

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

No. 482.—VOL. X.

[Registered as a
Newspaper.]

SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 1890.

[Registered as a
Newspaper.]

PRICE TWOPENCE.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

Dr. George Wyld, in his suggestive address to the London Hypnotic Society, which we shall print in our next issue, gave some valuable hints in explanation of obscure problems. Why, he inquired, can a suggestion made to a hypnotised patient suffice to cure him of a vicious habit when such a suggestion made to him in his waking hours would be inoperative? In his waking time he is admittedly in his higher state. How comes it, then, that these beneficent results are obtained only when the man is half-asleep or wholly unconscious? This raises the whole question of consciousness, what it is, what area it covers. Is a hypnotised patient in a state which can be reached by suggestion that fails to touch the waking consciousness? Does the hypnotic process produce trance more or less complete and so awaken the slumbering Ego and rouse it to action? Dr. Wyld is disposed to think it does. He thinks that induced trance of this description awakes and arouses powers latent in the system and sets them in operation. He suggests that the Higher Self comes into play when the Lower Self is lulled to sleep, purges the temple of the Soul, and drives out the loafers and traffickers. It is a pretty thought: let us hope a true one. For among the dangers that beset hypnotism in ill-regulated hands, and they are neither few nor infrequent, we may see in this power of rousing the slumbering guardian of the soul something that inspires the highest hope for mankind.

I have always been of opinion that those who have done most for Spiritualism equally with those who have most opposed it have been onesided in their view. It is, in my judgment, a mistake to attribute all psychical phenomena to external agency. It is equally a mistake to ignore that agency altogether. I have found what I may call amorphous rappings and noises, devoid of intelligence, produced at a sitting. These I believe to be simply the equalisation of the conditions by the liberation of a certain amount of the psychic force stored up in the medium. I have traced repeatedly, when more perfected conditions have permitted, the manifestation of the higher self of the entranced medium. And I have unquestionably proven the communication of facts to a circle which were external to the consciousness of any person present. We have hitherto approached the study of this and kindred subjects too much from the side of prepossession. The solution of the problems that meet the intelligent student is not easy, by no means so simple as we have been led to believe. But it is pleasant to think that deep down within us, far removed from the jarring discords of this outer world in which we are at present conditioned, there is a nobler self that can

be reached, that can purify the temple of the Soul, that can scourge from out of it the ignoble herd of baser desires, that can fence the aspiring Soul and secure it from temptation, and can answer to the cry for help when it is most needed. Thank you, Dr. Wyld. There is daylight there.

I have had a number of clippings from various papers in regard to the alleged supernatural noises and apparitions which are reported to have taken place before the lamentable explosion at the Morfa Colliery. The best is that of the *Western Mail* (March 14th), and I reproduce it as it comes to me, without, of course, endorsing or necessarily approving what is said in it. It is from the Pontypridd correspondent of the *Western Mail*:—

Although during my visits to the scenes of the various colliery disasters which have occurred in South Wales and Monmouthshire during the past dozen years I have met with many strange stories not excepting so-called ghost stories, it has been left to me to come to Taibach to meet with a large body of people—not an exceptional individual—pinning their faith to superstitious anecdotes of a most extraordinary kind. A red dog forms the leading feature of one of these tales. This red dog was, it is said, seen in the colliery some time ago. It daily made its appearance in one of the working places, and then just as mysteriously disappeared. It may have been a living dog, I suggested, but my informant would not admit it for a moment—it was a ghostly dog, and an omen of evil. The story of the man dressed in oilskins and wearing a leather cap, who one day appeared on the cage and then vanished into thin air, mentioned in one of the narratives yesterday, is another example. Then there is another tale told of a man who jumped on a journey of trams underground, and, after riding some distance, jumped off and melted away in the darkness of the mine; and that this man was recognised as one who died long ago. Strange noises of ghostly trams "running wild" in the pit and heavy falls which never took place are quite ordinary matters compared with the remarkable perfume which is alleged pervaded some part of the mine on a particular occasion. It was an odour like that of a garden of roses. There was nothing visible, but the pleasant aroma of innumerable roses was, it is said, inhaled by several persons. These hallucinations, evidently formed of morbid fancies, have, for some time past, produced in the minds of many of the workmen a vague, indefinite fear that something would happen. Of course, all the workmen do not believe this tattle, but not a few shake their heads ominously when such things are mentioned, and one actually said yesterday: "I did not believe them before, but it has all come true now"; and to smile at the recital of any of these stories is to bring down on one's self the dire displeasure of his informant. Mr. Isaac Hopkins, manager of the Dynevor Collieries, Neath, came to Port Talbot on Tuesday night, and on the same evening he was telling Mr. George Palmer, of Neath, that some men had come to work at his colliery, and stated as their reason for leaving the Morfa that the pit was haunted.

The *Yorkshire Post* has a similar but less full narrative; various other papers give currency also to the supernatural warnings. Probably there were warnings. These very soon spread among a sensitive people who are secluded from the outer world, and carry their lives in their hand when they go to their work. I should expect to find such people "superstitious," i.e., more alive to the action and pre-

sence of the world of spirit than their neighbours of coarser fibre. But as to the exact amount of truth existent in these records I am not called on to decide.

I intrude rather largely on the space of "LIGHT" this week by publishing an abstract of an address that I delivered at St. Nicholas Club by request. I have done so because it answers many questions that are addressed to me frequently, though it was obviously impossible to condense within reasonable space all that I desired to say. What I have said speaks for itself. The Christo-Theosophical Society is an eclectic body with no prepossessions and with a very earnest desire to arrive at truth. They are going in the right way, and I, least of all, desire to provide them with any dogma. I was honoured by an invitation to express my opinions before them, and the result is before my readers. I may be permitted a word of hearty praise of the work that is being done in connection with St. Nicholas Cole Abbey. It is a City church, a parish from which the drifting of time and circumstance has removed the souls to which the rector should minister. It stands in the midst of a busy population, and, with characteristic energy, the Rector (Mr. Shuttleworth) has gone among the young men employed around him and has gathered them together and interested them with a human and living interest in his broad and catholic exposition of Christian doctrine and its bearing on daily life. He is worthily seconded by his coadjutor, the Rev. G. W. Allen. The club which these good men have founded is a humanising and civilising influence of a high order. What is there either humanising or civilising in a clerk's life in a warehouse? I came from my meeting with these earnest men refreshed and comforted, and I have carried away a strong sense of the good work that is being done, with no dogmatism and no pretentiousness, at St. Nicholas.

One is impelled to think what might be done if all our centres of enlightenment were as luminous. If, for example, people would not persist in talking about what they do not understand, and forcing other people to swallow their ideas under pains and penalties. If, again, people might go to an open church and "the world forgetting, by the world forgot" meditate there in seclusion and peace, holding, perhaps, an hour's communion with—those who are not dead, not lost but only gone before, what a season of refreshment it might be. But the silence out of which comes wisdom is broken by some "heated pulpiteer" who enlarges in strident tones on his little topic and breaks the blessed peace. If he would only leave us alone, alone with God and the infinite possibilities of the future, and the solemn responsibilities of the past. But he won't. He will preach and preach and preach, and out of it all comes Dead Sea fruit.

WALKING ON FIRE.

A correspondent of the *Indian Civil and Military Gazette* thus describes a feat which he witnessed recently at Benares:—Invitations were issued to all civil and military officers and other European and native residents to witness a festival known as "Agni Kund," which literally means walking over a pool of fire, at the residence of the Rani of Coorg. The invitations were largely responded to, and all the European spectators were astonished at seeing the natives walking over a pool of living coals. The place where the fire was placed was about 20ft. long, 4ft. wide, and 2ft. deep. At one end of this was situated the god of fires, made of kneaded flour, and the great god Mahadeo was conveyed round the fire three times in a grand palanquin, borne by priests, amidst great singing and dancing (something after the fashion of the Indian war dance and song). After the third turn one of the priests, with a drawn sword, severed the head of the god of fires, which they said had the effect of "cooling the fire." After the defeat of the god several natives, young and old of different castes, walked across the fire with bare feet. Whether their feet were burned I cannot say; at any rate none of them complained, but repeated their walks. —*Fall Mail Gazette*,

MR. A. P. SINNETT ON "FREEWILL AND NECESSITY."*

"Freewill and Necessity regarded in the light of Re-incarnation and Karma," is a comprehensive title, and Mr. Sinnett has dealt with his subject in an exhaustive and very suggestive manner. He claims that the truth of the Esoteric teaching, of which he is one of the most distinguished exponents, is largely pressed home, not by isolated considerations, but by the light it sheds on otherwise insoluble mysteries. Of these are Predestination and Freewill. Man feels his liberty of choice, and feels further that the thought of any future for the soul with consequences resulting from this life necessitates this liberty. If we are to be sentenced at the option of an Almighty Judge without reference to our acts, then justice is done with, and we are the sport of a mere mocking and arbitrary fate.

Necessity, again, meets us at every corner in the journey of life. Causes produce results which we can forecast. The morals of the slums are the outcome of the conditions that antecedent generations have established. The purity, sincerity and truth that have been handed down to the mother surround the cradle of her child with an atmosphere which evil cannot penetrate. No grapes of thorns: no figs of thistles. Results flow necessarily from causes following the line of least resistance. And one traceable line of cause produces in each life its necessary line of effect.

Problems these which the *avant-couriers* of the race alone can tackle. We are here on various planes of progression, and it is the glory of this generation that it has set itself in the persons of its foremost thinkers to deal with what its predecessors have passed by. Mr. Sinnett's solution of the problems with which he deals is founded on the law of Re-incarnation. If this life is the "be-all and end-all" there is no solution thinkable. But who thinks now that death closes the period of growth for the soul? And why should the consequences of deeds which have been done in one state of an immortal life not be operative in their consequences in another? They may be, perhaps, more appropriately atoned for in that state in which they were committed. But, as Mr. Sinnett points out, an act is energised by its motive, and the motive comes from the soul, the Ego, the real man: the form in which his initiative finally expresses itself is a mere accident. So, Re-incarnation or no Re-incarnation, there is ample space and opportunity for the working out of retribution. The law of Karma, as expounded in Oriental philosophy, is precisely identical with that which the Higher Spiritualism teaches of the issue from a man's soul of the acts that make his life and determine his future.

