

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

As we were going to press last week we heard with great sorrow that Mrs. Penny was dead. Time only allowed of four or five lines of intimation to the readers of "LIGHT." Though not known to her personally, the present Editor of this journal has had much correspondence with Mrs. Penny by letter, a correspondence which was interrupted, and at last stopped, by her continued illness. In all the communications so received there was always a breath of that pure spiritual life which permeated, and indeed was, her very existence here. Ill health alone prevented her from continuing those deeply spiritual and philosophical papers which we so gladly offered from time to time to our readers. A good friend and a noble woman has passed on.

The "New Review" for December contains a very striking paper on the "Mystery of Ancient Egypt." The writer is Mr. W. Marsham Adams, and he shows, or perhaps we should say, attempts to show, that the Great Pyramid is the representation in stone of the ancient Egyptian Ritual of the Dead. Mr. Marsham Adams says that the Ritual of Ancient Egypt is full of "allusions which become vocal only when applied to the Grand Pyramid. Such are the festivals of the 'Northern Passage,' of the 'Southern Passage,' that of the 'Hidden Lintel,'" and so on. The paper points out that all these allusions have their counterparts in the structure of the Great Pyramid. Moreover, Mr. Marsham Adams states that the allusions are astronomical as to their basis, and maintains that the Egyptians took a determinate horizon for their fundamental conceptions, the 'horizon of the point in the sky which is occupied by the sun at the vernal equinox.'"

Such a horizon must have been very largely imaginary, for it must have "dipped" considerably to the north below any horizon ever known in Egypt; nevertheless Mr. Marsham Adams's paper seems to justify the assumption that such a horizon was really imagined and used by the Ancient Egyptians. And more than this, the writer shows that this horizon and its uses are symbolised, and through this symbolism the passage of the soul after death is in its turn symbolised, in the mighty masonry of the Great Pyramid. If Mr. Adams is right the story in stone of the Great Pyramid, as a counterpart of the Book of the Dead, and of the Ritual of Old Egypt, is one of the most wonderful stories ever told. And once more, if he is right, what a spiritual civilisation must that have been that flourished on the banks of the Lower Nile. We quote the eloquent paragraph with which Mr. Marsham Adams concludes his article:—

Thus ends the strange and solemn dirge of ancient Egypt, preserving to the last its correspondence with that primeval

building when the granite Trinity, concealed within its height, keeps watch over the "Abode of Flame" far in the subterranean depth below. Once perceived, the intimate connection between the secret doctrine of Egypt's most venerated books and the secret significance of Egypt's most venerable monument seems impossible to sever. The path of illumination which is conveyed by description in the Ritual is described masonically in the Grand Pyramid; and each form illustrates and interpenetrates the other. As we peruse the dark utterances and recognise the mystic allusions of the Book, we seem to stand amid the profound darkness enwrapping the whole interior of the building. All around are assembled the spirits and the Powers that make the mystery of the unseen world; the "Secret Faces at the Gate," the "gods of the Horizon and of the Orbit." And dimly before our eyes, age after age, the sacred procession of the Egyptian dead moves silently along, as they pass through the "Gate of the Hill" to the tribunal of Osiris. In vain do we attempt to trace their footsteps till we enter with them into the Hidden Places, and penetrate the secret of the House of Light. But no sooner do we approach the passages and tread the chambers of the mysterious Pyramid than the teaching of the Sacred Books seems lit up as with a tongue of flame. The luminous veil itself melts slowly away, disclosing the Path of Illumination and the splendours of the Orbit; the celestial Powers and Intelligences shine forth from beneath their enshrouding symbols; the spirits of the Just grow lustrous with the rays that proceed from the Tribunal. And a glory which is not of earth reveals in its divine unity the full mystery of the Hidden Places, the House of New Birth, the Well of Life, the Lintel of Justice, the Hall of Truth, the Orbit of Illumination, the Throne of Judgment, and the Orient Chamber of the Open Tomb.

We have received a letter from Signor Sebastian Fenzi, of Leghorn, in which a very important question is treated. The letter was caused by some remarks in "LIGHT" on the outrage in the Palais Bourbon. In that article the presence of evil in these events was prominently noticed. Our correspondent takes up the ground that evil and good are necessary factors of life, that without our knowing evil we cannot know good, and that part of our work consists in fighting and conquering evil:—

Philosophers must study this question thoroughly, and endeavour to grasp the true significance and importance of evil, and they will find that in the general plan of life on earth evil is to good what night is to day, contrast being indispensable in all things, material, intellectual, and moral. If, therefore, evil must of necessity play its freaks with us it is because, like the intervals of rainy days which force Nature into teeming activity and energetic life, it compels all that is good, clever, and noble in man to wake up and confront it.

This seems not quite the whole truth. It is a fairly easy way of explaining the existence of what has been the standing problem of all time. The "general plan of life" is a phrase itself requiring elucidation. It is the meaning of this "general plan of life" that we want, for it is in that plan that we find it difficult to understand the presence of evil.

In cultivated and wise men the enjoyment of study increases with age. It is a beautiful thought that Solon expresses as follows: "As I grow old, I still learn something every day." There is no enjoyment which surpasses this.—CICERO.

MRS. PENNY.

Old readers of "LIGHT," who interest themselves in the deeper aspects of the spiritual problem, will have observed with lively concern the brief announcement, last week, of the removal of Mrs. Penny from the earthly scene. We were not, indeed, unprepared for it. More than three years ago a painful crisis made death seem, even to her medical attendant, so imminent that she herself, and all her friends, were in daily expectation of the end. She rallied; but, for a long period, with scarcely abated suffering. Then there were some months of considerable relief; she was able to correspond with friends (though usually by an amanuensis) and even occasionally to see them. More than one of these travelled long distances for the privilege of a few (broken) hours of conversation with her. Brief articles by her appeared again, though rarely, in "LIGHT" and elsewhere. But the activity of her life was over; she had parted with most of her valuable books by gift to those she thought most likely to appreciate and use them; even her own manuscript notes went to aid students of her favourite authors and subjects. Early in the now closing year the discipline of almost ceaseless suffering was re-imposed. Nothing is spiritually indifferent; and we may well hold, however vaguely, that from the purgatorial fire of the past twelve months this excellent life extracted the final uses of its incarnation. Throughout it she could not cease to think, and my latest letters from her are largely concerning "the mystery of pain." Ideas are a more potent resource, even in physical torment, than is commonly supposed ("Give me a great thought," cried the dying Herder), and it was characteristic of her mind and moral nature that she would entertain with interest the suggestion—upon the principle of the solidarity of the race—that the pain of one may in some obscure way, and in some minute degree, draw off and localise a diffused element of disease in the whole society, or in some related section of it. But to one of her intellectual temperament it was weary waiting in disablement for the long deferred release. Just before it happened there was the usual merciful relief from pain. Consciousness was apparently retained to the last. On Sunday, the 17th, she was heard to murmur, "To-morrow—only till to-morrow." And so it was. On the morrow, soon after mid-day, she was liberated.

