

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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Light:

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27TH, 1883.

THE CORRESPONDENCE ON ESOTERIC BUDDHISM.

This week we give the concluding portion of the discussion on this subject, and now, as we have already intimated, it must drop for the present, more particularly as no practical good seems likely to be the outcome of an extended controversy. We are not Theosophists, and may be under some misapprehension as to the standpoint taken by them, when we suggest that, until such ugly facts as that urged by Mr. Henry Kiddle are satisfactorily explained, they cannot reasonably expect serious attention to be given to merely speculative theories. At the same time we are anxious to give a fair field and no favour to all who have something definite to say upon the subjects discussed in this journal, and if at any future time Mr. Sinnett, Madame Blavatsky, or others, are in this position, we shall be very pleased to open our columns to them.

On another page will be found a letter from the above mentioned lady. We print it because Madame Blavatsky and many Theosophists consider the provocation to have been very strong, but for the future we must decline to insert letters the tone and temper of which are so alien from that which we desire to see. It will be well to leave purely personal matters alone. In Madame Blavatsky's opinion "G.W., M.D." may have been too strong in his language, but we cannot but think that Madame Blavatsky herself would have done greater service to the cause which she espouses if her protest had been more temperate in its tone.

The protest from Hindu Theosophists we very willingly give. It will be found in another column and explains itself.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

The authoress of "The Gates Ajar" has given to the world a charming sequel to that very popular little work. "Beyond the Gates"* is a book that will be widely read, all the more so that the word Spiritualism is not once mentioned in it, though the whole story is devoted to an exposition of the Spiritualist's faith as to the future life. Some of the experiences of the soul, depicted in every case with perfect naturalness and much graphic power, are true to life, as those whose spiritual eyes have been opened can testify. The moral lessons taught and illustrated are excellently enforced. "Their works do follow them" who have done good. Their "sins find out" those who have done evil. The borderland between this state and the next is crowded with those whose treasure is on earth. And to them, passing to and fro on ceaseless errands of mercy and love, come, from the state of bliss to which they have ascended, the loving spirits who learnt on earth to lend a helping hand to those in need of it, and who find their happiness as ministering angels now. The perfect verisimilitude of the whole narrative is very charming. In this it far exceeds a book that has lately attracted attention—"A Little Pilgrim in the Unseen." The multiplication of such books, and the eager way in which they are read, is a sign of the times.

I am not about to usurp here the province of the Reviewer when I draw attention to an important addition to spiritual literature in the shape of a work by Mrs. Howitt-Watts. The lives of Kerner and Howitt, so far as they were concerned with spiritual matters, and can be fitly called "pioneers of the spiritual reformation," are here sketched by the hand of one who is eminently qualified for the task. Her great sympathy with Kerner has led her to present a charming portrait of that remarkable man. And none even of those most closely associated with William Howitt, in his work as a Spiritualist and Reformer, could do him the same justice in his life-labours as his daughter has done. She has manifest advantage denied to even his closest friends. For she can not only shew us the force and power of that most vigorous mind—its sterling and uncompromising honesty and tenacity of purpose,—its controversial aptitude, its readiness of fence, its vehemence in defence of truth—but she is able also to shew us how, as earth and earthly interests grew dim and the eternal verities grew nearer and more clear to view, the might of the man seemed merged in love, and his whole being became transformed. The life of conflict had at last its fruitage of peace. The man of war, whose blows, struck for the faith that was in him, had been so vehement and so telling, passed to his rest all gentleness and love. No more beautiful picture than that which Mrs. Watts has drawn, and which no other pen but hers could have drawn, is to be found in the range of biographical literature. I count on the gratitude of my readers for transferring to these columns this most touching picture of the transition of a great Spiritualist.

* In January, 1879, chilled through being caught in a sudden shower, bronchitis supervened. By this bronchial attack he was confined to the house for some weeks. His family grew

* "Beyond the Gates." By E. S. Phelps. 2s. 6d. May be obtained of the Psychological Press Association.

anxious. Still greater became their anxiety when hemorrhage set in, the heart being affected. On the receipt of this sad intelligence, the writer and her husband started immediately for Rome. Happily, we found my father still alive. To us he looked at first but little changed. He was seated in his arm-chair in the dining-room, wrapped in his dark purple dressing-gown, with his venerable snow-white beard falling upon his breast, on his head his small black velvet cap. His face had grown slightly thinner; over his whole countenance was spread a strangely spiritualised and almost transparent look—and he was so very still! He said that he hoped soon to be stronger, and that then we would all go together to Albano and enjoy some days of mountain air; that he should like to shew us the lovely flowers which grew there in the spring. Alas! we knew that never in *this world* would he be stronger, nor go forth again to gather spring-flowers. As yet he was unaware of the fatal nature of the recently developed symptoms. For three weeks he yet remained on earth to those who loved him so tenderly.

"From the commencement of his illness, he appeared to have become merged into the pure realm of love. The vigour, the energy, the fire, the combative strength of that great nature already had passed off like an outer envelope, revealing to the full the innermost nature—the principle of his being—Love.

"He deeply felt the ceaseless ministrations of affection shewn him throughout this season of weakness and suffering by friends whose friendship to him was very precious. 'I am ministered to by angels in earthly form!' he said repeatedly, referring to those friends in Rome.