Mr. Sinnett illustrates his position by the case of a man whom he supposes to have come into this state of being under the malign influence of a heritage of evil from a past existence. He is pursued by his fate. It is necessary, for example, that he should become a murderer, as the concrete expression of his spiritual state. In one case he gloats over his crime and would repeat it: in another he is horrified at his act and filled with remorse. A's Karmic career bowls him down the broad road that leads to further sorrow, B's repentance pulls him up, stiffens him and saves him. As the crime is done so is the state arrived at, such is the life to come in the next state.

Mutatis mutandis, the same arguments apply to the acts of the good. We cannot pursue the subject further. Nor can we deal at length with objections such as those with which Mr. Sinnett deals in his usual perspicuous fashion. His pamphlet should be read by all who desire to master his arguments or who wish to confute them. Are our acts dictated by irresistible necessity? What use, then, to struggle? Are we the sport of Fate? Let us drift, then. These and such shallow objections Mr. Sinnett meets by

* *Transactions of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society*, No. 15. (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, and Co., February, 1890.)

showing that, just as the evil of the past is perpetuated in the crime and sin of the present, so the heritage of woe may be lessened and finally obliterated by the good deeds done by the soul that is awake to its duties and responsibilities.

Mr. Sinnett has much else to say which we do not meddle with now. It ought to be to Spiritualists, as it is of a truth to us, a cause for rejoicing that a truth so far-reaching in its significance as that which Mr. Sinnett has so well set forth is the common property of ourselves and of those from whom we have some divergence of opinion on less important matters.

VISUALISED IMAGES PRODUCED BY MUSIC.

The following interesting letter appears in *Nature*.—

In the annexed paper, and in her own words, are related the very curious effects produced on a lady friend by certain musical tones and orchestral combinations. They are so very singular, so entirely outside my experience, and, withal, so inexplicable, that I shall be glad if you will give them a place in your columns, in the hope that some of your readers—physiological or psychological—may be able to throw some light on them.

I should state that the lady is in perfect health, is very intelligent, an accomplished musician, and not at all, in this or any sense, the victim of a disordered imagination. She is quite conscious that these spectral images have only a subjective existence, though visually they have all the vividness of presentment which belongs to realities.

At the first blush it would seem as though these apparitions were in some way a response to stimuli sent through the auditory nerve; but this, if any, is an imperfect explanation, since it will be noticed that occasionally these visualised pictures *slightly precede the instrument they belong to*.

This fact suggests that a state of unconscious expectancy may be a factor in their reproduction, but it fails entirely, I think, to account for their initial appearance.

25, Woodland-road, Gipsy Hill, S.E. GEO. E. NEWTON.

The sound of an oboe brings before me a white pyramid or obelisk, running into a sharp point; the point becoming more acute if the note is acute, blunter if it is grave. The obelisk appears to be sharply defined and solid if the note is loud, and vague and vaporous if it is faint. All the notes of the 'cello, the high notes of the bassoon, trumpet, and trombone, and the low notes of the clarinet and viola make me see a flat undulating ribbon of strong white fibres.

The tone of the horn brings before me a succession of white circles of regularly graduated sizes, overlapping one another. These circles and the ribbon float past me horizontally, but the point of the obelisk seems to come at me.

In an orchestra, when the violins strike up, after the wind band has been prominent for a time, I see often, but not always, a shower of bright white dust or sand, very crisp and glittering. I am taking note of the recurrence of this impression, and think it is becoming more frequent, but it is not invariable like the others.

I have heard a great deal of orchestral music all my life, but I have only noticed these effects for four or five years. They gained gradually in frequency and clearness, and now the first three are invariable.

If I know the scoring of a piece well, the various effects *slightly precede* the instrument they belong to; only the objects are vague and faint till the sound begins.

Sometimes, if an oboe passage has an intense and yearning character, the white point comes so near me, and moves so rapidly, that I think it *must wound me*.

I am very anxious to make it clear that I am not trying to describe a mental state by symbols, but that I *actually see* the point, the fibres, and the circles. Generally they seem to float half-way between me and the orchestra.

If only one class of instruments is used, the effect does not extend beyond the opening bars: for instance, in a string quartette I only see the white sand for a moment at the beginning; if, however, wind and stringed instruments are combined, I see the various effects again and again in one piece.

Too many children come into life trailing after them clouds which are anything but clouds of glory.—OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

A MAN'S clothing becomes charged with his magnetism without any effort on his part that it may become so. In walking he uses up this motor power as surely as does the locomotive while running over the iron rails; and this expended magnetism settles down to the earth, forming the only means by which the dog is able to scent his master's footsteps, and so because his master's coat has been involuntarily charged with it, the dog is enabled to distinguish it from another's coat.—PROFESSOR CALDWELL.

OLD AGE.

BY MRS. A. J. PENNY.

The natural mind sinks down fast into the expressions of things, if it be not led inward to the ideas of thought. So far as the mind operates on the expressions of things from the outward memory, it overclouds the ideas of thought from the inward memory. The mind can have no spiritual prosperity, but as it is closer and closer in re-alliance with the supernatural—J. PIERREPONT GREAVES, *New Theosophic Revelations*, p. 160.

But for Madame de Steiger's kindly invitation, I could not venture to recur again to a theme so tempting to an old person; yet, as she has led inquiry towards a more practical object than theorising, there is excuse for a little further enlargement of thought upon seeming decay of mental powers, and real dejection of spirit under the growing burdens of age. They are heavy, and must increase. Trying, ideally, to minimise their weight, seems to me as fruitless as trying to persuade ourselves that death is painless.

The problem how to make old age happy would probably find the best and shortest answer in a summary of the virtues which are essential to happiness at every age—unselfishness, humility, and patience, all the beautiful retinue of love (in its highest sense); because if youth and middle age can be tolerably glad-hearted without these, old age cannot: its privations being often almost intolerable, and felt to be so by other people, as well as the main sufferer, when habits of *passive* virtue are deficient. When every outpost of life is assailed by time, unless central peace has been an habitual refuge, ageing years must be mournful, and torpor of mind a welcome soporific. At the same time, I am strongly convinced that any amount of *goodness* will not altogether compensate for previous neglect of intellectual culture, if I may use the word in Swedenborg's sense when he said, "*The intellectual in general is the visibility of the internal man*";* for without that, even love fixes its solicitude on such small affairs as cumber the *surface* of life, and is apt to increase its own trials by anxiety, and other people's by fuss. Seeing that a large amount of isolation is inevitable when bodily senses are impaired, the desideratum of old age is resource, *i.e.*, pursuit and pleasure in the inner life. For securing these Madame de Steiger gave in her letter in "LIGHT" a most excellent prescription; for such "an illumination of the spiritual faculties," sincere goodness of heart is indispensable; all unkindness or ill-will darkening the mind's eye and narrowing its perceptive range. I quite share her belief that "leaving the machine bereft of its highest portion" is not what should or would occur if the lower had been kept in due correspondence with higher spheres. Though now and then what, in *manifested* existence, appears loss of intellectual life, may result from organic disease doing gradually what a severe blow on the head can effect in one moment,—a lesion of nerves which cuts off communication between one part of the brain and another; but generally, I suppose, the loss is a result of the mind having been so long averted from its vivifying superior, that for all intuitional light it is out of focus. Let Swedenborg speak here, "Every man has an internal and an external, or is an internal or external man, in order that by man there may be a conjunction of Heaven with the world; for Heaven flows in through the internal man into the external and thence perceives what is in the world; and the external man which is in the world hence perceives what is in Heaven."†

But what *does* the internal man see through the majority of external men and women? Very little, I fear, that he can care about among all the self-ended trivialities of his dependent's mind; for all that *comes to pass* is so much its dominant concern that *perception* of what is in Heaven, or higher spheres—like the eyes of sightless fish in underground lakes—is quite closed up. Influx thus impeded, the ever new, illimitable knowledge and sweet affections of a higher world, can as little penetrate to the outer mind as waters from a spring can pass through a conduit which sparrows have stuffed up with their rubbishy nests. And when all the hope and life of these have gone, summer over and winter near, the choking litter remains. The mind bent on mundane things feels at last their worthlessness, but cannot find solace in any other: for "the nature of the interior gladness and beauty is not at all known by those who are only in the gladnesses of the love of the world, and in the delights of self-love. Those gladnesses and delights cause

* *Arcana Caelestia* 5114.

† *Ibid* 4963.

the above things to appear joyless and undelightful.* Whereas "every delight is of such a nature that it becomes of less account in proportion as it proceeds to the external, and happier in proportion as it is internal."† Who that is given to much thought, to metaphysical research, and above all to study in the writings of mystics and true Spiritualists of any school, will deny this? What inexhaustible treasures seem to open before us there, ever more as time goes on; and treasure that cannot be taken away however suddenly death may spring upon us; for though knowledge with its present limitations will vanish away, for minds used to thirst for truth, there must be exquisite supplies beyond. Contrast with this what must befall a poorly furnished mind, however serene the conscience: to quote again from one of "the men of my counsel," "penury of ideas conducts people to having no resource but in recitals. You are by nature an active being; when you live averted from principles and enlightening truths, you resort to depicting their results."‡ Ah, yes! our firesides and morning calls witness to that. Yet by right of nature, in orderly evolution, the closing up of external avenues to pleasure sets free keener perceptions of what is delightful to mind and spirit, as everyone recovering from illness, before the body can stand its usual amount of activity, probably knows; and in all ages it has been recognised that without some measure of asceticism no consciousness of Divine realities is possible. Now, if, instead of accepting Nature's gentle hint, and letting sensuous gratification pass away from us, that the inner life may have less of hindrance, we try by new diversions, new excitements, to stimulate what is tending to quiescence, we do our best to promote second childhood; and the old man or woman naturally reverts to prattle as the only power left to an un nourished mind; to animal enjoyments, and changes of idea as few—comparatively speaking—as the tunes of a musical box; set box or mind going, and the products of each will follow with wearying regularity of sequence—and the mind of a human being cannot be shut up, to escape those iterations, without injury both to the provoker and the provoked. Hence the great advantage, were it only for charitable ends, of having won in earlier years some realm for mental movement and delighting, which can occupy us when silence and remoteness of thought is either a necessity, or the most acceptable offering to society that we can make.