There has never been a more ardent, seldom, perhaps, a more intellectually qualified, student of spiritual and religious mysteries than the accomplished lady who has just passed away. With literary capabilities which in her youth had borne fruit in a novel declared by good judges to have been a production of uncommon merit, she was early initiated into the old theosophy by a husband who had himself abandoned the pursuit and prospects of wealth in order to devote himself to a study which became thenceforward the passion of their joint lives. This gentleman, Mr. Edward Burton Penny, was the first to introduce to the English public the works of the celebrated French mystic of the Revolution period, Claude de St. Martin ("le Philosophe Inconnu"), by his translation of two profoundly interesting books, the "Theosophic Correspondence" of St. Martin and Kirchberger, and that entitled "Man: His True Nature and Ministry." It was to the first of these books (which has an indescribable charm for every lover of mysticism) that I owed the privilege of my introduction to, and long following correspondence with, Mrs. Penny. During the long years of her widowhood, crippled and suffering often and much from a painful spinal affection, she led a secluded life of study in a picturesque old house ("The Cottage") in the town of Cullompton, in Devon, where she was greatly esteemed and loved, especially by the poor.* In a little wing of this dwelling was her "Book-room," containing, perhaps, one of the choicest theosophical libraries to be found; works in different languages (she was an excellent linguist), many of them very rare and now only to be obtained by a collector's persevering efforts; works, the names of some of whose authors are scarcely known even to persons of literary research, but from which this devoted student was constantly extracting golden significance for the recondite circle of her thought. Prominent here, of course, was her great master in theosophy, Jacob Boehme—Boehme, of whom even the most adventurous readers may say—substituting his name—what Hutchison Stirling's German teacher said when questioned about Hegel: "Other writers may be this, may be that; but Hegel!—one has to stop! and

think! and think!—Hegel! Ach Gott!" But scarcely less arduous study is exacted by other and less known writers of this school whose works were here collected—by Franz Bader, Oetinger, Hamberger, Dionysius Freher, Gichtel, Fabre D'Olivet, Greaves, St. Martin, and others. William Law is the easiest, but even Law—an English classic—is hardly known to the general literary public except by one, and that by no means the most impressive, of his works—the "Serious Call." Here was a mine of hidden treasures, which has never, perhaps, been so thoroughly explored as by Mrs. Penny—certainly never by an intelligence more eager and docile, or more apt to penetrate difficult meaning. Nor were her studies in this region confined to one school. Her own writings show the catholicity of her reading whenever mysticism is in question. Her knowledge of Swedenborg, for instance, was extraordinary, and her assimilation of his principles she found easily reconcilable with the dominant influence of Boehme. It rarely happens that the devotees of one particular master are able to enlarge their ideal territory, while the literary critic, though he may be omnivorous for his purpose, seldom assimilates anything. Mrs. Penny was necessarily an eclectic, in speculation at least, just because her principal studies had laid in her intelligence so deep and broad a foundation for her faith that thought was free from many a barrier which a narrower or more traditional orthodoxy would have set up. Herself a Christian from profound conviction, she was patient with modern scepticism, which she regarded as a transitional state, naturally consequent on the dryness and superficiality of the Church, and containing more sincerity than ecclesiastical and conventional religion, of which, if of anything, she might be called almost intolerant, so greatly did it vex her soul. She hoped that infidelity, in seeking to stamp out Christianity, would really stamp it down to a deeper foundation, to a natural philosophy of Divinity and Man. That she found the groundwork, and even the complete plan, of such a philosophy in Jacob Boehme, scarcely needs to be stated.

It was occasionally suggested to Mrs. Penny by a correspondent that Boehme required to be translated—rendered into modern modes of thought and expression—rather than to be cited. But she had her own method of interpretation, and that, for a patient reader, perhaps the best, viz., *collation*. She would bring passages from very different parts of his writings to bear on one another, till half-a-dozen several obscurities sometimes seemed to blend into a common luminosity. Her best analysis was always through synthesis. And she would give her readers or correspondents—at least I can answer for one of them—so firm a grasp on certain leading conceptions in the old theosophy, that these are henceforth recognised as main beams in the edifice, and one sees how great is the ideal weight they can support.

Mrs. Penny's numerous articles in various publications, here and in America, have a special value. Without attempting systematic exegesis, she aimed at helping students through the difficulties she had herself encountered. And she never shirked a difficulty, or tried to conceal it in verbiage. If she could not understand a doctrine or a passage she said so, and at least made her readers see where the difficulty lay. But she rarely, if ever, quitted a subject without throwing some light upon it, or at least directing one to some pertinent idea. And no one knew better how to distinguish clear thought from what she happily designated "mental fumbling." The collection and reprint of her various writings, by a competent and sympathetic editor, would be no slight service to those who understand the spiritual significance and value of the old "theosophers."

In a seventeen years' correspondence with Mrs. Penny I have seldom had a letter from her which I did not feel constrained to preserve for the sake of some thought or expression of more than momentary interest. Her lively and penetrating intelligence found, perhaps, its readiest and most spontaneous utterance in these unpremeditated compositions. But not the thinking intelligence only, the whole character spoke in them, and made their peculiar interest.

Mrs. Penny was, I believe, under seventy at her death. "LIGHT" has lost in her a contributor whose value some had learnt to appreciate, and a constant reader whose sympathetic intelligence could extract from even conflicting lines of thought whatever was best in each. Her Christianity and "Spiritualism," for instance, never prejudiced her against the modern "Theosophy," to whose exponents she gave willing attention. But to the last her ruling desire was to promote study of the profundities of Jacob Boehme. And for her own considerable attempts in this direction she will ever be held in esteem by initiates of that master mystic.

* I remember well the spontaneous testimony to her beneficence and kindness by the driver of a conveyance I hired to take me to her house on the occasion of my first visit to her.

HINDOO MAGIC.

The "Arena" for December contains an interesting article on Hindoo Magic by Dr. Heinrich Hensoldt. Speaking generally of the mysticism of India, Dr. Hensoldt says:—

It would seem as if among the Hindoos *speculative philosophy* had been the ruling fancy from a very remote antiquity, and, moreover, that kind of philosophy which does not depend upon an interchange of ideas for its advancement, but is based almost entirely upon *intuition*—viz., upon the cultivation of certain mysterious innate faculties, which are presumed to lie dormant even in the breast of the savage. While our forefathers, driven partly by the exigencies of an inhospitable climate, were chiefly engaged in establishing a material prosperity—thereby unconsciously stimulating the acquisitive or accumulative faculty, and transmitting to us the desire for wealth as a rooted instinct—the Hindoos have descended into the abyssal depths of their own consciousness, and have tried to solve the great world-riddle by mere force of meditation. Whether they have accomplished much in this way, I will not here attempt to discuss; in my opinion they have come much nearer to the truth than we, with our endless empiricism and experimental torturing of matter.