"He bade his wife and children 'to rejoice with him and not to mourn when,' as he expressed it, 'he should have cast off this clod of a body and have passed on to his own generation.' Almost the last words uttered by him were 'blessing upon his family, his friends everywhere, and,' he added with euphatic, though feeble accents, 'upon the whole world.'

"On the Sunday evening of March 2nd he became much weaker. All afternoon he had been seated in his arm-chair near the window. He said he was 'weary,' could he not be removed to his bed? He marvelled at his extreme sense of prostration. 'Except for this heaviness of the body,' he added, 'I feel quite well, and as though I could go anywhere.' Tenderly he was borne by his beloved ones to his bed, from which his emancipated spirit, on the morrow, was to ascend to its Creator.

"After a physically restless, but mentally calm night, it was evident, when morning dawned, that the end was near. He now spoke but rarely, yet appeared constantly to pray inwardly. Evidently in some occult manner he had learned the exact hour appointed for the removal of his spirit. Thus in great weakness did he continue through the forenoon.

"About three o'clock p.m. a friend, the Rev. Dr. Nevin, the clergyman of the American Church, called to inquire how he was; my father, hearing who was come, said he should be pleased to see Dr. Nevin. After the exchange of a few friendly words, Dr. Nevin asked my father if he should offer up a prayer for him. 'Certainly,' was the reply. We all knelt around the bed. The two faithful Italian servants, who were devoted to their dying master, knelt near the door of the room, weeping like children.

"Scarcely had Dr. Nevin retired when, as if the blessed angels had assembled to receive the spirit, now ready to depart with a sudden and startling energy he exclaimed in a strong voice—'Lift up my hands! Lift up my hands!' His wife and daughter, standing one on either side his bed, each held up a hand, already heavy with death, when, somewhat raising himself upon his pillows, as if to grasp the Invisible before him, his head sank back, and the spirit had arisen! The aged countenance assumed almost immediately an incredibly youthful, it might be called a beatified, expression—the expression as of one who, having fought the good fight through Divine grace, had gained the victory and entered into his rest."

The life of Kerner is most appropriately inscribed:—

TO

"L. M."

A SEERESS OF ENGLISH BIRTH,

WHOSE INSIGHT INTO

THE MYSTERIES OF THE INNER LIFE—

NOT LESS REMARKABLE THAN THAT POSSESSED BY

THE SEERESS OF PREVORST—

HAS GIVEN

ILLUMINATION AND SUSTAINMENT

TO MANY EARNEST SEEKERS AFTER TRUTH,

THESE PAGES

ARE INSCRIBED AFFECTIONATELY

BY HER FRIEND,

A. M. H. W.

The biography of William Howitt is associated with the name of another pioneer, who still remains with us, "William M. Wilkinson, his friend and co-worker." Mrs. Watts' unwearied labours in the cause she loves have added

to the literature of Spiritualism a volume for which our heartiest thanks are due.

The Psychological Press Association has issued a very complete list of works bearing on Spiritualism and kindred subjects. It includes all standard works issued in England and abroad, and numbers over 600 volumes. All profits are devoted to the free distribution of spiritual literature. The books published by the Association are excellently got up. My own "Spirit Teachings," and Mrs. Watts' volume which is just published, are exceptional specimens of printing and binding.

M. A. (Oxon.)

SINGULAR VISION.

Some time ago, when Dr. Percival was headmaster of Clifton College, an excursion by steamer was made by some of the masters and ladies, and boys connected with the college, from Cumberland Basin to Chepstow. The family of one of the masters were of the party, but he himself stayed at home. At seven p.m. he went to the front door of his house and looked out idly for a minute or two. As he did so he saw, or thought he saw, the steamer alongside the quay at Chepstow. One of the boys slipped, fell, and in falling between the steamer and the shore, tore his face. After this curious scene had passed before his eyes he went indoors, and settled down to work in his study. About nine o'clock he heard his wife in the entrance-hall, and the scene at the landing-place flashing back upon him, he said (half ashamed of the folly of giving any weight to it), "Well, did you get that boy out of the water?" "Yes, of course, he was only frightened, not hurt, except a ducking. But how on earth do you know anything about it? I am the first to come up, the others are walking." "Never mind how I know. What about the wound on his face?" "Oh, you know, So-and-so (the boy in question) has a hare-lip."

The lady who kindly procured me the foregoing account from the gentleman who had the vision, was at the picnic herself, and saw the boy fall into the water. She remembers that some of the party were afraid he had cut his face, but it was a hare-lip. The accident happened on the arrival of the party at Chepstow, before lunch. What to do with the drenched boy was the difficulty. A friendly old woman, however, took him into her cottage, and put him to bed while his clothes were washed and dried, and there he spent the day.

The remarkable point is the long interval between the accident and the clairvoyant vision at Clifton. I wrote to call the attention of the seer to this singularity, but he assures me that his recollection is clear as to the time of day at which he saw the scene. His impression was that the accident really happened in the evening at the time when the party were preparing to return, but this was plainly a mistake on his part. He would seem to have taken his notion of the boy having torn his face, not from direct clairvoyant sight of the scene itself, but by reflection from the impressions of those who were actually present at it.