No one, I think, could have measured the trials, wants and privileges of old age more accurately than Madame Swetchine in her beautiful little essay upon it. I wish it was in the hands of every woman who begins to feel, as she complains, that the *chrysalis* is making people forget the butterfly—the *Psyche*, waiting in obscurity within—that they are regarded as those who are about to finish soon. But when, with all her fine spiritual delicacy, she has touched on the extinguished lights of that epoch, she sums up with consoling truth, "People talk of the decline of age; but if Heaven is our true centre, decline in our dual existence is simultaneous with ascent. Body and spirit are in almost constant opposition, and while nature fails it is not decay that hastens on, but freedom, glory, and the perfection of a soul always more radiant as the spiritual principle absorbs what is not spiritual." And in her *Nunc Dimittis* she claims release, pleading that at last her soul's "baggage is lightened, the pride that once inflated fallen, the ego has lost its substance, and the world withdrawn its burdensome favours."§ Surely a blissful state! But to the extreme verge of a suffering *bodily* life, she occupied herself assiduously with things *not seen*, and knew by long experience the truth of Joubert's axiom, "Happiness is to feel the soul good." [Translation greatly lessens its neatness—"Le bonheur est de sentir son âme bonne."]

P.S.—To students of Swedenborg I think this quotation—drawn from his vast mine of instruction, *Arcana Cœlestia*—may suggest a cause and a purpose in the occasional childishness of aged people, which the "general reader" is unlikely to accept. "In this manner correspondence is effected between the spiritual and the natural with man, or between his internal and his external: for truths are first procured; afterwards those truths are as it were exterminated; yet they are not exterminated but stored up, and in such case the inferior receives common illustration from the superior, and in that light truths are replaced in their order, whence all truths therein become images of their common or general principle and correspond

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, 5116. † *Ibid.*, 996; see also 994.

‡ L. C. DE ST. MARTIN'S *L'Homme de Desir*, p. 118.

§ MADAME SWETCHINE, *Sa Vie et ses Œuvres*. By Le Comte de Falloux. P. 207. *Ibid.* 222, Vol. II.

thereto."* Swedenborg was not referring to senile privation of truths previously grasped; but perhaps this process may be going on for the merciful object of rectifying distorted images of truth before the state begins when concentration is more difficult, because there will be no longer the dividing fence of *personal bodies* to neutralise spiritual influx. What influx? that of the *society* in spirit life of which each human being is an unconscious associate already.

THE BUDDHA RAYS AT BADULLA.

Colonel Olcott gives in the last number of the *Theosophist* the following account of a very inexplicable phenomenon of which no doubt exists as to its objective reality. It has been seen, we hear, and attested by a great number of witnesses. It is not an optical delusion. What is it?—

In our Supplement for August, 1887, appeared a letter from the High Priest Sumungula adverting, among other things, to the extraordinary fact that the luminous phenomenon known as the Buddha Rays (*Buddharasmi*) had occurred at Badulla on the full-moon day of that year—Buddha's birthday. The High Priest states in his letter that pupils of his own monastery had, in common with some thousand other spectators, seen the rays. I have just been able to corroborate this statement by the personal testimony of one of these pupils, and one of the most respected and trustworthy of the younger men in the monastery. At my request he has prepared the condensed statement hereunder printed. What gives additional value to the certificate is the fact that the young monk was thoroughly sceptical as to the possibility of the alleged recurrence of the luminous phenomenon on the Buddhist Christmas, though backed by the testimony of countless pilgrims who averred that they had personally seen it in former years. This incredulity led him to carefully examine the light he describes from each of the four sides of the dagoba. His letter is as follows:—

Having heard of the emanation of Buddha's Rays from this dagoba, I undertook a pilgrimage thereto, reaching Badulla on the 6th of May, 1887, about 7.30 a.m., at which hour the sun was shining brightly on the dagoba with nothing unusual to be seen. Soon after my arrival the assembled pilgrims, who numbered about 200, commenced the usual ceremony of marching thrice around the dagoba to the accompaniment of drums.

Being incredulous of the truth of these phenomena, and desiring to be in a position which could not possibly render me subject to any optical delusion, I moved around to the west side of the dagoba, standing in its shadow. At that moment I heard the cry of "Sadhu" from the pilgrims, and looking up, saw what looked like two or three small, bright stars rising slowly from the north side of the dagoba. These gradually increased in number, the most of them coming from the south side. There simultaneously appeared what resembled a rainbow in colour, which was distinctly visible during the whole time; not stretching across the top of the dagoba, but shaping itself to its contour and hovering over the emanations which certainly came from the body of the dagoba.

The phenomenon lasted about one and a half hours, the rainbow disappearing with the emanation from the dagoba.

(Signed) RAMBUPPOLA PANNABARA.

It is very hard to reconcile this emanation of light with any hypothesis of science. Though it occurred in full daylight and under the glare of a tropical sun, yet the total absence of condensed vapour in the atmosphere forbids our supposing the colours to have been due, like those of the rainbow, to a refraction of light. There is this further dissimilarity between it and the rainbow, that the chromatic spectrum which the priest saw in space at a distance of some ten feet above the dagoba was not formed in an arc, but followed the curves of the mound with its terminal square plinth and spike. Moreover, the observer saw the colours clearest from the west side—facing towards the sun, and he also saw them from the south side. Clearly, then, this could not have been an effect of luminous refraction, even had there been a misty vapour hanging about the spot, which there was not.

Still another point is noticeable—the radiant tints were visible during the space of two hours; and anyone who has seen the sunlight of the tropics will easily conceive of the vividness of a chromatic effect which could display itself in spite of the blaze of sunlight. From the private explanations of the young monk I learn that the effect of the phenomenon upon the feelings of the pilgrim multitude was most marked and moving. With one accord they prostrated themselves, uttered the Buddhist cry of "Sadhu," and recited the verses of their religious worship with great fervency. I wish I could feel sure that their moral natures had been so upheaved as to guarantee a radical improvement in their lives. H. S. O.

* *Arcana Cœlestia*, 5208.

DOUBLE PERSONALITY.

FROM THE *Scientific American*.

The subjoined extract from a scientific paper seems worthy of preservation. It bears also on some problems that hypnotism is bringing into prominence. Some of these are touched upon in "Notes by the Way," and will surely attract the attention of all students of hypnotism:—

The record books of the medical profession contain not a few reports of patients living double lives; cases in which there is a periodical loss of one phase of mental life and the assumption or resumption of another very different one. For example, an hysterical subject will have a fit, and on coming out of it will be found to have lost all memory of the past. The mental faculties remain unimpaired, but so far as knowledge goes the patient's mind is that of an infant. With more or less delay she will learn to talk, and to read and work, practically beginning life again at the beginning, and sometimes developing a character quite unlike her first one. The physical basis appears to be the same; but the personality is entirely different, with different temperament, different habits, different tastes, and soon.

Matters will continue after this fashion for an indefinite period; and then the patient will go into another fit, emerging just as she was originally. All the life she has lived since the first is suddenly wiped out. She can recall none of it; for the time her second life, and it may have lasted years, is annihilated, and the current of her original life flows on as serenely and naturally as if it had never been broken—until another fit sets her back to the end of her second life, which she takes up again in utter unconsciousness of a break in it. And so her existence alternates between two lives entirely distinct and independent of each other, save that the same body serves both.

Formerly such alterations of consciousness were explained by spiritual or demoniac possession. The body was supposed to be tenanted by two independent spirits; or the patient's soul was from time to time ousted by some other malignant or benevolent soul, as the tempter might indicate. In our more scientific and materialistic days, the spiritual hypothesis has few retainers; the phenomena in question being much more satisfactorily explainable by supposing that the patient's mental life has been carried on wholly or chiefly by one side of her double brain, and that when the action of that side is arrested by disease, the unused side takes up the intellectual function and continues until another paroxysm shifts the responsibility to the first used side. So the two lives alternate with the alternating functional activity of the two brains: the reason that such lives are always double and never triple or manifold lying in the fact that we have only two independent brain lobes and no more.

The latest case reported of this sort is exceedingly interesting and peculiar, in that there is a loss of continuity in the life only when the state recurs in which the patient's life began. The case is reported at length in the *Revue Scientifique*, by Professor Azam, of Bordeaux, where the patient lives. The patient is a married woman, now about thirty-four years old, and has been living a double life since she was fourteen years old. For brevity, we will call her first state of consciousness and its repetitions, A, and the second state of repetitions, B.

At first B came on at intervals of days, and lasted for a few hours only. Twice it was absent for three years at a time, from the age seventeen 1-2 to twenty 1-2, and again from twenty-four to twenty-seven. Latterly she has lived the life of B most of the time, A recurring at intervals of two or three months, and remaining but for a few hours. Formerly the transition occurred during some minutes of unconscious sleep following violent pain in the temples; now it is almost instantaneous. In A, the patient has always been quiescent and somewhat morose in disposition; in B, she has always been bright, gay, and affectionate. In A, she has no memory of events which happen in B; but, in B, she has a full recollection of her life in both states—a remarkable peculiarity in her case, as already observed. In B, her distress, on discovering that there have been blanks in her conscious experience, is extreme; but the practical inconvenience of such loss of memory, formerly great, has become less with the predominance of B. On rare occasions on passing out of B, the patient suffers a brief period of agitation and extreme terror, during which her knowledge is somewhat disordered; at other times there is no apparent derangement except such as commonly appears in hysterical patients.

In her passage from B to A (Professor Azam remarks), she

does not emerge from a dream. She emerges from nothing. The time elapsed may be an hour, or it may be months, it is all the same to her; an entire section of her conscious life has dropped out. "To compare her existence to a book from which some pages have been torn is not enough. An intelligent reader might fill the blank, but she can have absolutely no notion of anything that happened in her secondary state."

A world of curious problems and complications, social, theological, and others, are suggested by such a case as this. Fancy a person on trial for a crime committed in a previous state of which no recollection remains, with no one aware of the criminal's peculiarity; or a woman to find herself suddenly (to her) surrounded by a family of children, owning her as a mother, yet utterly unknown to her! There is a splendid chance for a sensational novelist. And we should like to hear a convention of clergymen discuss this proposition: Suppose a victim of double consciousness to be a saint in A, and a wretched sinner in B. Her earthly existence terminates in B. Will the two states of consciousness be united by the destruction of the conflicting organs of consciousness? Or will two souls remain, to go their diverse ways? Again, if there is one, and only one, soul to survive, will it be damned for the sins of B, or saved by the faith that illuminated A?

FAITH AND FACT.

There is no gleam of glory gone,
For those who read in Nature's Book;
No lack of triumph in their look
Who stand in her Eternal Dawn.