But if they have not succeeded in solving any great fundamental problem, they have discovered a number of strange facts of which we are practically ignorant. Like the alchemists of old, who, in their search for the philosopher's stone, stumbled upon porcelain, sulphuric acid, and other substances of great practical utility, so the Hindoos, in their effort to raise the veil which hides the mysteries of time and space, discovered forces which are apt to cause extreme surprise in the Western neophyte, and which are destined to play a great part in the future of our race.

As to the varieties of Hindoo "conjurers,"—which hardly seems the right term—the writer says;—

Hindoo conjurers may be divided into several orders, and there certainly is a division of caste between them. Their secrets are never communicated to outsiders, but among performers of the lower order are transmitted from father to son, and among the higher from adept to disciple. The members of one order always perform the *same tricks*, which have been handed down to them from antiquity, and which they never vary in the minutest detail. These tricks have been performed in precisely the same manner for thousands of years, and the fact of their still exciting the same surprise at the present day shows how well the respective secrets have been kept.

Our conjurers perform their paltry tricks at night, in an artificially illumined hall, on a platform, surrounded by an arsenal of apparatus. They can do little or nothing without the aid of apparatus. They also usually perform in full dress, and are thus enabled to conceal a multitude of things in pockets, &c., made for this purpose. Now the Hindoo Pundits, Yoghis, and Rishis exhibit their astounding feats in broad daylight—not in halls or on platforms, but in the streets, gardens, and public squares of India's great cities. They usually work alone, permitting the spectators to approach them very closely, and to surround them completely. They appear half-naked, and if they make use of apparatus at all, it consists merely of one or two commonplace objects, such as a couple of short sticks and half a coconut shell. But with these they will do things which are perfectly marvellous.

The lowest class are the Fakeers, and this is given as one of the tricks performed by some of them:—

A Fakeer will take a large earthen dish, pour into it about a gallon of water, and hold it steadily in his left hand, the other hand being raised to his forehead. Then the vessel will diminish in size while you look on, growing smaller and smaller, so that at last it would take a magnifying glass to recognise it. Then it disappears completely. This will occupy about a minute and a half. Suddenly you see again a tiny brown object, not bigger than a sand-grain; this enlarges in the most inexplicable manner, till, at the end of another minute, the original dish, a foot in diameter, filled with water to the brim, and weighing at least fifteen pounds, is again before you. I have seen this trick performed several times, and on one occasion was so near as to be almost in contact with the Fakeer.

Dr. Hensoldt narrates some stories of other performances by these Orientals, especially a very curious one about the celebrated mango tree trick, and then gives a description of the rope trick, which is good enough to be reprinted:—

A Yoghi, after having addressed a large assemblage of people and preached one of the most impressive sermons I ever listened to, took a rope about fifteen feet long, and perhaps an inch thick. One end of this rope he held in his left hand, while with the right he threw the other end up in the air. The rope, instead of coming down again, remained suspended, even after the Yoghi had removed his other hand, and it seemed to have become as rigid as a pillar. Then the Yoghi seized it with both hands, and to my utter amazement *climbed up* this rope, suspended all the time, in defiance of gravity, with the lower end at least five feet from the ground. And in proportion as he climbed up it seemed as if the rope was lengthening out indefinitely above him and disappearing beneath him, for he kept on climbing till he was fairly out of sight, and the last I could distinguish was his white turban and a piece of this never-ending rope. Then my eyes could endure the glare of the sky no longer, and when I looked again he was gone.

The writer saw this feat on four different occasions, and speaking of the feats generally, he says that "Western philosophy has not yet furnished anything like an explanation of these phenomena, and as to Western science, it is now only on the point of awakening from a long dream."

THE "RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL."

From the announcement below it will be seen that Mrs. Bundy is retiring from active participation in the work of the paper which has become identified with some of the best thought in the United States. We wish all success to the new Editor, whose name is a sufficient guarantee for the continuance of the high character of the "Religio-Philosophical Journal"; and at the same time we trust that Mrs. Bundy, though enjoying a well-earned repose, will from time to time help in the work which she has so much at heart. The announcement is as follows:—

In assuming entire control of "The Journal," business and editorial, I have only to say that the paper will be conducted in the same spirit and with the same purpose which have hitherto characterised its career. Having been for some years closely connected with "The Journal" editorially, it is not necessary that I should now, in taking formal charge, make any statement beyond the assurance that it will aim to present the best thought of the day, giving special prominence to the psychical side of life and to the moral and spiritual interests of man. I never anticipated when I was quietly co-operating with our lamented friend, Colonel Bundy, that he would so soon pass to the silent land and that it would devolve upon me to conduct "The Journal" in the cause of scientific investigation of spiritual phenomena and of reform in general. Mrs. Bundy, to whom during the last year or more I have given such help as I could, having retired from "The Journal" and left it in my care, I shall endeavour to keep it up to the high standard which it has maintained in the past, and to make such improvements in adaptation to the requirements of this progressive age as may be needed to keep it ever abreast with the most advanced thought.

Mrs. Underwood will be associated with me in the editorial conduct of the paper. With the support of its friends, including its corps of able contributors, "The Journal" in the future will, I hope, do a work not less important than that which it has done in the past.—B. F. UNDERWOOD.

GOD is eminently a God of order. Every manifestation of the Supreme Will must assume to our minds the form of order.

ONE reason why the world is not reformed is, because every man would have others make a beginning, and never thinks of doing so himself.

DEVOTION.—However dear you hold your patrimony, your honour, or even your life, you should be willing to sacrifice all to duty, if you are called upon to do so.—SILVIO PELLICO.

It is better to merit praise and reward without receiving them than to have them when we are not worthy of them; we should leave our actions to speak for us.—BAYARD.

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

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post-free to any address, is 10s. 10d. per annum, forwarded to our office in advance. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and should invariably be crossed "— & Co." All orders for papers and for advertisements, and all remittances, should be addressed to "The Manager" and not to the Editor.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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

Light:

EDITED BY "M. A., LOND."

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30th, 1893.

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

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

THE RETROSPECT.