H. WEDGWOOD.

DIRECT SPIRIT WRITING.—A correspondent in America reports to *Le Spiritisme* (Paris) that through the mediumship of Mr. George Cole, of Brooklyn, direct spirit-writing is obtained. A sheet of blank paper was signed, folded several times, enclosed in a box, and placed on the mantel-piece by the investigator. The medium, after ten minutes' waiting, described three spirits as engaged about the box. The description pointed to L. Judd Pardee, Voltaire, and Lucretia Mott, as known by their portraits. When the investigator opened the box, he found his signed paper contained three notes written, bearing the signatures severally of the personages described by the medium, who called attention to the fact that the writing was like his own, except that over the signature of Voltaire, which looked like that of an old person.

"ESOTERIC BUDDHISM."

By the Hon Roden Noel.

After the indignation expressed by Spiritualists (among others by Mr. Farmer, in the *Psychological Review*) at the publication of my former comments on some theosophical positions in "LIGHT," as being so much too long and abstruse, and blocking the way for publication of exciting "facts," I ought, perhaps, to have the grace to hold my tongue for ever after! But the perusal of Mr. Sinnett's book has set me off again, and I throw myself on the indulgence of the editor and his readers, craving a little space, as Mr. Tangle claimed time, for the utterance of a "few more words!" Of the ability, value, and interest of Mr. Sinnett's book there can be no question. I for one have to thank him for a lucid, and yet thorough, deliverance on Buddhism, resting on teaching that may certainly be regarded as authoritative upon the subject. My own brief remarks on Buddhism were the result of a desultory, rather than an exhaustive study of the system, and hence I gladly submit to be corrected by himself, Mr. Lillie, and "C. C. M." But, on the other hand, I find that my objections to the substance of theosophic teaching remain very much the same as they were after reading the "Fragments of Occult Truth," and other deliverances in the *Theosophical* monthly journal. I do not see that I have anything to modify in what I said about the questions at issue in the series of papers, so ably and courteously controverted by "C. C. M." But I should like to put some of my objections in new, and perhaps clearer, words. Into the *rerata* *questo* of whether each man consists of a great number of separable Principles, some of these only, however, being present in some men, and not others, these Principles being also capable of existing apart from one another in such a manner as to simulate, in their isolation, the whole "human combination" popularly known as a person ("Shells")—I shall not again enter, "C. C. M." and myself having already gone into it at more than sufficient length, and the difference between us on the point being evidently an irreconcilable one. The question seems to resolve itself into this—is a man a *conglomerate of principles conjoined from without*, or is he a *spiritual substantial unity, developing his own "principles" from within*? Leaving this, however, we come to the question how far the system of doctrine authoritatively expounded in Mr. Sinnett's book may be regarded as Materialism, though one subtler than our crude Materialism of the West. Materialistic I called the teaching of Eastern Theosophy, and for calling it so I was very severely taken to task by "C. C. M." Therefore I am sorry that I must repeat, after reading attentively the further deliverance of Mr. Sinnett, that a subtle form of Materialism it still appears to me.

"Occult science," we are told (p. 22). "is wholly free from the logical error of attributing material results to immaterial causes." Now, considering that Mr. Sinnett and I are constantly engaged in moving our eyes, arms, and legs in obedience to our intelligent wills, this is a logical error, which even occult science must find it very difficult indeed not to make! Without calling in the somewhat clumsy philosophical devices of "Pre-established Harmony" and "Occasionalism," as did Leibnitz, Geulinx, and Malebranche, principles which occult science is not in a position logically to call in, I do not see how we can contradict the intuition of common-sense, that material results certainly are (very often, at least) attributable to immaterial causes.*

The chapter on "Buddha," as regards the special subject of which it treats, is, however, a most instructive and interesting one. I may say that, endeavouring to obtain for myself some insight into the mystery of the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, I had arrived at a conclusion in some respects very similar to the doctrine here enunciated concerning the successive incarnations of the Buddha. It appeared to me that while we are all of us, as far as our present conditioned and "fallen" consciousness is concerned, so to speak, *involuntary* incarnations of the Divine inmost principle, Jesus Christ was so *voluntarily*, with a much fuller consciousness of the fact than we have yet attained. He elected before His birth to relinquish the plenitude of that blessedness and enjoyment which was His by virtue of His high spiritual station, prompted thereto by love for those whom He might thus deliver, by sharing with them their sinful and miserable condition. Such a blissful attainment of spiritual joy is here described as Nirvana (the chapter so headed being also very interesting), and Buddha is described as thus resolving to forego it, in order to deliver the brethren on lower planes of development. It occurred to me, however, on reading this, to consider why the Buddha, being represented as still in Nirvana, should not be conceived (so Christian mysticism conceives Christ) as still present with mankind to sympathise with and help them in the depths of their own spirits, still accessible to prayer. Perhaps, however, he has now obtained the yet greater privilege (as this system of Theosophy

* But "G. W., M. D." says he was told authoritatively that the will itself is matter in motion. To such a depth of materialism, even I should never have supposed Indian thought could have descended. Clearly, however, I was right that Theosophy does regard the thinking, willing Ego as a subtle ether, a strange misconception that has been exposed over and over again. Ether, like other matter, is an *object*, not a *subject*. Roast beef helps to write a Hamlet, but it is not Hamlet. And if it were reduced to a gaseous state, it would be no nearer a work of spiritual genius than before.