Friends of a failing Faith! while your
Lighthouses of eternal life
Hold tremulous lamps across the strife,
That die and darken hour by hour;

And higher climb the waves that drench,
And on the rocks the breakers roar;
While Light for you opes no new door;
And higher climb the waves that quench,—

While Heaven-scalers in the dust
Sit, with their hopes dead or disrowned;
Their splendid dreams all shivered round,
And broken every reed of trust,—

While timid souls that sail the sea
Of Time are fearful lest yon band
Of Cloud should not be solid Land,
To step on for Eternity,—

And faint hearts flutter 'twixt a nest
That is not sealed to wind and wet,
And one that is not ready yet,
With wandering wings, and find no rest.—

There is no gleam of glory gone
For those who read in Nature's Book;
No lack of triumph in their look,
Who live in her Eternal Dawn!

—GERALD MASSEY, in *My Lyrical Life*.

A MESSAGE.

When thy sad soul is blinded by the mist
That seems to ever drift before its sight;
When having driven, thou canst no more resist
The wind and wave of earth's tumultuous night;
When thy whole mind is sore cast down by fear,
Pause thou awhile and pray, "O God! draw near."
And straightway seek the soul thou lovest best,
And God will meet thee there and give thee rest.

And if the passing years have left thee lone,
Friendless, 'midst those who comprehend thee not;
Thy hopes destroyed, thine idols overthrown;
And if thy heart rebel at mortal lot,
Go forth at eventide and gaze on high—
Gaze till thou'rt lost in Heaven's bright harmony;
And thy reflective soul, withdrawn from strife,
Will silent promise thee immortal life.

Perchance earth's heaviest woes have smitten thee,
And dimmed the light of holy fires within;
Perchance thy weary eyes refuse to see
The golden path that leads thee from thy sin;
And up to Heaven ascends thy bitter cry:
"The earth is Godless! Life a mockery!"
For thee, O soul! the unseen angels pray
That death will swift reveal the hidden day.

—MARIE GIFFORD.

In a spiritual point of view the clergy are most real martyrs to their perilous calling.—HENRY JAMES.

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

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Light:

EDITED BY "M. A. (OXON.)"

SATURDAY, MARCH 29th, 1890.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to the Editor.

LIFE—SOUL—SPIRIT.

PART III.

THE SOUL DURING AND AFTER DEATH.

Death is another form of birth of the Soul on its way upward to reunion with God. There are two causes of death. Either the Divinity ceases gradually to radiate its influence on the Spirit or suddenly stops it: and so the Soul, and as a consequence the Body, is deprived of its vitality, and death ensues either gradually or suddenly. The action of dying usually lasts much longer than is supposed. The three degrees of being in man become united in the body at different intervals of time, and in an inverse order. The Spirit, located in the brain, does not join the material body till the age of puberty or thereabouts, and is the first to quit it, usually before death sets in. Man's personality can exist without the presence of the Divine principle. Just before death takes actual possession of the man, the Soul invigorates the body with a higher power, and enables the dying man to pierce space and see relations and friends who have gone before. The death agony is caused by the withdrawal of the Soul: then all the spiritual essences of the man withdraw into the heart, the home of the Soul, "like a dove seeking the shelter of its nest, safe from the bad spirits (Masikim) which throw themselves upon the corpse." The Talmud teaches that the Soul (Ruach) leaves the body finally with the last breath. The man, however, is not yet dead. The three principles of the Body are still alive within him, and leave only when decomposition sets in; and even then hover near the former home until the flesh undergoes corruption.

The disintegration of the inner man is even now not complete, the union of the several principles having been so intimate. The lower principle of the Body (Nepesch) descends even into the tomb: this the Kabbalah calls the Habal of Garmin, "the spirit or breath of the bones"; and this it is which is also called "the body of the resurrection" or "the luminous astral body," of which we hear in Lord Lytton's *Zanoni*. May this, we wonder, throw any light on the curious frequency with which some highly developed psychics are pursued by apparitions, messages, and the like from, or purporting to be from, some souls whose bodies lie in the graveyard to which the sensitives have gone near? It is a well established fact that some mediums cannot go near a burial place without attracting to themselves some influence from it.

After death is complete each constituent part of man gravitates to its own place—"each accompanied by beings

similar to itself which surround the bed of the dying waiting their departure."

Since we find law operative throughout the universe, the smallest element being the reproduction in miniature of the greatest, we are prepared to find that man, the Microcosm, is a reproduction of God, the Macrocosm. As He manifests through Nature, man manifests in his natural Body; and as his senses can discern only the outermost material principle of his body, so he can discern only the outermost or phenomenal manifestation of God in the material universe. In it, however, there are three grades corresponding to the three grades in man. Asiah is the world in which we live, and corresponds to Body. Jezirah is the correspondent to Ruach, the world of Soul. Briah is the highest grades of Spirit. All is enclosed in the enveloping circle which contains them. In each of these states the correspondent principle finds its home. The Habal of Garmin (the lowest principle) lies with the body in its last resting place: in the case of the good, in a reposeful sleep; in the case of the evil or worldly, wandering and restless, liable to evocation and producing disorderly and riotous manifestations. The Kabbalah would, doubtless, allege that violent physical manifestations which we loosely attribute to "spirits" have their origin here. The Soul finds its home in its world Jezirah, its corresponding state in spirituality. This is the formative world in which resides the true creative power in man. It is the world of causes. The Spirit lives in its own sphere, and from it animates and inspires the Soul, which again acts on the Body. So that, alike in state and in principle, the threefold influence, in itself tripartite, is throughout maintained. The Macrocosm is reproduced in the Microcosm.

Apparitions, whether of angels, of the departed, or of inferior beings, are caused by the presentation of the lowest principle—the Habal of Garmin—or by the Zelem (the aerial form in which the different principles of man exist) dressing itself temporarily in matter. This is what we call materialisation, and may be of all grades of solidity, from the tenuous shade, through which the natural eye can see objects behind it, up to the solid flesh and blood materialised form of the dark cabinet and circle-room.

The Kabbalah teaches that all worlds offer to the Soul as many conditions of existence as there are varieties of material life on earth. The more we infringe immutable laws the more will be the need for purification. Accordingly each world has for each one of the principles in man, its Paradise, its river of fire for purification, and its hell for the erring ones who choose darkness rather than light because their deeds and desires are evil.

This imperfect outline of the oldest Jewish transcendental philosophy is very suggestive of thought. There can be no hesitation in the mind of a thoughtful man in affirming that the rough and ready psychology of the Spiritualist needs revision. We are much more complex beings than our fathers imagined or we have yet understood. The beginning of life was not here, nor is its end. "That which drew from out the boundless deep will turn again home." It is not necessary to give an unqualified adhesion to any system of philosophy in order to derive from it satisfaction and such sustenance as it affords to us. This Kabbalistic philosophy has seemed to us to offer a field of study which ought not to be wholly passed by.

DR. WYLD'S address before the London Hypnotic Society on "Hypnotism and Mesmerism: What are they?" will appear in our next number, to be followed by his address to the London Spiritualist Alliance on "Matter through Matter."

BIBLE Talks in connection with the Christo-Theosophical Society are being held in the Drawing-room of St. Nicholas' Club, 81A, Queen Victoria-street, every Sunday afternoon, from three to four o'clock. The subject of study at present is the Mystical Interpretation of Scripture. Any persons interested and wishing to be present will be heartily welcomed.

**PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF SPIRITUALISM, WITH
SOME DEDUCTIONS THEREFROM.**

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE CHRISTO-THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,
AT THE ST. NICHOLAS CLUB, ON THURSDAY,
MARCH 20TH, 1890.

By "M.A. (OXON.)"

When I was favoured with an invitation to tell what I know of Spiritualism to those who assemble here I was, first of all, honoured by the request to set forth what is a dominant factor in my life, and then appalled by the task that I had undertaken. How should it be possible for me to condense into the space during which I could presume to occupy your attention the experience of eighteen years, or to select from it that most suited to your desires? For those who do not know, as I know, the rapid growth of experience in these matters, have no means of gauging the wealth of knowledge that is accumulated. I am no rash intruder into these matters. It is now more than eighteen years since I made acquaintance with Spiritualism. Since that time I have worked as hard as I knew how in its service. I have the honour to preside over a society—the London Spiritualist Alliance—which represents, and worthily represents, the best and most cultured phase of Spiritualism in this country. I edit a paper, "LIGHT," which is quoted all over the world as foremost among the representative organs of the best and purest Spiritualism. I have had a correspondence extending over many years with people in all parts of the world who have submitted to me their doubts and difficulties, and I have tried so far as in me lies to solve them. I cannot flatter myself that I have always succeeded, but the effort has been to me a liberal education. It has made me acquainted with the difficulties that present themselves to my co-investigators, and has led me to think of what otherwise might have escaped my notice. I thankfully acknowledge that the difficulties and perplexities of Spiritualism have been chiefly made known to me by my intercourse with other investigators. For I have had few myself, and on my own part. I was so fortunate as to come into relations with a being, wise, powerful, and good—and on those three qualities I lay stress—who presented to me what I believe to be truth in orderly and simple fashion. It seems to me to be of the last importance that those who meddle with this matter, who cross the border into an unknown land, should see to it that they have such a guide. Wise he must be, or how can he direct? Good, or how can he be trusted? Powerful, or how can he protect from the dangers that unquestionably beset the intruder?

If I have carried you so far, I will not further occupy your time in generalities, but will proceed to my subject. The difficulty is to know where to begin and where to end. For the daily experience of eighteen years, crowded as mine has been with that which most men would regard as miraculous, is not easily presented to a strange audience. I can only say that I shall tell you nothing that I cannot give chapter and verse for, and I shall willingly answer any questions that may be put to me. I hope I shall not be obscure. If I am I will try afterwards to elucidate what is dark, premising only that I have not the key to all these mysteries. I can only testify as I know.

There is Spiritualism and Spiritualism. The most evil day that ever fell on Spiritualism came when certain wide-awake creatures discovered that "there was money in it." It was found that money could be gathered from feather-headed people who were willing to pay for being cheated, and cheated they were accordingly. I have nothing to do with this phase of Spiritualism. I know very well that it exists. I am sure it will exist as long as human nature affords it a feeding ground. The existence of fraud in connection with Spiritualism is on a par with the base coinage that the smasher produces. He could not produce his sham if the reality had not previously existed.