The last days of 1893 are very near, and when this number of "LIGHT" is in the hands of our readers not many hours of the year will be left. It is a habit of most people to look backwards as well as forwards on these anniversaries. On looking backwards in our case we may be fairly satisfied with the year's work. There certainly has never been a year in which greater attention has been paid, and for the most part rationally paid, to psychic matters. Many are the evidences that the subjects "called Spiritualistic" are gaining ground in the consideration of men, and none of these evidences is stronger than the attempts made to explain away the now generally recognised phenomena. Of these attempts during the year the most serious, and at the same time, perhaps, the most unsuccessful, was that made by Mr. T. J. Hudson in his book on the "Law of Psychic Phenomena." The book seemed at first sight so important that some people thought that the whole Spiritualist castle was to be at once destroyed; but a very little investigation showed that the argument was founded on untrue premises, from which wrong deductions had been made.

The Chicago Congress was one of the events of the year. For the first time in the history of the English-speaking world men met together to talk not of Spiritualism, nor of Theosophy, nor of Occultism, but of all and everything that pertains to the psychical nature of our humanity. Condensations of some and extracts from others of the papers presented to that congress have appeared from time to time in these columns. From those condensations and extracts their value can be gathered. Of course there was much speculation, and perhaps some guesswork, but on the whole the work done was good. For Spiritualists the most important thing was, perhaps, the evident tendency shown by Mr. Myers and Professor Lodge towards accepting the Spiritualistic hypothesis in its broader character. Even supposing that nothing had been done at Chicago beyond talking publicly of psychic matters, that alone would have been a step onward. But much more than this was done.

The "Proceedings" of the Society for Psychical Research, as edited by Mr. F. W. H. Myers, from which many extracts have been made in "LIGHT," have during the past year made a very serious impression on the thinking world. In these "Proceedings" are given detailed accounts of phenomena which a few years ago would have been considered to be the wild delusions of a madman. Yet there they are,

given with all the sanction of scientific research. But no ghost story ever told by a Spiritualist surpasses those told by Mr. F. W. H. Myers in "apparent" probability. That these "Proceedings" have been received by the public without a wild disclaimer is evidence again of the change in opinion among educated people. Here again, then, we may congratulate ourselves. And while speaking of this it may be well to refer once more to the series of papers on Ghostland which the "Westminster Gazette" thought fit to publish recently. With the ignorance the journalist generally displays when he knows little about the subject on which he professes to write, the writer in the green-tinted evening paper produced a few flabby, ill-digested, and stupid articles, which nobody appears to have read. A few years ago, and it would not have been so. There has been much change, and one of the things which have demonstrated that change in 1893 has been the reception of the "Westminster Gazette's" articles.

The appearance of Mr. Stead's "Borderland" was also a feature of the year that is closing in. Of the effect of this venture of the Editor of the "Review of Reviews" we cannot yet speak confidently. That Mr. Stead believes he is doing right no one can doubt, but even right intentions may be damaged in their effect by injudicious action, and we fear there has perhaps been a not too careful verification of the narratives to be found in "Borderland." No doubt time will cure all that.

Though not occurring in England, the published report of the Milan experiments, Eusapia Palladino being the medium, produced a considerable impression. The eminence of the men who vouched for the accuracy of the report, and the undoubted care with which the experiments were conducted, helped materially to the impression produced.

As far as this paper is concerned the most noteworthy feature has been the termination of the marvellous series of "Records by Mrs. S." of séances where Stainton Moses was the medium. Nothing more important has so far been seen in the annals of Spiritualistic literature.

On the whole there is much ground for hope that a rational Spiritualism will within a not too distant period become a factor in the general thought of the English-speaking world, with all the change that such a factor may produce.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

We again remind our readers that Mr. Richard Harte has kindly consented to give an address to the members and friends of the Alliance, at 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, at 7 o'clock on Monday evening, January 8th, on "The Proper Function of Spiritualism."

PORTRAITS.

We hope next week to commence another series of portraits, with the likeness of the Rev. J. Minot Savage, minister of Unity Church, Boston, Mass. The reverend gentleman's name is, of course, familiar to our readers, and we do not doubt that they will be pleased by the opportunity which we propose to give them of forming some conception of his personal appearance.

CONSECRATION OF LIFE.—As the pleasures of the future will be spiritual and pure, the object of a good and wise man in this transitory state of existence should be to fit himself for a better by controlling the unworthy propensities of his nature and improving all his better aspirations; to do his duty, first to God, then to his neighbour; to promote the happiness and welfare of those who are in any way dependent upon him, or whom he has the means of assisting; never wantonly to injure the meanest thing that lives; to encourage as far as he may have the power whatever is useful and tends to refine and exalt humanity; to store his mind with such knowledge as it is fitted to receive and he is able to attain; and so to employ the talents committed to his care that when the account is required he may hope to have his stewardship approved—
SOUTHEY.

SOME HIGHER ASPECTS OF SPIRITUALISM.

Address delivered by Mr. W. Paice, M.A., to the Members and Friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 2 Duke-street, Adelphi, on Monday evening, the 18th inst. :—

I feel that I am taking up somewhat ambitious ground in presuming to address you on such a subject as the Higher Aspects of Spiritualism, and I should not have chosen it had I not been convinced of its importance. Spiritualism, thereby meaning continuance of life beyond the grave, cannot rest in its effects or its phenomena. These phenomena are only evidences of the truth it believes it has demonstrated; it is impossible that it cannot have a moral and spiritual message to the world. Let it not be supposed that I despise phenomena—they are useful, they are necessary; but they are not the end. The end, in any rate the immediately perceptible end, is that if the facts be true, as we believe they are—by those facts meaning not only the survival of the so-called dead, but also the intermingling of unseen agencies with ourselves and our affairs—if such facts be true, then life on this earth becomes a quite different thing from what it has hitherto been considered to be. This paper is an attempt, a very feeble and tentative endeavour, to help on towards the knowledge of the new conditions.

First of all, then, it may be well to consider what generally has been, and, indeed, still is, the position of the ethical question. To the world as such, the world of commerce, of fashion, even of art and of science, ethics are, as a rule, not known, being, perhaps, most clearly exhibited to the denizens of these worlds in the one word "respectability." For a man to be respectable is so to conduct his life that he shall arrange it according to a certain conventional standard, determined by his immediate surroundings. Such standards vary greatly, from the condition of never having been brought before a magistrate up to the highest ideals of church membership and deaconhood. The criteria of the standards also vary. There is, for instance, that represented in the old story where a traveller for a certain mercantile house, wishing to know the status of a customer in a country town, asked the local stationer if his would-be client was respectable. "Respectable!" was the answer "why, he reads nothing under the 'Saturday Review.'" Such people, in whatever circle of "respectability" they move, have no determined principles of action as far as morals are concerned. Their morals are made for them. And yet they probably constitute the larger part of the world.

Of those, however, who do profess to think out in some way what are the principles of action, we get broadly two great divisions; first, those who acknowledge that there is a spiritual principle which is outside and beyond the ordinary course of events; and second, those who deny this, asserting that all ethical action is the outcome of material forces. The first great division may again be divided into two sub-groups, namely, those who believe in a spiritual revelation, and those whose spirituality is a reasoned, and therefore reasonable, one.