strangely considers it) of *Para-Nirvana*, which is, we are informed, so very transcendental that nothing whatsoever can be predicated of it, and which, of course, would, by absorbing the Demi-God in God, render him utterly useless as respects any assistance he might otherwise have been able to render to the unfortunates not yet so happily circumstanced. We Christians must be permitted to wonder in that case why the Buddha ever allowed himself that somewhat selfish privilege, so long as he himself continued loving, and there remained any creatures wanting love. With our ways of thinking, such absorption into Impotent Abstraction would certainly not be the culmination of Divinity, but very much the reverse. But, probably, we shall be told that we are still in the gall and bitterness of anthropomorphism, Being, with a big B, far transcending any offices, or requirements of love, and righteousness; and we shall also be told that it is rather childish and degrading for grown-up men and women to want a Mediator, at all; that the Ideal needs not to be presented from without, but is to be attained rather by the assiduous contemplation of our own inner selves.—I will not say of our own navels, for I perceive, by the rebukes administered to "G. W., M. D." that Theosophists, unlike the poet's "Gentle Dulness," do not "dearly love a joke." Here are two salient points of difference between Buddhism and Christianity. Christians want an Ideal out of themselves, that they may, by contemplation and worship, realise it within; and they need the Ideal to be living, personal, able actively to help them, one with whom they may commune; with power to realise in themselves the spiritual beauty they desire. (I should, indeed, not have supposed that absolute consciousness was equal to none, unless Mr. Sinnett had assured us that this is the case.) I should have expected to find in the chapter on incarnations some allusions to Christ, and some attempt to harmonise the doctrine of the two religions on this head. But the attitude taken up seems rather that of somewhat contemptuous antagonism to Christianity. Indeed, I understand that the adepts of Tibet are disposed even to deny the bare historical existence of Jesus Christ—at least, of the character and career ascribed to Him by Christians. This, of course, drives us back to the so-called historical evidences of our faith; and for my part, although I disbelieved for a long time, I confess that a careful study of them has satisfied me that the adepts have arrived at a wrong conclusion. They would, probably, have had greater influence here had their attitude toward Christianity not been so uncompromisingly hostile; had they attempted to reconcile rather than emphasise conflicting claims. But since they appear to be certainly wrong on a question upon which all are capable of forming a judgment, their testimony upon other momentous questions, which we may be supposed not to have the same qualifications for deciding, is in proportion somewhat invalidated in our eyes—and *a fortiori* their pretension to *infallibility*. Otherwise, no doubt, as I believe "C. C. M." has urged, their special knowledge about the kinds of lives, and spheres of life, possibly even about cosmogony, and the destiny of the present world-system, might be conceded as arising out of special adept training, and peculiar powers so acquired; though their great metaphysical acumen, and higher spiritual wisdom might appear doubtful. Still, I think it would be very difficult thus to distinguish; and there can be no question that neither they themselves, nor their disciples would concede permission for any such distinction to be made. Yet if one's own superior virtue, and the acquirement of supernatural power, were the end sought by long and arduous discipline, that would certainly not be likely to confer deepest spiritual insight, which is the child of love. However, I confess that in this book Mr. Sinnett states one end of the adepts to be very impersonal. He says it is to save as many individuals as possible from final annihilation. But after all, I do not see how we can do otherwise than judge this alleged revelation, as we should do any other, by our own reason and conscience. That these may be but little illuminated is quite true; still, what else can any of us depend on? These adepts, unlike Christ and Buddha, keep themselves so aloof from the world that we have no opportunity of estimating their spiritual standing by their own deeds and words, save and except by those few glimpses they have chosen to vouchsafe of themselves in the few books and magazines recently published. And all I can say is that for my part I am not impressed by these at all in the same kind of way as I am impressed by the recorded words and deeds of Jesus the Christ, or even Gautama Buddha. These revelators appear to stand on a totally different plane. They give us some abstruse speculation, impart to us some alleged curious secrets, which may or may not be true, about the origin and destiny of man, of the earth, and of the stars; but though they travel far afield, they do not seem to penetrate profoundly either the nature of things or of the human spirit. They do not help us to know ourselves. There is no fresh self-evidencing, revealing, illuminating power in what they utter, or in the rather grotesque marvels they accomplish. And after all, we can only take it on their own word that their final object in "avoiding our bad magnetism," and living up in a cave away from their toiling and suffering fellow-creatures, is *not* their own advancement, but ultimately the spiritual benefit of our race in other lives, which they alone are able certainly to foresee. This may or may not be so. But, meanwhile, how do they *prove* to us that their knowledge of these and kindred topics is infallible, and to be trusted? Assuredly the miracles they have wrought—granting them

to be genuine—prove nothing of the kind. They are merely marvels addressed to the senses, and no more, only proving the possession of occult lore, concerning the forces and phenomena of nature, whether organic, inorganic, or both. The doctrine must be judged on its own merits; and though a teacher's wisdom may be greater than our own, it is of no use to us until the doctrine he teaches commends itself to us as true, and valuable for the conduct of human life. Then his wisdom becomes ours, though without his ours might have failed to be kindled. Some may feel these teachings to fulfil these conditions. I can only say that for me, and many of my friends, whose intuitions in these regions I respect, they fail to do so. They appear to fail both metaphysically, and spiritually. They are unsatisfying to the deepest needs of the soul, as well as to our firm conviction of what is intellectually true. To the retort that this is mere presumption on our part in face of the claims put forward by these Brethren, and the veneration felt for them by many in India, as also by some here, of course there is no answer possible. We must all follow our lights, though also looking for assistance from others, feeble as these lights may be.