That Spiritualism is infested by persons who find in it a happy hunting ground for their tricks is no surprise to me. I should expect it, and I say nothing about it till I meet it, when it gets a short shrift and a sudden death. What I am about to tell you is the experience of one who has not derived his knowledge from this source. I shall illustrate what I have to say from other sources, but what I shall tell you is mainly derived from my own personal experience without the intervention of a

paid medium. I do not for a moment desire to throw any discredit on what I may call commercial mediumship. From it we have derived much that we know, but it is not my topic to-day.

If you will bear in mind, then, that there is Spiritualism and Spiritualism, and that you can derive no fair acquaintance with the subject from the records of the police-courts or even from the writings of Dr. W. B. Carpenter, I will endeavour to unfold to you a plain tale.

What is Spiritualism? A difficult question to answer. A definition will clear the air. Long ago I ventured on some such as this. "Spiritualism shows us in action a force, conveniently called Psychic, governed by an Intelligence outside of a human body; that Intelligence almost always representing itself as that of a departed human being who had lived on this earth." I wrote in that sense many years ago. I have seen no reason to change my opinion since. Two or three cases have come under my knowledge when the Intelligence professed to be that of a being who had not lived here, and two or three thousand have consistently and persistently professed themselves to be human.

If I am asked to further define terms that I am compelled to use I can give only a tentative definition. A Medium or Psychic—a term that must be frequently met with—is difficult to define exactly. We can say that he is a mesmeric sensitive, probably controlled by unembodied intelligences as the hypnotised subject is by embodied will. He is sensitive, when fully developed, in an extreme degree. It is not my business now to point out to you how most of the fiascos of Spiritualism and the failures of well-meaning men to get for themselves evidence that comes readily to others, have resulted from neglecting to realise this fact. Not till we treat with the care that we should bestow on an exceptionally delicate instrument these exceptionally organised beings shall we make investigation progressive. Here I may quote some remarks made long since, which are, I still think, substantially true:—

"The medium is a mesmeric sensitive, and as such is amenable to every dominant influence brought to bear on him. He is the receptacle of the several positive influences of the circle. If there be present a positive mind filled with doubt, it reacts on the medium. If there be a scoffing, jeering spirit amongst those present, it cuts into him like a knife. If an over-clever person thinks he has detected, or suspected fraud, that suspicion bites into the medium and 'the iron enters into his soul'—precious *rusty* iron it is too! If vice be present, it reacts on him. If fraud suggests itself, he feels it. He is the 'wash-pot' into which the collective feelings and sentiments of the circle are collected. And more than this. He is the link between them and the spirits that their mental states attract. The communications are pretty sure to be the re-presentations of the mental state of the sitters: unless indeed a powerful controlling spirit is charged to protect and neutralise adverse influence. On the medium first of all devolves the effect of the conditions under which the sitting is held. If the minds be harmonious and the intentions pure, he is calm and passive and a fit vehicle for corresponding influences. If suspicion and evil tempers are predominant, he is influenced in corresponding ways. A mesmeric sensitive, he comes under the dominant influence, and too often re-presents the wishes and thoughts of those who surround him: or rather, becomes the unconscious vehicle for spirits who so act.

"When will investigators learn this simple truth? A medium is a mesmeric sensitive controlled by spirits unembodied. These spirits are, in the vast majority of cases, attracted by the circle; and in order to elevate and purify our communications we must exercise supervision over those whom we admit to our circle. A medium should be dealt with in the same way as an astronomer would deal with one of his most delicate instruments. He should be isolated from the rude contact of others, seeing that he absorbs their influence, and becomes charged with their active thoughts. He should be protected from anything that can upset the delicate equilibrium which can alone make him a serviceable vehicle for communications. He should even be guarded from mixing with other people, seeing that each human being is surrounded with his own atmosphere, and that the medium, by virtue of his sensitiveness, readily enters into the sphere of those with whom he comes in contact. He should be isolated; kept from the possibility of being dominated by any earthly influence; trained in habits of temperance, sobriety, and chastity; placed outside of the range of vulgar temptation, and kept 'unspotted from the world.'

"I think I hear the laugh that greets this statement. A medium is a charlatan, an impostor, who produces one's grand-

mother for five shillings, a noxious and 'elusive wild beast, to be crushed and trampled out! Yes. I am aware of it. *Hinc illæ lacrymæ.* It is for this reason that our circles are crowded with phenomena at best equivocal, too often apparently or really fraudulent. It is for this reason that we have such cause to blush for the puerilities and imbecilities, the frauds and tricks that are perpetually being brought to light. The most delicate of all conditions, the most obscure of all subjects, the most fugitive of all phenomena are dealt with on principles that may do for blasting rock or clearing virgin forests, but which defeat their object when applied to cases where precise knowledge and delicate care are the first requisites. The best results will always be obtained in harmonious family circles, where jealousy, mistrust, and the grosser passions find no place. It would seem as if these spiritual plagues take form and shape in some open circles: as if the mental obliquity of some of the sitters caused equivocal phenomena. This is a wide question. Before we can hope to obtain results at all commensurate with what is possible, we must learn somewhat of the nature of mediumship and of the conditions under which it may be profitably exercised."

If I am asked again how the phenomena which I record are produced I must profess my ignorance. I do not know how the simplest phenomena of Nature, so familiar to me, are produced. I have an empirical acquaintance with them and that is all. I do not know how the tulip grows from its bulb, or the rose from its root, or the orchid apparently out of nothing. I do not know equally how a rap is produced, how luminous bodies are created in the séance room, how in vacant space is built up before my eyes a body organised as my own, "with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature." I do not know: I cannot tell. But my theoretical ignorance must not be read into my evidence. There I am very clear indeed. I cannot explain all mysteries, but I can assuredly testify to facts within my knowledge. About their objective existence I have no doubt whatever, nor any as to the accuracy of my own observation and that of my other witnesses. The facts that I rely upon occurred in a circle of private friends, a scientific gentleman, who started on the inquiry as a Materialist, and ended by an unquestioning belief in the reality of what he witnessed in his own house during a period of more than five years; his wife, his two children, occasionally an intimate friend, and myself. The lady had a friend, who had been interested in Spiritualism by a gentleman who had known Dale Owen. She brought the matter to her notice, and so it came to me. Lord Adare's (now Lord Dunraven's) book of records of his séances with D.D. Home was first put into my hands. I could not read it with any patience. I was wholly without interest in its details. Next I was given Dale Owen's *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World*, and, though only a brief interval of six weeks had elapsed since I had contemptuously rejected the other volume, I found myself devouring this greedily. I had never had any active or dogmatic opposition to any unfamiliar subject whatever, but I confess I was passively devoid of interest in the subject of Spiritualism till I was thus brought into contact with it. What change had taken place in me during those weeks I cannot tell, but the fact remains that I found myself impelled to use all means in my power to inquire into this subject which had so little interested me hitherto. I procured all the books that I could lay hands on and devoured them, getting, I am bound to say, very little out of them. I went to a séance and got at once into relations with a departed friend of marked individuality, whose presence and words were unmistakable.*

The experience gained that evening had more effect on my mind than anything that had affected it before. It set me on a new track, and devoted me to a work which I have never since abandoned. It made a Spiritualist of me. I must not linger over the efforts that I made at the public séances of Herne and Williams to witness phenomena. I found no difficulty after three or four failures in finding plenty of material for thought. I pondered much on what the gift might be that we call mediumship. I soon had an opportunity of making a personal acquaintance with it. As I sat at the table my right arm was seized by some irresistible force and dashed violently up and down in a way that disabled my hand for some days. The object we found was to liberate the force by which Herne was levitated on to the table, and his chair placed so as to rest on the table from the mantelshelf near which he had been sitting.

* See *Spirit Identity*, Appendix V., p. 124 et sq.

One other phenomena of a very remarkable nature I may mention. After this séance was over my friend and I were leaving the room, which was on the first floor. Williams preceded me downstairs, then came my friend, and Herne was last. I turned on the stairs to say something, and saw in perfectly clear light a chair sailing along two or three feet above the floor, and coming towards us. Naturally this movement in mid air of a solid object excited my astonishment. It fell on the landing close to our feet, and I went back at once to look for wires or any appliances by which a trick might be accounted for. There were none: what I had seen was the result of the stored up force that our more or less abortive séance had not used.

Profoundly impressed by this unexpected addition to our séance, at which the action of my arm was sufficiently startling, we set to work to investigate for ourselves. My friends went to spend their summer holiday at the seaside, and I went on a visit to them. We sat regularly, and by degrees all the usual phenomena that are styled physical were evolved in our circle. Raps of every conceivable variety in tone and intensity, from a tiny tick up to a startling crash, as if a sledge hammer had been brought down on the table with a giant's force, tilts and movements of the table without the contact of our hands were common. I was able to move the table—a large one—by making passes over its upper surface, and so to raise and maintain it in a position which it could not have kept of itself. It frequently was raised off the floor to a height of two feet or more and remained suspended in the air, gently vibrating or oscillating. All this was without contact of our hands. We charged the table with our psychic force, and then removed ourselves by drawing back our chairs from any contact with it.

By degrees other phenomena developed themselves. We had a curious musical sound which was made in the air out of nothing, for there was no musical instrument in the room very often, and when there was it did not seem to be used. This sound took the place of the usual rap, and answered to our code of signals in the same way. It had a most remarkable power of betraying feeling as the intonations of the voice do. I have heard it display anger and excitement quite as effectively as the voice can.

We had also wonderful spirit-lights, huge, self-luminous floating masses that were like bottled moonlight, illuminating nothing near them, but having a pale luminosity which was very beautiful. They would sail up from under the table and float about the room near the ceiling and in its distant corners. They seemed to me to be a condensed and concentrated form of the floating masses of luminous vapour which I always observed in our séances when the room was darkened. Under the table I could see a self-luminous cloudy mass; above it, near the ceiling, now and again descending over the table, I could see a similar mass; and when audible or visible phenomena occurred I could see rays or points of light from this upper mass dart down to the table, so that before a rap was heard I was able to tell that it was coming. It is a very interesting and important question for us what this luminous matter is. Whatever it be, it is the *abulum* used by our invisible operators in what they do.