We will begin with the first of these groups, which contains those who believe in a revealed Spiritualism of some kind, that is, in the existence either of an agency or of agencies outside themselves, which agencies are independent of the world as we know it. Of this group let us first take the sub-group which includes all persons who believe in a conventional revelation. Revelation according to these is of a double nature, being either that which is contained in the sacred books supposed to be revealed, or that which is contained in the traditions of the Church, supposed to be inspired by the agency or agencies which have inspired the sacred books. This agency when singular is the God of the Christian Church, and He alone is the inspirer as far as the Protestant cult is concerned. The Roman Catholic cult acknowledges the existence of sub-agencies in the shape of saints. The teaching supposed to be obtained in both these cases is independent of this world, though expressed in its terminology. That the books have been inspired is alone sufficient for orthodox Protestantism; that they have been inspired, but that the Church still holds the keys of interpretation, is sufficient, but necessary, for orthodox Catholicism. What is meant by inspiration is quite another question—though here the real difficulty begins. To say that the collection of writings known as the Bible is the work of "mediums" would strike horror into the hearts of myriads of devout Protestants, who regard the word "inspiration" with the same affectionate awe as the good woman of the legend did the

blessed word "Mesmerism." "Inspiration" is the result of the act of "inspiring," and "inspiring" produces "inspiration." From such a blind belief have arisen all the horrors of Calvinistic bigotry. The "Word" is the "Word," and there is an end of it. One part of it, indeed, may contradict another part, but that can only be in appearance; it is the "Word of God"—and that is enough. One can well imagine the ethics that have been got out of such a creed. Materialism in its worst form, that of a pseudo-spirituality, has naturally been the result. One need only refer to the doctrine of justification by faith to appreciate what such a pseudo-spirituality means. And yet there is even in this system or non-system the recognition of spiritual forces; whatever may be the ultimate idea of Deity it is in some way that of a spiritual force. "God is a Spirit" has become almost the shibboleth of certain believers. Nevertheless the spiritual properties attributed to Deity are so vague, and require so much explanation, that they are mostly argued away, and we stand at last in the presence of a purely anthropomorphic God. The spiritualism, then, of the orthodox Protestant religionist does not count for much.

The Catholic creed is different. That acknowledges the existence of saints and angels constantly in touch with humanity, even interceding for them. Hence a code of ethics which is far more spiritual in theory than that of the Protestant, whatever it may be in practice. Spiritual life is a real thing to the Catholics, whether that life be spent on earth, in purgatory, in Hell, or in the full enjoyment of the Beatific Vision. The tendency of such a belief is to elevate the value of good works, works which men are sure will be rewarded hereafter, because it is well known that such works have previously been rewarded. The death-bed repentance of a sinner under such a creed is not the blasphemous mockery it is among those to whom a vicarious sacrifice is the one only necessity for purification. The Catholic Church teaches the excellent doctrine of an existent and not too comfortable purgatory, and the evil-doer knows he is not going at once to Paradise, even if he ever gets there at all. The essential difference between the two divisions of the Church is that good living is necessary for salvation in the one case but not in the other. In that other case, moreover, the element of time comes in; repentance is urged by both qualified and unqualified teachers as a matter not to be postponed, for there are such things as accidents, and not always can it be said that:—

Between the saddle and the ground
He mercy sought, and mercy found.

It must not be supposed that I am denying the existence of truly spiritual people in both these divisions of the Western Church. The world would indeed have been badly off if there had not been holy men and women whose lives were the salt of the earth; but these would have been holy anywhere, for such holiness is independent of creeds. Also, I am not arguing against Christianity, but against the wrong interpretation which has been put upon the pure teaching of the greatest Reformer the historic world has ever seen. A newer spiritualism was undoubtedly demanded.

Next let us turn our attention for a few moments to that reasoned spirituality which one school of thought has made its predominant note. This is in no sense founded on revelation, it is argued out from the consideration of man as we think we know him; there are no saints and angels, there is indeed a possible God, but He is a somewhat hazy entity.

The best exponent of this philosophy has been Professor Green, whose influence on the thought of Oxford was far more important than that of others who have posed a good deal more before the world. It will be seen how elaborate is the argument thought necessary to demonstrate the spiritual nature of man, a spiritual nature acknowledged by every savage, and which has only been lost in the mazes of a mistaken civilisation. I will not tire you, but I must ask you to bear with me while I read a few extracts from Professor Green's "Prolegomena to Ethics." He says:—

If nothing can enter into knowledge that is unrelated to consciousness: if relation to a subject is necessary to make an object, so that an object which no consciousness presented to itself would not be an object at all; it is as difficult to see how the principle of unity, through which phenomena became the connected system called the world of experience, can be found elsewhere than in consciousness, as it is to see how the consciousness exercising such a function can be a part of the world which it thus at least co-operates in making; how it can be a phenomenon among the phenomena which it unites into a knowledge. Why then, do our most enlightened interpreters

of nature take it as a matter of course, that the principle of unity in the world of our experience is something which, whatever else it is—and they can say nothing else of it—is, at any rate, the negation of consciousness, and that consciousness itself is a phenomenon or group of phenomena in which this "nature" exhibits itself or results? And why it is that, when we have professedly discarded this doctrine, we still find it to a great extent controlling our ordinary thoughts? There must be reasons for this inconsistency, which should be duly considered if we would understand what we are about in maintaining that there is a sense in which man is related to nature as its author, as well as one in which he is related to it as its child.*

This is a specimen of the manner in which the spiritual nature of man is demonstrated by those philosophers who propound the doctrine of a spiritual life without the intervention of revelation, on which doctrine they found a system of morals. Yet even this, reasoned as it is, leads to something which, after all, is intrinsically vague. Listen to Professor Green again in some of his concluding remarks. He is speaking of "ultimate good":—

We should accept the view, then, that to think of ultimate good is to think of an intrinsically desirable form of conscious life; but we should seek further to define it. We should take it in the sense that to think of such good is to think of a state of self-conscious life as intrinsically desirable for oneself, and for that reason is to think of it as something else than pleasure—the thought of an object as pleasure for oneself, and the thought of it as intrinsically desirable for oneself, being thoughts that exclude each other. The pleasure anticipated in the life is not that which renders it desirable, but so far as desire is excited by the thought of it as desirable and so far as that desire is reflected on, pleasure comes to be anticipated in the satisfaction of that desire. The thought of the intrinsically desirable life, then, is the thought of something else than pleasure, but the thought of what? The thought, we answer, of the full realisation of the capacities of the human soul, of the fulfilment of man's vocation, as of that in which alone he can satisfy himself—a thought of which the content is never final or complete, which is always by its active energy further determining its own content but which, for practical purposes, as the mover and guide of our highest moral effort, may be taken to be the thought of such a social life as that described in the previous paragraph.