Now, my general objection to this system is that, though it speaks, indeed, of Nirvana, and of a yet sublimer state where consciousness merges into unconsciousness, where "naught is everything, and everything is naught;"—yet our present defective consciousness is after all hypostatized, and made absolute. The cosmogony, and world-destiny propounded seem distinctly to imply this. For we are told "that which antedates every manifestation of the universe, and even lies beyond the limit of manifestation, is that which underlies the manifested universe within our own purview—matter animated by motion, its Parabrahm or Spirit." (And here one would desire to protest against so extraordinary a use of the word *spirit*, for motion, or energy of matter! whereas the nearly universally recognised meaning of the word is either conscious individuality, intelligent will, or the profounder, and more excellent conscious sphere of such individuality, the regenerated "new man.") "Matter, space, motion, and duration constitute one and the same eternal substance of the universe." "There is nothing else eternal absolutely." (P. 183-4.) Then the exponent expressly disclaims for the adepts even the agnostic attitude regarding a personal God. "No such conception enters into the great esoteric doctrine of nature." Whether this is *Atheism*, or not, of course depends on what we mean by Theism. If "Theism" may mean the worship of absolute matter, space, motion, and duration, then, no doubt, this may be Theism—certainly not otherwise. And if it may mean this, then any word may bear any meaning, which tends rather to confusion. Why not honestly confess that the system is an atheistic one? The mere word will not bite us! But nothing, surely, can be more unphilosophical than to contrast, as is done here, the conception of universal natural law, as obtaining in the universe, with the conception of intelligent Divine Will as ruling it. Law, order, is the only conceivable evidence we can have of such intelligent Divine Will governing the world. The very idea of order involves intelligence originating and directing. Again, "the one eternal, imperishable thing in the universe, which universal pralayas themselves pass over without destroying, is that which may be regarded indifferently as space, duration, matter, or motion;" and then the exponent expressly guards himself against the far more philosophical conception of Spinoza by adding: "not as something having these four attributes, but as something which is these four things at once and always." So there is no eternal substance, as in Spinoza, having the attributes of thought and extension. But the substance and origin of all is (abstract) matter, motion, space, and duration! And now we see what *Maya* means—a conception triumphantly pointed to by "C. C. M." as proving the idealism of Hindoo thought, so much more thorough and ancient than ours!

"All things are Maya—transitory states—except the one element which rests during the mahapralayas only—the nights of Brahma"—that "androgynous element," Matter-Motion, having just been defined. (P. 177.) Again: "Brahmum, or Parabrahm, is a passive (?), incomprehensible, unconscious principle, but the essence, one life, or energy of the universe." "It acts only through Pakriti, matter,"—"everything takes place through the inherent energy of matter." Mr. Sinnett himself defines "the adept esoteric philosophy" as "transcendental Materialism." Of course it is. And thus my former position as against "C. C. M." is distinctly justified. It is not a gross, vulgar Materialism, for it knows of matter in all kinds of states and in all degrees of density, knows also of an unconscious Principle of Matter, its cause and substance. Consciousness, then, is a function of matter, though of matter, "O so thin!" and "Spirit" (!) "the seventh—the universal Principle"—"the only God recognised by esoteric knowledge" (p. 179)—is expressly defined as "motion," Motion animating Matter. (P. 183.) This is the active principle, "matter" being properly the passive.

The conception of world-cycles is no doubt imaginatively magnificent, but they are here rather too accurately defined, perhaps, for poetry. And while everything arose primordially from unconscious matter and motion (*Duration*, by the way, occupies in this Quaternity of the esoteric Pantheon rather an anomalous, illogical, uncomfortable, and undefined position—one does not quite see *how* it gets into such high company at all!), everything will ultimately return thither. Then all will

be quiet again. Quiet will reign. And after? pertinently asks "C. C. M." For after the great Kosmic Pralaya, there are no more Dhyán Chohans to wake the universe up again. Whereas in the more limited world-system pralayas, there are always some of these at hand (gods, or planetary Spirits of high development) to perform that office for the particular solar system that has gone to sleep. And if it be replied that the universe is now gone to sleep for ever, the question will still have to be faced, what woke it up originally?