There came a time then when I found myself able to receive messages from my unseen friends, with whom I had become very well acquainted, by means of automatic writing. By that phrase I mean that my hand was controlled to write matter of which I had no knowledge, as my vocal organs had been controlled to speak that of which I had no knowledge, and as messages had been given to us through the table by raps conveying to us new and true information. My book *Spirit Teachings* gives specimens of these messages so written. I lay stress on one or two facts regarding the production of these writings.

- (1) They had, all of them, a very distinctly marked elevating tendency. There was not a frivolous or idle word among them. There was not in their whole course—I have some twenty-five books full of them—a single statement capable of verification that was not exact and accurate.
- (2) They were written, many of them, while my brain was occupied by reading a book and my attention was totally diverted from what my hand was writing. It was, indeed, my constant habit to take no notice of what was being written until the hand ceased to move. I then read what had been written and asked my question or stated my argument as I thought fit. Readers of my book will remember that in this way some very close arguments were maintained.

- (3) The varieties of handwriting are in themselves very curious. Just as each communicating intelligence selects his own rap and never varies from it, so that one can say at once, That is A or Z, so each of my communicants used his own handwriting, quite distinct from my own, and never varied from it. I could tell at once who was talking to me from a glimpse at the page before me.
- (4) In this way a large number of facts subsequently verified were conveyed to me. I am able to affirm very positively that some of these were new to me, and could not have been previously known to me. There was no question of unconscious cerebration or of latent knowledge.

This method of communication has never altogether ceased, though it has been less frequently used, as the opening of the inner faculties of the soul made it less necessary. Clairvoyance and clairaudience have somewhat superseded the written message.

And now as to my deductions. Here I am on speculative ground, and can give you only what these eighteen years have taught me, without any wish to force my conclusions upon any one. Like yourselves I am a learner, and am qualified to teach, and that in a very humble way, only by the accident of access to unusual sources of information. You will be familiar with the truth that Spiritualism brings to each of us what he makes out of it. It is a perplexing problem to many. To some it means only the action of some latent faculties of man's inner nature. The Society for Psychical Research seems to be drifting into the attitude of the Sadducee, believing neither in angel nor spirit, but only in a sub-conscious self. That is a pity, but can do no particular harm, for angels and spirits will still persist in spite of denial. Occultists of various shades import sub-human spirits, elementals, and elementaries into the question. I am not prepared to say that there are not spirits who are below the level of the lowest man. I do not know. Only I know that there are some whom I have gained knowledge of who are very much on the lowest plane of human nature, as there are some who infinitely transcend it. For myself, I think that the world of spirit that surrounds our earth is sufficiently recruited day by day from all sorts and conditions of men to account for any divergence of character and characteristic that we may observe in our invisible friends. With one accord—isolated cases excepted which only prove the rule—they profess themselves to be departed spirits of humanity. Sometimes they offer evidence of the fact which would be sufficient to convince a jury. There is within my own personal knowledge a body of evidence on this point which would suffice to prove it, if the matter were not so unfamiliar, to any reasonable man. The difficulty is that such knowledge hooks on to no previous knowledge which has been assimilated. If a chemist in his laboratory makes a new combination and discovers a new fact, it is the resultant of what is already known. It is new but not strange. With our facts the reverse is the case. Not only does science know nothing about them, but she does not want to know anything about them. She regards their discussion as a return to superstition. "It would be a condescension on my part (wrote Faraday) to pay any attention to them," i.e., the facts now proved and generally admitted. "I made up my mind (said Agassiz, member of the Investigation Committee of Harvard University) before coming here that nothing would come of it." (The scientific method this!) "I have settled the question (wrote Herbert Spencer) in my own mind on *a priori* grounds." (Scientific method again!) "Spirit is the last thing I will give in to," said Sir David Brewster. "Supposing the phenomena to be genuine they do not interest me," wrote Huxley. (Yes: the anatomy of a crayfish, but not the examination of evidence for the soul's survival. Protoplasm at one end, but not immortal life at the other!) I might extend my pillory, but it is not necessary. A change has come and is growing apace. One of these days I shall find myself, or someone more competent, addressing an audience at the Royal Institution on Spiritualism: and then the wise men will say, "Oh yes, it is curious how persistent truth is. Why, all this is as old as the hills. We have always believed it."

I have said that within my own knowledge the communicating Intelligence professes to be that of a departed human being. In my *Spirit Identity* is an often quoted case which I do not now cite. It is contained in Appendix III., p. 105 *et seq.*, and I refer you to it as a sample of evidence that makes strongly for my contention, that the Intelligence is that of a departed human being,

[The lecturer having here adduced some pieces of evidence for his contention, proceeded:—]

I must not pause to discuss what constitutes our identity after bodily death. I say only that my own experiences amply prove that death does not kill the Soul, unless I must postulate an elaborate and highly organised conspiracy to cheat and beguile me while teaching me all the time the loftiest and purest doctrines of ethics and religion. Some, I know, can assign everything to a Satan transformed into an angel of light. If he teach others what has been taught to me, I bid him God-speed. I prefer to tread on surer ground. I know very little of Satan or of angels of light. I know a good deal of my brethren who have preceded me into the Silent Land.

Ever since I penetrated to the core of this subject I have been deeply impressed with some serious considerations regarding it. One is that there is abundant proof of an organised attempt on the part of the world of spirit to impinge on this world of ours. I see in the methods employed a striking similarity to those used at other transition epochs, such, for instance, as the time of the birth and life of the Christ. This I have pointed out at length in my *Higher Aspects of Spiritualism*. With this plan, in one or other of its phases, the earnest student of Spiritualism is brought in contact as soon as he gets behind the mere surface phenomena. And another consideration that time presses more and more strongly on me is that there is an impulse and yearning in some people who are forced into relations with the unseen world which fit them to receive and develop the seed that, falling on more stony ground, would never bear fruit. I believe that receptivity on the part of the inquirer is quite as necessary to success as the psychical gifts of the medium. Yet one more consideration is that there are to be noticed certain epochs in the history of our race when old truths need restating, when the cry of the earnest seeker after truth ascends to the God Whose listening ear is attuned to catch the faintest cry, and when the answer comes in the form of a Gospel suited to an age that craves for it. Only in the light of some such explanation can the history of the world's progress be deciphered.

When I first became acquainted with this remarkable development of thought, which has made more progress in forty years than Christianity did in two centuries, I dreamed that it would add one more to the hundred and one sects which are standing answers to the noble prayer, "That they all may be one."

I was mistaken, as those are who forecast the ways that are not as man's ways. Spiritualism is no new sect. It has proceeded by a process of permeation, and has rendered unique service to the cause of religion by adding to faith knowledge. There is nothing in the broad truths which we are taught that is incompatible with what the Church requires us to believe. Indeed, there is nothing in what I have learnt that conflicts with the simple teaching of the Christ, so far as it has been preserved to us. I will not say so much as regards the teaching of some Christian bodies. We hear little of election and eternal punishment, not much of Heaven and still less of hell; but we are told with a blessed iteration that man is the final product of the acts and habits of his daily life, that he is occupied in graving a character for which he is responsible, which will be the record of what he has done with his life here, and which will determine his place hereafter. For we shall each of us go to his own place, and we cannot possibly go anywhere else.

It concerns us much to know somewhat of this life in the land beyond. We cannot know it in detail until we put off the burden of the flesh, and learn of it by experience. There is on this earth no language in which its glories may be expressed. We learn of it only by analogy, we see it only as in a glass darkly. But it is something to know that man is the arbiter of his own destiny: that he will live there as he is living here: that by his daily habits he is working out his own salvation, or preparing for himself misery and woe. It is something to know that nothing that we do is wasted or lost: that no loved one drops out of earthly gaze to pass into the void: that all, whether they can or cannot reach us here, will reach us when we come home. It is something to know that the whole fabric of religion, so far as it affects man, receives its sanction and stimulus from the doctrines of the higher Spiritualism with which so many of us have made acquaintance. And in days when it is the fashion to bring up every time-honoured truth for proof anew, when man has largely lost his hold on the ancient faith, when religion, as a binding power, is losing so much of its vitalising influence,

it is something to feel that by the mercy of that God, Who never fails to respond to the prayer of His creatures, we are being brought face to face with the reality of our spiritual existence by experimental evidence adapted to our understanding.

It is not to be denied that in a scientific age a creed that shall commend itself to the thinking men of the day, demonstrated in its foundations by the scientific method, logically coherent and free from dogmatic encumbrance, will appeal with tremendous force to those who yearn for an union between Science and Religion. The faith that I have learned satisfies these conditions. I see in it no contradiction to that which I know of the teaching of the Christ. I see no reason why the old faith should be assailed. I am no iconoclast. As to the doubt of the age, I did not create it, and would not encourage it. As to the new faith, I would have every man consider it for himself and ponder well what it means. If to him the old is better, I would have him cleave to it. Many there will be who will cling to the faith of childhood as they have learned its lessons. Why should they be disturbed? In the ears of others will be ringing the cry, "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." Why should they be held back? And if there be, as there always will be, halters between two opinions—timid souls who peer into a strange land and fear to penetrate its unknown paths, why should they be hurried?

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

That there is much to be done to elevate the tone of what the world in general knows as Spiritualism no one is more profoundly aware than myself. We must realise that our aspirations and desires to a large extent regulate the character of the communications that we receive: not always, for there are mysteries here that still perplex us. But, if we put aside the phenomenal aspects of the matter, and do not complicate our conditions by controversy: if we shut the door and stand in silent reverence and awe before the veil that shrouds the world of spirit from our gaze, we may remember with confidence that in proportion to the purity of our faith and the loftiness of our aspiration will most probably be the character of that unseen visitor from the Silent Land who will lift the veil and speak to us from out its silences.

MRS. RICHMOND ON SPIRITUALISM.

Spiritualism is not afraid to have God in the Constitution. Neither is it afraid to have God left out of the Constitution; for the God of Spiritualism is not a jealous God, is not an angry God, is not a revengeful God, and can inhabit the Constitution of the United States without the name being there. Spiritualists are not afraid of religion as a rule; neither are they afraid to not have the name mentioned for fear people will not think they are religious. It is not necessary for true piety to be labelled. True religion, like virtue, expresses itself, and they are perfectly willing that God's works shall declare His name; traced in burning letters upon the starry skies, visible in the movements of the Heavenly bodies; swaying in the winds and waves, and moving worlds; and they are perfectly willing that the human life and the human spirit shall testify of God. If we speak the name of God clothed in any mystic syllables, or language, or word, it is our privilege; but we do not even advise you to do so; you must speak as you feel, as you think! It would be blasphemy to rise or bend in prayer if God is not upon your lips from within.