And this is what we find in the previous paragraph:—

In the most complete determination within our reach, the conception [of the perfect life] still does not suffice to enable anyone to say positively what the perfection of his life would be; but the determination has reached that stage in which the educated citizen of Christendom is able to think of the perfect life as essentially conditioned by the exercise of virtues, resting on a self-sacrificing will, in which it is open to all men to participate, and as fully attainable by one man only in so far as through those virtues it is attained by all. In thinking of ultimate good, he thinks of it indeed necessarily as perfection for himself; as a life in which he shall be fully satisfied through having become all that the spirit within him enables him to become. But he cannot think of himself as satisfied in any life other than a social life, exhibiting the exercise of a self-denying will, and in which "the multitude of the redeemed," which is all men, shall participate. He has other faculties, indeed, than those which are directly exhibited in the specifically moral virtues—faculties which find their expression not in his dealings with other men, but in the arts and sciences—and the development of these must be a necessary constituent in any life which he presents to himself as one in which he can find satisfaction. But "when he sits down in a calm hour," it will not be in isolation that the development of any of these faculties will assume the character for him of ultimate good. Intrinsic desirableness, sufficiency to satisfy the rational soul, will be seen to belong to their realisation only in so far as it is a constituent in a whole of social life, of which the distinction, as a social life, shall be universality of disinterested goodness.†

I have thought it necessary to make these somewhat lengthy quotations, first, because of the importance of Mr. Green's work, and next, because of the necessity there is of showing what results in the way of ultimate morality are to be got from such a reasoned spiritualism. These results appear to be the attainment of a condition of absolute unselfishness. Unselfishness is the ultimate good. Against this nothing can be urged except that the good is not ultimate, for unselfishness in itself is a means to some kind of end, and that end is apparently the self-contained happiness of the individual in the presence of his fellow-men. Altruism can nevertheless hardly be the final goal, though it is a magnificent step onward in the development towards that goal; indeed, with a somewhat different inter-

pretation. I think it is fairly easy to agree very largely with Professor Green's philosophy.

Thus, then, we find, as far as the consideration of these divisions of the ethics of the Western world are concerned, that where spirit in any form is recognised not very much has been accomplished. Speaking of Christendom generally we have first a Church which teaches that there is a spiritual life and then ignores it, and a Church which teaches the existence of that life, but confines its investigation of its meaning to the Church, the Church being its only lawful interpreter; and lastly, a reasoned spiritualism which uses the word in its older sense which leads up to something which is very beautiful, but which falls short of the perfect interpretation of a spiritual life.

We have next to consider the ethical methods of those who deny spiritual agency of any and every kind. Here we are helped a good deal by the revolt of Professor Huxley in his celebrated Romanes Lecture of the present year. The great apostle of agnosticism, whose name we have once more heard pronounced in that once well known conjunction—Huxley and Tyndall—has declared that moral progress must be considered apart from the accepted theories of evolution. Says Huxley—

Cosmic nature is no school of virtue, but the headquarters of the enemy of ethical nature.

Again:—

Self-assertion, the unscrupulous seizing of all that can be grasped, the tenacious holding of all that can be kept . . . constitute the essence of the struggle for existence. . . . For his successful progress as far as the savage state, man has been largely indebted to those qualities which he shares with the ape and the tiger.

Yet this struggle has been held to be the cause of our system of morals, the thing out of which our virtues have grown. I quote Professor Andrew Seth, who has been commenting on Huxley's lecture in the current number of "Blackwood Magazine," "the fashion is to treat a man as a natural product—not as the responsible shaper of his destiny, but, with its spiritual struggles and ideal hopes, as the unresisting channel of the impulses which sway him hither and thither, and issue now in one course of action, now in another." Because it is possibly true that certain antelopes became the progenitors of giraffes owing to their necks being longer than those of other antelopes thus enabling them to get food from the trees when the shorter-necked ones perished—in fact, because of the "survival of the fittest"—therefore, all moral tendencies must have developed in some such way! Professor Huxley has shown the fallacy of this reasoning, which even in analogy is of little value, though the "survival of the fittest" may be always true, there is no proof of the non-survival—though it may be infrequent—of the "unfit." Professor Huxley has overthrown all this by pointing out in unmistakable language that "fittest" and "best" are not convertible terms. But on the supposed fact of their being convertible terms the whole argument for the evolution theory of morals has been based.

With regard to the purely materialistic theory of morals, therefore, we may conclude that it is doomed. It has been weighed in the balances and found wanting.

This is a very rapid and imperfect survey, yet, though rapid and imperfect, it is, I think, correct as to its broad outlines. We have either no spirituality at all, or else it is of such a vague kind as to be of little or no importance in determining the right conduct of mankind. At its best it points to a shadowy salvation from the effect of shadowy sins, by shadowy means. The reality is not there. Indeed, one thing has always struck me as being the most amazing if not the most appalling within my knowledge, and that is that men can actually argue about the means of salvation, and determine the supposed destiny of an immortal soul, according to the correct or incorrect arrangement of a syllogism. The dilemma is forced upon one, that either the salvation itself is not looked upon as a real and necessary thing, or that madness—the impostor's madness of delusion—is strangely and terribly prevalent.

But then, where are we? To us the Unseen is real. The "Thou God seest me" of the frightened worshipper is transformed into a "great cloud of witnesses." At once the circumstances are changed for us. It is impossible for anyone who has attempted to explore the Unseen not to know this. The séance-room only does it partially; it is the continual impact of intelligences outside ourselves that makes so certain the existence of the "great cloud of witnesses." So conscious does one become of this that it is at times difficult to ascertain where the agency begins and one's self leaves off, for the union of spirit

* Green: "Prolegomena to Ethics," p. 14. † *Ibid.*, p. 415.

with spirit is very close. The question then arises, if the presence of spiritual life about us in a more complete sense than that acknowledged by the professors of a moribund religion is acknowledged, what effect ought that knowledge to have upon our conduct, how does it affect our theory of ethics? But before we can proceed to answer there are some preliminaries to be considered.

First. Of what character are these agencies? I am not going into such abstruse points as the existence of elementaries, of elementals, and so on, but simply broadly speak of them as being, as far as character is concerned, good, bad, and indifferent. Of course we might go a step further and begin to inquire what is meant by "good" and what by "bad." If that were urged, I for one should say "I don't know." All that I do know is that "good" is the opposite of "bad," and that the tendency of "good" is to what we call "happiness," and the tendency of "bad" to what we call "unhappiness." But why anything is good, and why anything is bad, I do not know, I only am sure that owing to circumstances outside and beyond—a long way beyond—myself, there is something which makes for good to which I am attracted, and towards which I work. I also know that the "good" agencies work also towards that something, and the "bad" oppose. And I know, moreover, though I do not understand how I know it, that so to work is what is called right, and not to do it is wrong.