But, says Mr. Sinnett, the periods spoken of are so enormous that really it is absurd to inquire further. In all conscience, we may rest satisfied with what is before us, even though, having attained to the height of God-like consciousness, we should after that prove not to be immortal after all, but destined to merge in the universal and Absolute Unconscious, which is defined to be Matter-Motion, or Space—Duration. Now, I cannot take this view, though certainly, when you put it in this way, it does sound a little greedily to "ask for more"! Yet, seriously, is the game worth the candle for adepts and such-like?—to live through many cycles labouring and suffering lives, in order to attain individual bliss, and deliver some egos from the earlier annihilation, which is reserved for so many of us, if after all they, and everybody else be destined *ultimately* to the annihilation, which cannot be distinguished practically, if it may theoretically, from that which is reserved for the wicked and foolish? "To ask if Nirvana means annihilation," says Mr. Sinnett, "is like asking if the last penalty of the law be identical with the highest honours of the Peerage." Granted; but what if the last penalty of the law be after all in store even for those who have already attained these highest honours of the Peerage? When the Dhyán Chohans—the most God-like souls—have reached the last hour of their perfected conscious life, will not all their previous lives appear to them as very nothing in the retrospect? So to an old man his long life appears to him. And what if he has blank annihilation only before him then? Will it not be far more horrible to renounce perforce the life of a good, beneficent, wise and almost omnipotent God than to renounce that of a mere puny man, who can look back only on a few years of comparative failure on this planet? "What has it all been for?" he will exclaim. "Would that I had been extinguished in the blind and imperfect beginning! The cruel mockery practised on me by that crass, unreasonable supreme God, Matter-Motion, would then have seemed a little less monstrous and unjust." Time surely is a mere *relative* conception of the limited, still defective, human mind. We know that an interval which appears slow to one may be like a flash of lightning to another, or vice-versâ. Duration is purely relative to the conscious being that experiences it, depending on the special constitution of his experiencing faculty. Even opium and hashish completely modify our concepts of space and time, while there is the fourth dimension of Zollner and the mathematicians. Duration is and can be nothing but the succession of feelings or ideas belonging to a one and self-identical conscious subject, capable of comparing, distinguishing, and remembering them, who also knows himself to be the same individual amid the flux and change of his sensations and thoughts, for else no comparison of them were possible, and so no duration. Hence, to the God-like and developed spirit, the whole conception of duration may be different, and an experience which might appear long and almost endless to the larva-soul of an earthly man might probably be gathered into one glorious flash of consciousness for the God-like. But after this, good-bye! Matter-Motion, the blind god, has devoured its own children, and eternal night has settled upon all, to the stultification of its own unconscious, and therefore stupid, chance-directed, efforts!

But I object to such a system, because (as I have pointed out in other essays respecting scientific conceptions of man and his destiny) I cannot conceive the possibility of matter and motion ever issuing in or producing consciousness, our human individuality, the characteristic of which is recognised unity or self-identity through successive changes, while that of matter, space, duration, and motion is multiplicity, infinite self-diversity, without internal principle of gathering the diversity, succession, and change into one and the same focus of unity, so that the diverse elements may be compared, identified, and distinguished. In short, *Matter* is a mere abstract idea of the mind, formed from a certain definite group of concrete sensational concepts, such as hardness, resistance, shape, colour, extent. *Motion* is an abstract idea formed from our experience of the change of position *inter se* of certain groups of shape, colour, and extent. Of Force, or Energy, as Hume shewed long ago, we have no experience at all outside ourselves, though he should have added that when our own felt energy, or force, is resisted, then we have such experience; but it is only in relation to our own energy that we have, or can have, any knowledge of external energy. We may *infer* it from the phenomenon of change, but that is all. But intelligent, conscious force, or energy, that of Will, is the only Force, or Energy, we can have any idea of, having experience of it in ourselves. Conscious spirit is self-creating, and creative of the world of phenomena. Its nature is activity. And, as I have shown in the *Modern Review*, since all existence implies self-identity and distinction, nothing can exist out of one or many conscious subjects, for here alone can you get the principle of self-identification and distinction,

uniting the changing and diverse qualities in one focus of self-identity, and distinguishing them *inter se*, distinguishing also the particular one existence from others similar, yet different. Hence dead, blind, material things can exist in perception or thought only. Time and space being mental constructions, general moulds of our thinking process, cannot exist out of such process. The "laws of nature" are only our interpretation of the Activity outside our individuality, that must necessarily partake of the limitation and peculiar character of our own perceiving, thinking faculty. But this Activity, being intelligible to us in some degree, must necessarily be conceived as intelligent, as *akin* to our perceiving and thinking faculty: and since it is Energy, producing an effect upon our intelligence, it must be *akin* to our intelligent Will. What these materialistic systems, whether gross or subtle, do, is to take our sensations and conceptions (which necessarily imply conscious conceivers and perceivers like ourselves), and then put them crudely and arbitrarily outside ourselves, but in no other similar intelligent thinkers and feelers, hypostatizing them in that impossible condition—even falling down in worship before them as primordial powers, or unconscious (!) gods, existing before men and all other intelligences, one day waking up for no particular reason, and urged by no special stimulus, to produce these intelligences, men amongst the number, after first producing the ordered Kosmos of Stars, with their inorganic elements, plants, and animals. Thus Materialists are like the child in Browning's poem, who feigns that the hobby horse he himself carries is, indeed, carrying him! Wherein after all does the Oriental materialism differ essentially from that of Buchner with his *Kraft und Stoff*? For *Kraft* we have here motion rather than energy; and for *Stoff* we have all sorts of subtle ethers; but they are all equally incapable of passing into conscious spirit, however thin and subtle they may be. They, on the other hand, all matter, whether gross or subtle, all material forces, too, *felt and known only through sensation*, such as attraction, electricity, galvanism, magnetism, are as such only the objects of consciousness, not the subjects of it. They are not, and can never become themselves conscious, though they are objects of consciousness in their effects upon us.* But as phenomenal objects of consciousness, or as felt in their effects, they cannot even be conceived to exist, save as felt and conceived by us, or by intelligences *akin to ours*, through comparison and memory of a one self-identified unity of consciousness, which we name personality, or, if you please, individuality. Motion, duration, matter, space, as well as all the particular things capable of being classified under any one of these conceptions, all involve perception, abstraction, sensation, conception, memory, comparison, and self-identification in a thinker. Therefore they cannot exist at all apart from him. And, therefore, they cannot exist before him to produce him, because they all imply his prior, or, at least, contemporaneous existence, in order for them to be possible. In short, they are ideas or conceptions of the human mind, and hence the human mind supports and produces them; not they it.