Spiritualism needs no altars with mystic symbols and signs inscribed there, for its altars are the hearts of men and women, its shrine is humanity, its temple is the universe of love and truth, it declares God's name in the loving works of human hands. Oh, how ashamed the great world must be that not only uses the all hallowed name of God in vain, with all the wrongs and ravages of humanity perpetrated in that name, but breathes the sacred name of Christ beneath battlemented towers, and sends forth its armed myrmidons of powers to conquer the world with bayonets, and still breathing the name of Christ. Let us have no name at all, but let us breathe that spirit which will weave its own name into the hearts and lives of humanity. Let us single out this fair lily land of the west, this bright and beautiful future republic of the world, as the one nation, at least, that has grown to the knowledge of serving God without blasphemously placing His name in the laws when the nation did not serve Him. When we grow to love God, as we may, the land will be full of beauty and the world will be full of peace. When we grow to serve God, as we may, poverty, and want, and sin, and shame, and human oppression will depart; then far above these petty disputes of bigots, far above the terrors and fears of men, the names of those noble patriots will stand who, loving humanity, served God in spirit and set the example for the nation to follow.—*The Weekly Discourse.*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

John Stuart Mill and Christianity.

SIR,—I have read the interesting letter of Mr. George Harpur, headed "John Stuart Mill and Christianity," which, I think, ought to have been called "John Stuart Mill and Atheism"; for, undoubtedly Mill's teaching tends to Atheism. His facts cannot be doubted; we all know them to be as he states them. Mill presents us with this dilemma, either God designedly causes these calamities, or He does not and cannot prevent them. In the first case He is devoid of love, justice, and mercy; therefore is no God. In the second He is limited in power and is equally no God. Take which form you please, the result is the same. Mr. Harpur suggests a third theory, and he is not the first by many who has suggested it, namely that pain and misery better our lives. But how can the lives of those millions be bettered who are killed outright? Ah, say they, but the lives of those who are left to mourn their loss will be bettered. Will they? I wonder if a man was ever made better by his mother or father being murdered? At any rate his mother or father would not. I have heard it said that all these calamities that we suffer from are blessings in disguise. Are they? Then what are these people, the sanitarians, thinking of? They are trying to deprive us of the blessings of cholera, typhus, typhoid, and diphtheria; the sinful reprobates!

This theory is a straw that those who are struggling in this whirlpool of contradictions are trying to catch at, but they do not answer Mill. His teaching undoubtedly leads to Atheism.

J. BAYNES THOMPSON.

SIR,—Will you allow me space to thank your correspondent George Harpur for the beautiful way in which he has "justified the ways of God" in his letter to you published in your last number? I fancy the same thought must have been passing through the mind of your Vice-President when delivering the address reported by you, in which he spoke of "the agony of the effort, and the blessedness of the issue." It seems to me that the "power of suffering to draw the sufferer upwards" solves one of the hardest problems of life, viz., the reconciling the belief in a God of infinite love with all the sorrow and suffering we see around us. I believe that this difficulty has proved a stumbling-block to many, as it has to myself in days gone by, and although, thank God, I have thought myself out of it, I gladly welcome Mr. Harpur's letter, and thank him for giving utterance to the thoughts contained therein. His suggestion that the poor "dumb, driven cattle" shall not lose their reward is full of consolation.

T. L. HENLY.

Spirit Music.

SIR,—I had, a few weeks ago, what has seemed to me a singular psychical experience. For some time I had been haunted, everywhere about the house, by a booming, muffled sound; when this sound had gone on some time, it suddenly changed into music, vocal and instrumental; nothing very grand, but some of it very sweet. Some of it rather common, played, I might fancy, by a Salvationist in the next life, just one step above us.

The concerted music was, as a rule, just above the roof of my workroom. As the house was formerly a school house, the best room, and largest (running up to the roof), was the school-room, and is thus well fitted for my painting work. Owing to the fact of there being no ceiling, I speak of the little concert being held "on the roof," or just above it. The concert consisted of playing on the cornet and piano-organ (an instrument that seemed a combination of the two), and singing by human voices. The music was very simple, and the airs first sung were two I play and like much, "Home, Sweet Home" and "God Save the Queen," both played a great number of times. Others came afterwards, and all were gone over again and again.

As the time went on, the voices—the best part of the concert—were added to it, and sang with deeper feeling. Over and over again, till I wearied to hear them; on they went, till the work set for them to do by the Master was done; then they went off westward, and I heard no more.

Until their work was done, however, they seemed to know no fatigue, and I should think the lungs of that cornet-player must be made of steel, inasmuch as he never stopped, only changed his tune. He was most sincere, I am sure, and on one occasion took himself and cornet out into the adjacent field, and played so loudly I really thought I must be mistaken, and that he and his cornet were of this earth. But when night came, and with

it the best manifestations, my cornet-player came too and joined the others.

One night, as I sat listening, I thought and said, "Now if they would sing, 'Oft in the Stilly Night,' a favourite old song of mine, I should have more faith in them"; no sooner said than done; sweetly, though rather mechanically, a young man's voice sang it; other voices, those of women, took it up, and all sang it in parts. I turned to the piano and played it, to this they replied by playing and singing it again, and afterwards they sang unasked, "Auld Lang Syne," and as "Oft in the Stilly Night" was a favourite song of one of four sisters (very frequent companions of mine), perhaps they were the singers of both the songs, singing one of them it may be to remind me they had not forgotten the days "lang syne." Then they sang "He will receive you," a Dissenter's hymn, with a very pretty air; then one I like much "Abide with me, fast falls the eventide." In both these cases I heard the words very plainly. "Abide with Me" dropped soft as snow flakes from the roof into the air within a few feet of me. Then others came, a different set: they played something that reminded me of Beethoven, then others, excellent players, one on a cornet of beautiful tone, accompanied by a piano (or what was like that instrument), but of such a sweet and silvery tone as earthly instruments do not possess.

The music of this last so haunted me that I tried to pick it out on my own piano, and, to my surprise, was warmly encouraged by spirit-workers. One thing I learn from all this is, that the Kingdom of the Lord is, as I think Swedenborg calls it, a "Kingdom of uses," and we all, not only have our work given to us, but are expected to do it.

PENCIL.

"Exploration of Lives."

SIR,—Mr. Thomas Grant will find a good deal that bears upon the exploration and judgment of spirits in Vol. IV. of Swedenborg's *Spiritual Diary*. Its excellent index will guide him to it under the head of "Vastations" and "Last Judgment." In Vol. III. of the *Spiritual Diary*, at 4,363, there is indirect reference to a sort of public investigation of character in the spirit world; and at 3,462 "the explorers" are mentioned as officials in that process. Similar admissions occur, probably, in other writings of his; these and this one in *Arcana Coelestia*, 7,273, are only what I can at once recall. "The damnation of such as are in evils when they come into the other life is not effected in a moment, but after they have been visited—that is, examined. Examinations are for the purpose that they themselves may perceive that they cannot but be damned, because they have not lived differently, and that spirits and angels may know that they have been of such a character." . . . "By degrees, as the evil are explored according to orders, so they are also judged and damned." (Let the word be taken in its literal sense, doomed to loss!)

May I take this opportunity of assuring your correspondent, "G. R. S.," that all the questions he propounded in "LIGHT" for March 1st are fully answered by Swedenborg, with the exception of the third, relating to spirits' sense of the size and shape of things.

In his *Heaven and Hell*, his *Spiritual Diary*, and the sections in italics at the end of every chapter of the *Arcana Coelestia*, information of deepest interest, which Spiritualists have been feeling for and inquiring about for the last thirty years, has been buried for more than a century. The twentieth part of it, transmitted by a contemporary medium, would have made a sensation. But what two generations have undervalued, and solemn, confident ignorance denounced, is apt to remain a hidden treasure; sloth and indifference seal it up. A. J. PENNY.

Inspirational Writing.

SIR,—For some twelve months past I have been sitting for inspirational writing, my spirit friends assuring me that such was one of my gifts, but have never yet written anything beyond or outside my own normal capability. Speaking at a séance on the matter, I was told by a control that it was not my own writing, but that spirits seeing my capacity "filled me up."

Now I would like to ask, does not my own spirit go for anything? Am I only an automaton, acted upon by any spirit who takes the trouble to find out the vacuum in my composition that requires "filling up"?

I have been led to understand that the spirit forms its own physical body; and surely if a spirit is capable of framing an intelligent organism, it proves that spirit is competent to con-

trol it, and would certainly not require the assistance of others to "fill it up."

If not intruding too much upon your valuable space, I should be glad of a reply from any friends who think I have made myself sufficiently explicit. O. E. K.

Evolution of Soul and Body.

SIR,—Your number for March 8th is pregnant with deep subjects for contemplation, the results of unquestionable knowledge (though not of knowledge unquestioned) such as we must look for in vain outside the boundary of Spiritualism.

"1st M.B. (Lond.)," shows us, in his late address at the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, that the Secularist who, as far as he goes, is on the right track in the study of evolution, the origin of species, the descent of man, the survival of the fittest, &c., has but grasped the husk of truth, so long as he confines himself to material objects; and that it is not until he recognises the spirit and soul as well as the body that he can lay hold of the kernel. This done, evolution is fruitful beyond expression in ascertaining and explaining the problems of nature and man's mind; for, as "1st M.B." says, "he finds eternal progress the result of evolution, not of matter, but of soul and spirit."

In a correspondence with an agent of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the great naturalist, Professor Owen, lately averred his unshaken belief that no Darwinism could bridge the missing link between the monkey and the man. No, certainly not! I raise my voice with the aged and experienced Professor, so long as we go on a phenomenal basis only; but when we come to soul evolution it may well be all the other way. Why should not the soul of an anthropoid ape, *quadrumanal* though he be, which difference from ourselves is the grand unbridgeable missing material link; why should not its soul (for "beasts have souls," as old Cruden tells us) incarnate in the body of a low savage, and thereby attain personality? Having done so, I agree with Kardec in thinking that a soul, having once become humanised by the laws of progress, can never return permanently to the body of a beast; though the soul of an evil man may appear to the clairvoyant, or even phenomenally for a short time, in the form of an animal. Still more easy is it to believe that the souls of modern aborigines can re-incarnate through families of the Caucasian or other higher races. I believe it is that which they are doing from all over the American and the Australian Continents; and that that partly accounts for the rapid depletion of aborigines, so many of whom die from our diseases, more fatal to them than even our fire-water; and still more than from any other cause do they diminish, as we read, through their women becoming barren, as well as from the fatality among their few children that are born, not only in America, but in Australia; while at Tasmania there is not a single native left, though the custom of shooting them down has long ceased. Why is all this? Can any better reason be given than that their souls may re-incarnate among higher and more prolific races, which, with all their faults, are not deficient in brains, and are born with an aptitude of providing for themselves where a savage would starve?