Well, then there are these agencies—spirits if you will, though that word is used so loosely that I am rather afraid of it; and our actions are performed, in this presentment of our existence, in their presence. We are never alone.

Secondly. We have to consider what this "unloneliness" means as far as our conduct is concerned. It is not a question of being found out, though, incidentally, that may come in, but something outside and beyond that. Every action that is not right is helping the adversaries, as every action that is right is helping the good agencies, those who are of God. So that every action which is right in itself adds to the stock of good, while every action that is not right adds to the stock of evil.

It may be urged that this is speculative. I do not think it is entirely so. To show that there is at least a presumption in its favour, I must digress a little into that realm of mechanical philosophy with the account of which I fear I have more than once tired my audiences here; but as I cannot divest myself of the feeling that all things are orderly, and that the laws of mechanics—and by laws I mean those general principles according to which mechanical action occurs—that the laws of mechanics are anything but one form of the exponents of the general principles underlying all things, I am forced once more to refer to them. Now, we have learnt of late years that work which is done against any opposing force produces an accumulative effect, which effect is known as energy. I do not wish to argue from analogy, except so far as analogy is a true representation of the general form of actions in the cosmos; but it does seem to me very improbable that what is true of mechanical work is not also true of work which is so far mechanical that it is itself produced by an expenditure of energy. Therefore I think I am right when I say that whosoever does work against the force of good helps to increase the energy of evil, and whosoever does work against the force of evil helps to increase the energy of good.

This is, indeed, not an analogy only. We all know how a moral action produces results, results which are exhibited as frequently as not in tangible mechanical forms; so that even from this point of view it is not easy to divorce the meaning of mechanical force from that which is possibly a form of meta-mechanics. And here I feel that there is a good deal to be said for the materialistic hypothesis, it is so difficult for many people to see that intangible motives can be translated into mechanical force without a material medium. If the materialist would only instead of "matter" talk about "a form of spirit" there would not be so much difference after all between him and the spiritualist.

But to go back, for we are just now considering the question as to who those agencies are. Again I say I do not know—what I do know is that there they are. Some are the spirits or souls of dead men. I say "dead" men, for we all know what we mean by the word "dead," and there is just a little pedantry in talking of the "so-called dead." Some may be, most likely are, spiritual persons who have never been incarnated, and are either above or below the incarnate or ex-carnate human ones, who are, as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews said, "a little lower than the angels." It is impossible to think of these

agencies, indeed, without supposing all grades of intelligences among them, from the besotted soul which has just escaped from the body of a drunkard to the bewildering majesty of those hierarchs whose robes rustle with the musical thunder of their own purity, and backwards down to the supernal intelligence which in the imaginings of the poet has been called Satan in general and Mephistopheles and other names in particular.

I am speaking of these gradations of power and intelligence because the consideration of them is of great importance. To suppose that the state which impinges on this, or perhaps I ought to say "is" this state, contains nothing but the nonentities of too many séances, is to suppose something that is not at all likely to be. In the struggle of evil against good all kinds of possibilities are needed. In some cases the most delicate manoeuvres are required to add to the stock of evil, in others the poorest and most careless temptation is more than sufficient. Therefore very subtle dexterity is required on the other side, where, while harmless as doves, men ought to be as wise as serpents. It was no fiction of the imagination that depicted the Devil as becoming an angel of light when he thought it would be useful.

I know I am here entering on a subject of great importance for it is no less than the regeneration of humanity. But when I look around and see the unexplained inequalities of life, when I note the misery and despair of some side by side with the apparent plenty and happiness of others, when I see the shameless luxury of some and contrast it with the abject poverty of their neighbours, when success is measured in figures, and the struggle for life is making that life a bewildering chaos, I feel that I must ask what we who know of the Unseen, we who profess that knowledge by belonging to this Alliance, are doing to change and make better the apparent injustice prevalent in the world. Spiritualism teaches the continued existence of life after death, but if it does nothing more than that, better, I almost think, would it be to be without that knowledge. Like property, Spiritualism has its duties as well as its pleasures. For myself I have never been able to understand how any man can order his life, after his conviction that life does not end here, as he ordered it before. Of course the certainty of continued existence *must* affect men, yet I do not think it always does so in the right way, and that, I fancy, has been mainly owing to some confusion in people's minds as to the meaning of continued existence.

The mistake that I feel has been made is that of the "futurity" of the results of human action. The question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" having been answered in the affirmative, men's thoughts have been turned too much to the living "again," so forgetting the living "now." For myself, the doctrine of a future reward or a future punishment, whether it take the form of the orthodox heaven and hell, or the far better one of the Spiritualist, that man will be after death what he has made himself in this state, is as nothing compared with the importance of his doing his work in his place as part of the cosmos. I cannot conceive of any perfection except it be by the means of "casting out the self," to use Mr. Hinton's most suggestive phrase.

The position is this, as I think I see it, and with what diffidence I say it I can hardly express to you—the position is this, that there is a continual struggle going on between the powers of evil and those of good, that man is implicated in that struggle, that his education in this state depends upon the part he plays in that struggle, while he adds by what he does to the total amount of evil or of good in the Universe.

I remember some few years ago, when Mr. Crookes's theories of aggregation and segregation were first announced to a somewhat astonished and not too appreciative scientific world, that it struck me that aggregation and segregation were possibly the presentation on the material plane of the selfishness and unselfishness of the soul-world, of the good and evil of the spiritual world. In such crude imaginings one sometimes gets a little way into the outskirts of the vast and intricate city of Eternal Truth, and so I am not sure that I was not, to a certain extent, right. It is to be noted that Professor Green's reasoned spirituality led him to the conclusion that a perfect altruism is the ultimate good of mankind, and every movement of the underlying spirit of good which is struggling to manifest itself at the present day is in the same direction. It is always a movement towards casting out the self.

I have not attempted to lay down any great principles or to develop any fundamental laws. I have, after surveying the

ground, tried to make a few suggestions only. To myself the battle-field between good and evil is ever present, not in the vague sense of the religious enthusiast, or the reasoned sense of the philosopher, but in the sense of actual, real agencies which are working in one direction or the other. In that admirable address, given here a fortnight ago by my friend Mr. Collingwood, you had that reality impressed upon you from another point of view. In that reality I entirely believe. But because of that reality and its tremendous potentialities, it behoves us indeed to walk warily, and just now perhaps more so than ever. Men are in a strange way full of expectation, wondering what may come next. The old religions are crumbling away, while the spirit of evil is showing his determination to destroy in not a few ways. So for us who think we know, there comes with a weightier meaning than ever the cry "Watchman, what of the night?"