That is why all these philosophical systems appear to those who think as I do positively crude and childish, as well as untrue and unsatisfactory. You hypostatize your own notions, innocently imagining that they produced you, while you all the time are producing them; though, indeed, your own Ideas in your eternal real Being are substantial, and are the basis of your phenomenal conceptions. Is there, then, nothing outside us at all? With all my heart. There may be a whole world of intelligent consciousness, but nothing (so far as I can see) by any possibility out of, or beyond, that. If matter and motion, duration and space, do exist outside us, and outside every human mind, they can only, by the very terms of their existence, by their very notion, and by the meaning of their names, exist in other minds more or less *akin* to the human. You may go deeper than that, I quite agree. You may ask, what is the Principle or essential nature of these notions in us, and in others? We may have a glimpse of an answer to that question, but on the whole we shall have to reply, an unknown X. Since, however, they are partly products of consciousness, this X must be partly the principle of consciousness. And again, since there is a felt spontaneous, originating activity in the mind, this principle must have the nature of consciousness, especially as the unconscious, "separated from consciousness by the whole diameter of being," cannot be conceived capable of producing it. The originating principle of an effect must be greater than, or, at least, equal to itself. A deeper consciousness, then, underlies our present phenomenal and successive imperfect consciousness, underlies it with all its notions and sensations; deeper and fuller notions, or Ideas, therefore, are the substance of all such material concepts as matter, motion, duration, and space. The Substance and Origin of all, therefore, is individual conscious Spirit; and diversity—subject and object—being essential to consciousness, as well as to love, and love being the

highest form of consciousness we can conceive, the Divine substantial Intelligence must be, not one only, but many also—there must be many individualities in one universal consciousness, they all partaking of one another's attributes and experience by sympathy and co-operation. These individualities do not begin and end absolutely. They are eternal, and are the substance of the (so-called) external Kosmos. But their Divine conscious substance is deeper than their phenomenal manifestation in the fleeting shadow-consciousness we know; and many are in one, many of these ones in a higher one, and so, up to the Supreme One. Instead of its being true that there is no personal God, the truth is that there is nothing but personal God. The Supreme Spirit—Father of the Hierarchy—could not be conscious of Himself were He not eternally so, through the idea He derives from the Eternal Son, in Whom all other creature spirits eternally are, the Holy Ghost being the Divine energy of Father and Son, regenerating the lapsed and developing creatures, or phenomenal souls, who are in them. But the Son is as necessary to the Father as the Father to the Son. The All, in its eternal, real solidarity, and loving union, is God.

It is surely strange, Nirvana being admitted, not to recognise that the Ideas constituting consciousness in Nirvana must be more perfect, real, and substantial than our actually existing, and often contradictory conceptions—that these Ideas, rather than our present notions, must give the true explanation of things as we feel, perceive, and think them now. Yet this imperfect, contradictory system of conception is made absolute when it is made the basis of an elaborate explanation of the whole scheme of things, matter and motion being postulated as an absolute beginning and an absolute ending—originating and swallowing up even Nirvana, the higher system of consciousness (!)—which, on the contrary (unless the greater can come out of the less), should surely be the basis, explanation, and origin of this lower system of consciousness, including time, space, matter, and motion, if only we could attain to, and so comprehend it.

Nirvana (p. 163) is called "absolute universal consciousness" But yet a struggle is represented as taking place in a Buddha as to whether he shall relinquish the bliss which he has earned in order to help those who need him. (Pp. 164-165.) Therefore, after all, it would seem to be a mere ecstatic, and rather unreal subjective condition of the individual.* The universal life must touch and nourish every particular life. God we conceive to be omniscient, and all sympathizing because the substance and being of all. But the more god-like you become, according to this doctrine, the less do you appear able to apprehend, and feel with the needs of those wanting the fulness of life, which you possess. Surely, in this condition, however ecstatic and transcendental, you must be receding from the true Divine. One can almost imagine, after this, and feel reconciled to, its falling over into blind Matter and Motion again.