This depletion of primitive races, brought about, as I believe, in order that their souls may rise in intellect by re-incarnation into higher races, in the order of things, and as some compensation for being ousted from their own hunting grounds, is, in my opinion, one of the plainest symptoms of especial Providence guiding the actions of mankind that can well be conceived.

It is several years now since a letter appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*, written, I believe, by your intelligent correspondent, Captain Pfoundes. I noted it well. He told us of an Australian black man who wished that his white taskmaster should die, and be born again a bullock, and that he should have the driving of him. What if the tables should be turned, without precisely his antagonist becoming a bullock? There is subject of thought there for both sides. And there is subject of thought for ourselves. Where did this poor savage get his idea of Re-incarnation? Not likely from the white man. Was it intuition or a part of the religion of his race?

It is a bold thing for a humble man to say; but, to my mind evolution is *puerile* without the alternations of soul life and earth life. Materialists of note have been lately assuming, with all gravity, that because deep in the lower strata of the earth they have found the bones of an ichneumon, and, in higher strata, above these strata, they have found animals of higher development, until, at length, and in higher strata still above the ichneumon, the bones of a horse or quagga have been found

—they have come, therefore, to the conclusion that this ichneumon has, at length, through the course of many ages, materially evolved into a horse. And they have been seriously discussing, in all honesty of purpose, how wonderful it is that the five little toes of the primitive quadruped should have developed into a large hoof. And the newspapers have also taken up the wondrous tale in the same spiritless spirit. There is one fact in nature that helps to war against the above theory of material evolution only, which has not been, I think, sufficiently considered, viz., that the progeny of two animals, though they may be of the same order and genus, yet, if not of the same species, become barren mules, which is another obstruction to material evolution only.

The above thoughts, combined with our present knowledge, lead me further to remark that, in the *first* instance, on ethereal souls, both of men and animals, first becoming "living souls," by materialisation, there must have been (*unlike* the after materialisations of the Bible, and, for instance, what is called heathen mythology among the Greeks and Egyptians, as well as by our own experience) the same *permanence* of materialisation that we *now* find is effected only at the conception and birth of men and animals in the present day.

There is no space to comment here on the subject of "Astral Parturition," so ably put by Mr. Mitchiner, and so ably commented upon in "Notes by the Way," also in your number for March 8th. But I will merely say I am not surprised that the same painful labour and its result, in the case of Adam, should be spoken of as the loss of a rib. T. W.

SOCIETY WORK.

[Correspondents who send us notices of the work of the Societies with which they are associated will oblige by writing as distinctly as possible and by appending their signatures to their communications. Inattention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions.]

MARYLEBONE LYCEUM, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, W.—The Lyceum session was held last Sunday as usual, when there was a small attendance, owing to the unsettled weather. Children's tea party on Good Friday, tea at 4 p.m.; a few tickets for visitors at ninepence each. We shall be glad of any assistance.—C. WHITE.

WINCHESTER HALL.—PECKHAM SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—On Sunday morning Mr. Leach gave a very instructive discourse on "The Infant Soul: What Becomes of It?" followed by phrenological delineations of several of the children present, which were greatly appreciated by the parents. In the evening Mr. Butcher gave an address on "Spiritualism: Its Counsels and Consolations." Notwithstanding the bad weather we had a very large audience. On Sunday next our secretary, Mr. Veitch, will be with us at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. Subjects, "Psychometry" and "Clairvoyance."—P. AUDY.

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, MARYLEBONE-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Burns, in his address, gave expression to some beautiful humanitarian thoughts, which were well received. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Spiritual Communion; at 7 p.m., an address and illustrations of Psychometry, by Mr. Towns. Monday, at 8 p.m., social gathering. Tuesday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Busy Bees, "Word and Work." Wednesday, at 8 p.m., séance. Friday, 2.30 p.m. to 9 p.m., Saturday, 11 p.m. to 5 p.m., for conversation and sale of literature (except 28th, 29th). Floral service as announced last week.—J. M. DALE.

KING'S CROSS SOCIETY, 253, PENTONVILLE-ROAD (ENTRANCE KING'S CROSS-ROAD).—Last Sunday morning Mr. U. W. Goddard read a paper upon "Internal Harmony," being an exposition of the conditions which were, in the writer's opinion, necessary to secure intercourse with the brighter beings of the spirit world. The usual discussion followed. In the evening Mr. McKenzie succeeded in interesting the audience by an able discourse upon "The Higher Aspects of Spiritualism." Next Sunday, at 10.45 a.m. and 6.45 p.m., Mr. J. Burns, Editor of the *Medium*, will be our speaker, and on April 6th Mr. J. Veitch is expected.—S. T. RODGER, Hon. Sec., 107, Caledonian-road, N.

GLASGOW.—On Sunday morning last Mr. Robertson read extracts from Edward N. Denny's account of his birth into spirit life, and commented freely on the same. Denny says that after coming back to earth and being present at a séance, he returned home with his guides and they went beyond our solar system and other systems!! When may we hope to obtain reliable data in regard to the locality of the homes of spirit men who have gone from this earth? In the evening Mr. Griffin lectured on what "The Heavens are telling" of glad new knowledge. The audience was much better than of late, and two psychometric descriptions of strangers were entirely satisfactory.—R. H.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, CHEPSTOW HALL, 1, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—To commemorate the forty-second

anniversary of the advent of Modern Spiritualism we intend holding a special service on Sunday evening, April 6th, at 6.30 p.m., when suitable readings and addresses will be given, and a social gathering and soirée on Friday, April 4th, at 7 p.m.; tickets 6d. each, to be obtained from the secretary. On Sunday last Mrs. Spring was with us at the morning meeting, and in the evening Mr. J. Dale addressed the friends assembled. Next Sunday, Mr. W. McKenzie on Phrenology, at 11.15 a.m., and Mrs. Treadwell at 6.30 p.m. After the service we hope to see a good number of members present to receive the report of the last quarter's work.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

KENSINGTON AND NOTTING HILL SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.—On Sunday morning last, at the Zephyr Hall, 9, Bedford-gardens, Silver-street, Notting Hill Gate, Mr. Cannon gave some interesting remarks on "Spirit Influence." In the evening Mr. F. Dever Summers lectured on "Death." There was a good attendance at our Lyceum session last Sunday afternoon, and a number of very interesting recitations were given. Great improvement is being made, and we hope to be encouraged by the attendance of visitors, who will certainly not regret spending an afternoon at one of our sessions. Next Sunday—11 a.m., Mr. Pursey on "Philosophy and Theosophy"; 3 p.m., Lyceum; evening, at 7 p.m., Mr. W. E. Walker. Speakers for April: 6th, at 11 a.m., Mr. Pursey; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., special open meeting for investigators. 13th, at 11 a.m., service; 3 p.m., Lyceum; 7 p.m., Mr. McKenzie, "Phrenology." 20th, at 11 a.m., service; 3 p.m., Lyceum; 7 p.m., Mr. T. Everitt. 27th, at 11 a.m., service; 3 p.m., Lyceum; 7 p.m., Miss Marsh, "Clairvoyance." A concert and Cinderella dance will take place on Thursday evening, April 10th next. The programme will include some talented artists, and as a limited number of tickets will be issued early application will be necessary. Concert and dance, 1s.; dance only, 9d., to be had on application to PERCY SMYTH, Hon. Sec., 68, Cornwall-road, Bayswater.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

[Any acknowledgment of books received in this column neither precludes nor promises further notice.]

Lambert's Monthly.

Ida. (1 vol.) MABEL COLLINS.

The Newsagent and Advertisers' Record.

Obeah: Witchcraft in the West Indies. (Sampson Low.)

Advance sheet of *Banner of Light* received with thanks.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

It will ensure despatch if all matter offered for publication is addressed to the Editor of "LIGHT," 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to any other name or address. Communications for the Manager should be sent separately.

It seems desirable to make clear that any facts previously published in transactions of any Society or in any journal cannot be printed as original matter in "LIGHT," and should not be sent to us except for our private information. All records sent, moreover, must be accredited by the name and address of the sender, and will gain in value by the attestation of witnesses.

The Editor begs respectfully to intimate that he cannot undertake to return rejected MSS. If accompanied by stamps to pay postage in case of its being deemed unsuitable for publication, he will use reasonable care in reposting any MS.

He also begs respectfully to intimate that he cannot undertake to prepare for the press communications that are not suitably written. He begs his correspondents to see that all articles and letters forwarded are written on one side of the paper, are ready for the printer, and are of moderate length. Those over a column in length are in danger of being crowded out.

J. E. J. AND J. R.—Declined with thanks.

W. J. P.—Read Crookes, De Morgan, Dale Owen, and "M. A. (Oxon.'s)" books, and we will further advise. To be had at our Library.

O. A.—We cannot help you: but very good results are often got by simply sitting in a family circle. Try. If any difficulty arises we will advise.

X.—Perplexities must beset the inquirer, and increasingly as he pursues his inquiry. We do not see how we can throw much light on your questions. Patient study is the course to follow.

EARNEST INQUIRER.—Thank you. The interruption sometimes caused by disorderly spirits is often remedied by serious and solemn feelings in the sitters. At times, however, they are not to be managed: then it is wise to stop.

W. S.—We should say that a steady perusal of "LIGHT" would meet your case. We are not able to recommend you to any private circle. If you really wish for personal experience you must seek it for yourself, venturing what that involves. There is no royal road.

THE angels can see in a man's hand all the thoughts and intentions of his mind. The reason of this is because the hands are the ultimates of man, wherein the deliberations and conclusions of his mind terminate, and these constitute what is simultaneous: therefore also in the Word mention is made of a thing being inscribed on the hands. . . . Whatever a man examines intellectually appears to the angels as if inscribed on his hands.—SWEDENBORG.