earned a right to speak upon its various theories and facts; so also a man who has gone through the change called Death, and landed in the mysterious realm beyond, has earned a right to speak on the facts and theories of spirit-life, and especially if he, during earth-life, was respected and admired for his researches into the mysteries of nature, and for his truthfulness.

I conclude with a verse out of Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia*—

Say not "I am," "I was," or "I shall be,"  
Think not ye pass from house to house of flesh,  
Like travellers, who remember and forget,  
Ill lodged or well lodged.

PLATON.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Pray permit a few words of reply to your various correspondents. I can only strike the key-note in each case, for regard to the space at command allows of nothing more.

Mr. Fawcett speaks of "myriad physical immersions" as a "majestic course of evolution," the result being "sublime and magnificent in the extreme."

I really cannot think so. Is the moral condition of mankind at the present era—after all these countless re-incarnations—sublime and magnificent in the extreme? I should rather state the case thus: enormous pains—inconceivable tribulations—and a very small moral result. It is easy to make light of past tribulations which were entirely forgotten, as soon as the volume of each life closed, but, if we are all working upwards, each of these lives was worse than the present, and the amount of misery in each was very considerable while the total amount must have been appallingly great. And for what?—to reach our present moral level? I see in all this dire cruelty in the Supreme Power and no wisdom.

Mr. Fawcett speaks of "the acquisition of all possible experience by the Ego," and says that "this alone necessitates re-incarnation." Nay, but by a perverse arrangement, the acquisition of experience is rendered impossible, seeing that all memory is obliterated of a past life, as soon as that life is over. That, indeed, accounts for our low moral state, but it is fatal to any belief in the love or wisdom of the higher powers. And who believe in the myriad ante-natal existences? A few mystics and a few students, who get possessed of a theory, and fancy that they have some glimmerings of remembrance. I am warranted in believing that it is no more than a fancy, when a mere handful among tens of millions embrace this doctrine. Take the United Kingdom with, say, forty millions, are there forty re-incarnationists? Yet seeing that all have equally undergone these countless lives, some faint remembrance of some of them ought to be the common inheritance of *all of them*. It is therefore a good and sound argument that the very few who say they have a faint impression of former lives are only indulging a groundless fancy, recommended to them by the necessities of a theory. Swedenborg was a great seer, but in the vast range of his works no such idea presents itself. If ever man had a capacious spirit, he certainly had, yet the idea seems never to have occurred to him. The ante-natal past was to him a total blank. The same was the case with Kant, the most deeply thoughtful and introspective of mankind.

Mr. Fawcett says, I "think it unreasonable that we 'should suffer in one life for something done in another.'" I never expressed such a sentiment, and it is contrary to all my belief. But what we have a right to expect, and what justice demands, is that if we suffer we may have a clear remembrance of our fault, and of all the attendant circumstances—not that these countless lives should run through us, like water through a sieve, and leave not a trace behind; each of these lives entailing great suffering, yet no possibility of turning these sufferings to account.

A word about the letter of "Nizida." He says there are individuals who have glimpses of recollection of former lives. I wish these gentlemen would put down on paper their recollections. The traces of their countless former lives and their experience, reaching back to myriads of ages, might, one would think, furnish some instructive pages. But when we reflect that it is only a few units who remember, while the millions who, be it remembered, have all gone through the same course, have entirely forgotten, the natural conclusion is that the fancied recollection of the few is all an illusion.

"Nizida" observes that mental and spiritual advancement "cannot be flashed into us by some instantaneous process." Quite true; but who asserted that it could? All advancement must be gradual, and often very slow, but all this may take place in the spiritual world, without re-incarnations. There need be no hurry; there is an eternity before us. We must *grow*; there are no sudden transformations. But neither is it consistent with our belief in Divine goodness that our advance should be purposely retarded by an ordinance of obliteration of each page

of our existence as soon as that page is read through. This would be as cruel as it is senseless. It gives a highly penal view of the universe. Spirit is life and memory, not death and oblivion.

What is your correspondent's idea of bliss—the ultimate goal of our desires? It is the wretched Buddhist one—Nirvana, "The aching craze to live ends, and life glides into sinless, stirless rest."

The desire of life, then, is a craze. I plead guilty to that craze.

"'Tis life of which our nerves are scant,  
'Tis life, not death, for which we pant,  
More life and fuller that we want."

Nirvana is not life; it is death and annihilation. It is a sickly and ignoble dream.

Only one remark more. "Nizida" rejects my advice, and asks, "Why should he wait the great teacher, Death?" But in the very next paragraph he happily, but unconsciously, answers himself, when he says "another life or two will place us upon higher vantage ground, when the mysteries of Being, of God, and Nature will be open as the day to our spiritualised vision." I am not so sure of that; but let us at all events wait another life or two which will place us on a higher vantage ground. My advice is not so stupid after all.

G. D. HAUGHTON.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The subject of re-incarnation is one whose acceptance or rejection by individuals is not of sufficient importance to render its discussion either useful or desirable. I think it is one that should be written upon now and then; and those persons to whom it recommends itself will perceive its justice and beauty, and those to whom it is not acceptable will take no harm from the perusal of views that do not harmonise with their own ideas. Its practical importance exists only for those who can appreciate its appropriateness. Some day perhaps persons who at present reject it will see cause to alter their opinions, and until then no good is likely to accrue from forcing it upon them by logical reasoning. Such a course would only create factions and discussions where there should be nothing but harmony. It is impossible for us to prove the re-incarnation theorem with mathematical accuracy (or anything approaching it), and its discussion I am afraid will lead to no good. It will, on the other hand, needlessly stir up among Spiritualists those bitter religious feelings that in the past wrought so much evil, caused so much war, and shed the rivers of blood of martyrdom. Inimical discussion of unprovable questions like this is the work of "the adversaries," whose chief aim is to destroy and stamp out the present movement and to disgust outsiders with it, and this theory affords them a good opportunity to cause a break in their ranks. This is by no means a protest against discussion generally. Where matters of fact are concerned nothing can be healthier, but where it is merely matters of opinion it is unwise in the extreme to subject them to acrimonious debates. I beg, therefore, Mr. Editor, to enter my protest against this discussion, as calculated to do much more harm than good.—Yours,

1ST M.B. LOND.

[We are disposed to agree with our correspondent. This discussion, which has not been unprofitable, has probably continued long enough. We shall give some letters, which are already in type, in our next issue, and then, perhaps, the subject may be allowed to drop for the present.—ED.]

#### ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Several communications necessarily stand over for future use.

F. W. T. (Invercargill).—Remittance received with thanks.

DR. C. DU P. (München); ALFREDO PIODA (Locarno); MISS BURR (Hartford, Conn.).—Remittances duly received. Thanks.

J. B. P.—Thanks for your kind communication, but it would direct the discussion into a new channel, and there are cogent reasons why it should not be unnecessarily extended. The space is wanted for topics of wider interest.

"ADAIR" will be glad to know what distinguished persons besides Socrates and Joan of Arc have declared that they had heard and been instructed by supernatural voices; and in what book can he find any reference to the subject. Perhaps some of our readers will supply the information he seeks.