

so, but have known of instances when she did. She never exhibited this power without some reason for it."

"Is it possible for one to remember a previous existence?"

"Yes, indeed! That is a very frequent occurrence. I was interested in the case of a little child not long ago. His mother told me that the little fellow told her a long story of something which he said had happened to him. She knew it had not and remonstrated with him, telling him it was untruthful and he must not tell things which were not so. He replied:

"Oh! I didn't mean it happened when I was your little boy! It was a long time ago, when I was somebody else's little boy."

"I think," said Mrs. Besant, "We would have many real glimpses of the past existences of these souls did we not always check their expression."

"And do you have recollections of any previous existence?"

Mrs. Besant smiled.

"Who do you think you were?"

"You must not ask me that," was the gentle reply.

The reporter apologized.

"Is it possible for a change of sex to occur in a reincarnation?"

"Yes; for the real self has no sex. It is better that there should be a change, too, because the life, the whole, long life, is a more complete and rounded thing if the experience is wider. It is quite possible that a woman in one existence may be a man in the next and vice versa."

"Is Theosophy spreading in England?"

"Yes, slowly but steadily. And a new feature in our work is the interest which has been devolved among the working people. Hitherto our converts have been from the middle and upper classes, but now the laboring class have seemed to find in Theosophy a solution of many of their problems. We have had a great deal of opposition from the Jesuit fraternity. One of the fathers preached against us in Manchester. He said the phenomena of Theosophy were undeniably true, but that they were the work of the devil. I answered him in St. James's Hall and the house was packed to the doors. Lately they have been sending groups of persons having a strong hypnotic power to our lectures. These people would try by their combined will power to confuse

me so that I could not continue my address. One of the fathers himself told this to an English clergyman, who afterwards told me. The father said that they had tried a good many times, but had never had any success except one time, when I hesitated a moment but went directly on."

"And was that true? Did they have any influence over you?"

"Why, I was conscious of this hostile influence beating up against me, and I paused a moment, wondering what it meant. Then I went on with my lecture. Afterwards I was often conscious of this attempt and sometimes traced it to the persons who were trying to affect me."

Mrs. Besant paused a moment; then said with a slight, pitying curl of the lip:

"I know more than they do. They cannot hurt me."

"And do you, who were Mme. Blavatsky's pupil, still live in her house at London?"

"Yes. When she realized that her body was breaking up, she was desirous of leaving a little group of those whom she had taught to carry on the work. It was a privilege to live with her. Through all her pain and weakness she worked on, day by day, and every evening she would gather us around her and teach us. I never saw such perfect-self-devotion. The little colony still keeps together. Countess Wachtmeister, George Mead, Walter Old, Herbert Burrows, Edward Sturdy, Mrs. Cooper Oakely, Miss Laura Cooper, James Prys, Herbert Coryn and Claude Wright are my companions in the work at headquarters."

#### REV. J. E. STARR ON LAW.

"Last week a lady called on me bringing with her the papers in a case concerning \$100,000, and she requested me to find her an honest lawyer," remarked Rev. Edward Starr, pastor of the Elm street Methodist church Toronto, Sunday Dec. 11, to his large congregation, "and I'm on the hunt," he added in a deep tone after a reflective pause." The remark tickled the fancy of his hearers and there was a general laugh.

Notwithstanding the foregoing declaration Mr. Starr had many good things to say of those who practised law. He took as his text St. John viii.

9, "And when they heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one beginning at the eldest, even unto the last." This referred to the conduct of the scribes and Pharisees after they had been rebuked by Jesus Christ, who, instead of condemning a guilty woman, as they desired, said instead: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her."

#### THE LAWYER AND THE CHURCH.

The subject of the sermon was: "Why Lawyers Are Poor Church-goers." In his opening remarks the minister referred to the distinction modern society made in the sins of fame and culture and the low-browed sins of vice. To the former belonged hypocrisy in religion and acts of oppression committed by the arrogance of authority. The shortcomings of the bench and bar might be included in the first class.

Sin isolated a man from his better self, and no man ever wronged another without wishing thereafter to avoid meeting him. Mr. Starr had no prejudice against lawyers, although the public had. Since he was 16 years old he had been intimately connected with legal gentlemen, and he knew there was nothing in the profession, as such, which precluded a lawyer being a Christian.

#### SOONER LAWYERS THAN MINISTERS.

"As a matter of fact," said he, "I would sooner submit my case to a jury of 12 lawyers than to a dozen clergymen had I to go on trial for my character."

But lawyers gave in too easily to the temptations of their profession, and most of them acquired the idea that whatever was legal was right. They accepted too many bad clients, and looked at wrong through legal glasses. And when a man was doing wrong he generally kept away from good influences.

"Is it any wonder then that lawyers are poor church goers?" asked Mr. Starr, and he concluded, addressing the legal profession, "Better never have a brief than lose your soul."

Several accomplished young women are earning good salaries in New York by coaching society women in the topics of the day, the new books that are being talked of, new works of art that are attracting attention and interesting novelties even in more serious lines.