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Holmeses and Madame Blavatsky.

SIR,—In rebuttal of my statement that the Holmeses of Philadelphia were fraudulent mediums, with whom Madame Blavatsky was in collusion, it is contended by Mr. Robert Cooper that they were genuine mediums. I invite attention to the following statement of Colonel Henry S. Olcott in the number of "The Theosophist" for November last, p. 70:—

See her (Madame Blavatsky) at Philadelphia doing phenomena in the Holmeses' sances and allowing General Lippitt, Mr. Owen, and myself to believe they were attributable to the mediumship of Mrs. Holmes, whom in our "Scrap Book" she brands as a common cheat.

In "People from the Other World" Colonel Olcott described various phenomena taking place through the Holmeses, witnessed by himself and Madame Blavatsky; and he argued for their genuineness, and therefore the genuine character of the mediumship of the Holmeses, as against the fraudulent practices alleged against them. But now Colonel Olcott says that the phenomena claimed in his book as produced by Mrs. Holmes were done by Madame Blavatsky, and that Madame Blavatsky in her "Scrap Book" branded Mrs. Holmes as a common cheat.

If the phenomena that took place in the house of Mrs. Holmes—ostensibly through her as medium while she was in the cabinet, tied in a bag, &c.—were not done by her but by Madame Blavatsky, then there certainly was collusion between Madame Blavatsky and the woman whom she knew to be a common cheat. The two combined to make Olcott and others believe that the phenomena seen were produced by Mrs. Holmes's mediumship, when in fact she was not a medium, and her acting as a medium in the cabinet, &c., was only a farce got up by Madame Blavatsky and Mrs. Holmes to delude Olcott. All this is admitted by Olcott; and this admission is confirmation of my statements, and a valid answer to Mr. Cooper's denials of their truth.

San Francisco, Cal., U.S.A. WM. EMMETTE COLEMAN.

Correction.

SIR,—I regret that the corrections in proof of my letter in "LIGHT" of this date escaped the attention of the printers. I did not, for instance, write "self-rendering," as printed, but "self-sundering."

December 23rd, 1893.

C.C.M.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.

—Information and assistance given to inquirers into Spiritualism. Literature on the subject and list of members will be sent on receipt of stamped envelope by any of the following International Committee:—America, Mrs. M. R. Palmer, 3101, North Broad-street, Philadelphia; Australia, Mr. H. Junor Brown, "The Grand Hotel," Melbourne; France, P. G. Leymarie, 1, Rue Chabannais, Paris; Germany, E. Schlochauer, 1, Monbijou-place, Berlin, N.; Holland, F. W. H. Van Straaten, Apeldoorn, Middelland, 682; India, Mr. T. Hatton, State Cotton Mills, Baroda; New Zealand, Mr. Graham, Huntley, Waikato; Norway, B. Torestonson, Advocate, Christiania; Russia, Etienne Geispitz, Grande Belozerski, No. 7, Lod. 6, St. Petersburg; England, J. Allen, Hon. Sec., 13, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or, W. C. Robson, French correspondent, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne.—The Manor Park branch will hold the following meetings at 13, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park:—Sundays, 11 a.m., for inquirers and students, and the last Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., reception for inquirers. Also each Friday, at 9 p.m., prompt, for Spiritualists only, the study of Spiritualism. And at 1, Winifred-road, Manor Park, the first Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., reception for inquirers. Also each Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m., inquirers' meeting.—J. A.

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. Attention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions. No notice received later than the first post on Tuesday is sure of admission.]

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—Sunday, December 31st, at 7 o'clock, floral and christening service. Ten, 5.30 tickets, 6d. Thursday, at 8 p.m., circle.

SPIRITUAL HALL, 86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE, W.—On Sunday evening last we had a good attendance, and a splendid address was given by the controls of Mr. J. J. Morse, on "The Failures of the Past and the Hopes of the Future." Sunday next, at 7 p.m., local speakers, with vocal music. Friday, January 5th, an evening with "The Strolling Player"; and Clairvoyance, by Miss McCreadie, at Morse's Library, 26, Osnaburgh-street, Euston-road, N.W. An exceptional opportunity; admission free, collection at the close; the entire proceeds to be devoted to the funds of the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists. A cordial invitation to all.—L.H.R.

MORSE'S LIBRARY.—On Wednesday 20th, inst. at Mr. J. J. Morse's Library, 26, Osnaburgh-street, Regent's Park, N.W. Mrs. Smith, the well known clairvoyante and psychometrist, held a seance at which a considerable number, comprising both members of the library and strangers, were present. Mrs. Smith succeeded in giving some striking delineations, and several persons received vivid descriptions of departed friends, the names being given in some cases. The most satisfactory results, however, were obtained in connection with psychometry. The popularity and usefulness of the institution started by Mr. Morse become every day more apparent, and it is to be hoped that similar centres of Spiritualistic activity will be opened in other parts of the Metropolis. A seance in connection with Mr. Morse's mediumship is announced elsewhere.—D.G.

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—On Sunday last Mrs. Smith, of Leeds, took questions from the audience. One subject was grandly expounded—"What good will Spiritualism do?" The revolution in thought that the subject has caused was pointed out, and the ultimate issue was shown in the most lucid manner, the speaker demonstrating the fact that Spiritualism is of and from God the Spirit, and that man-made creeds must eventually give way to God's will. Another question, regarding the growth of children in the spirit world, was answered at some length, showing that the spiritual growth to maturity corresponded with the physical—minus the material encumbrances. The clairvoyant demonstrations were very remarkable. Speaker for next Sunday, Mr. J. Veitch.—J. RAINBOW.

THE MYSTIC'S FAREWELL.

I charge thee to speak softly,
For my soul is full of sound,
And the air vibrating strangely
With angelic light around;
I know not what this dreamland is
In which my soul finds rest,
But it verges on the great Unseen,
And angel minds know best,
The lulling of this sweet repose,
The shadows drawing near,
But stricken by a bright'ning light
Which makes their mission clear.

Every now and then I see,
Not shrouded or in gloom,
A dear, dead face of long ago
That vanished in the tomb;
And every brow is clearer,
Each smile is free from pain,
And I hear a gentle whisper
That we shall meet again.

The lamp alone burns dimly,
For you I cannot see,
And the damps upon my forehead
Seem like a lullaby.
I think I'm passing from you,
But let me tell you this,
Death is like a trembling gate
That opens out to bliss;
And the dim, eternal portal
Unswings itself for me,
And once again those voices sing
Their sleepy lullaby.

—A. F. COLBORNE ("Agnostic Journal").

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

SEVERAL articles and letters are held over owing to the pressure on our space this week.