This rather materialistic rationale of the universe seems to bear a somewhat suspiciously close resemblance to the results of Western science, although expanded, completed, and rendered more subtle by the subtle Oriental mind. We have Darwin's Evolution and Spencer's Unknowable, and Laplace's Nebular Hypothesis, all endorsed, and only arranged into a more comprehensive system of thought. But Western science is a shifting thing, varying in its hypotheses from day to day like a chameleon, or a kaleidoscope. However, of course the claim is that this system is part of a most ancient body of Dogma, originally revealed by a divine individual. And it certainly does seem to recall the cosmogonies one has studied in very ancient classical writings, such as the Orphic Fragments, where gods and men alike are said to have been produced by ancient Night, and to be destined to revert thither. But one had always hoped that this symbolised some more transcendent and spiritual idea than merely that of an abstract material principle, or even that the Unknowable of Herbert Spencer, the Unconsciousness of Hartmann, and Schelling's Principle of Absolute Indifference. The Eleatic One, the One of Plotinus and Proclus, seems far more sublime, however impossible it may be for such an abstract, undifferentiated unit ever to become many, as yet it evidently has done. You may say the Many is "illusion," yet here it is, and saying that does not account for what is. The One is empty and barren—the many is rich, living, and fertile.†

I have one more objection, and then have done. The doctrine of Devachan is no doubt an extremely ingenious concession to the weakness of human affection. Many of us ordinary mortals, who have not quenched all human fires among the snows of Himalaya, are still troubled with warm human affections, and desire a future life, chiefly in order that Love, who has not found her full

* Of course or by us perceived *ganims* as external, are symbols to us of conscious individuals, however rudimentary. But when you come to the *subyantic* you cannot at all know what conscious individualities these imply—though they must imply some such. The childish animism of savage races takes the physical forces and elements themselves (the phenomena so appearing to us) for living individualities. And Occultism, with all its airs of exclusive wisdom, positively does this too! These are what they call *Elementaries* (see Col. Olcott and Madame Blavatsky, *passim*). But Nature does indeed consist of angels, devils, and men passed to the other world. Only we are not in the secret of their subjectivity.

† This contention as regards Nirvana, is, I see, expressly admitted by one of the adepts themselves, in a letter read by Mr. Simeon, at a *soiree* given by the Theosophical Society. He there confesses that Nirvana is, after all, a selfish ecstasy, and that our immediate business is to help others. That letter is on a higher plane than anything else I have happened to see, professing to emanate from the same quarter—and it is even just to the higher mystical Christianity. I would here express my gratitude for the too rare utterances of "J. W. F.," from whom, though I cannot go with him entirely, I have learned very much. ("Light," August 18th.) Mrs. Penny, too, gives us admirable expositions of, and extracts from, the gr. at secr. Bohme.

† "Gau, theurer Freund, ist alle Theorie, und grun des Leben's goldener Baum," sings Goethe. But I cannot away with this worship of Ether! The fancy of Spiritualists and Occultists that matter in the gaseous or ethereal form, is a much more dignified and intelligent God than matter more solid and visible has always appeared to me very funny. Yet writers like Eliphas Levi speak of this Ether with bated breath, and endow it with all the titles and attributes of Divinity.

fruition on earth, may find there a more enduring opportunity, and a more favouring atmosphere. This may be Western and Christian weakness, but still it is the best part of the ideal which we cherish. Well, though a vast proportion of us are doomed to extinction through failure and shipwreck of our humanity in the terrible storms that await us in our many various lives, and though upon our reincarnation here or on other planets we shall forget our former lives and loves, being different persons, (but, it seems, not different individuals), and though all will finally be absorbed into the seventh principle, which is the Divine Matter-Motion, yet a kind of Heaven called Devachan is provided for the good. It will last a very long time indeed, and while even in this existence we shall not have our beloved with us, we shall dream that we have them; and that will come, we are told, to pretty much the same thing. Now, I may be hard to please, but is this perfectly satisfactory? I am one who thinks that if our highest, inmost and deepest being craves for a satisfaction, this affords an argument that such craving is destined to be satisfied. The migratory, and nest building instincts of birds do not deceive them, and the organisation of the fetus in the womb is veraciously prophetic of its future life. These are true analogies bearing on this question, as it appears to me. Why should our sensuous understanding be of more value in deciding questions that lie out of her range than such profound yearnings and intuitions from a region that commends itself to the best and highest among us as the best and deepest sphere of their spiritual nature? Therefore I ask: Is it enough that we shall have a long dream of our beloved, then awake to complete forgetfulness of them? Besides, I venture to remark that this doctrine concerning dreaming hardly commends itself to one as any more philosophical than consoling and satisfactory. An absolutely subjective condition, without any communication from without, I cannot even conceive. Our whole intelligent life is now nourished upon influxes from the external world of nature, as well as from the minds and affections of those who surround us. Is it otherwise, moreover, in dreaming? Surely not! We are still in communication with the external world through our organism—may I not say through our organisms, physical and psychic? perhaps more perfectly in communication with other intelligences through our psychic organism than when we are what is termed "awake." How many important revelations have been made through dreaming! Is not the soul more sensitive then to inner communion with the great hierarchy of intelligences around her? Our perceptions in dreaming are quite as vivid and detailed as those of waking hours. We are in a different world, but certainly not withdrawn into pure subjectivity. This notion is contrary to all my beliefs about dreaming, and about how our inner mental perception, conceptual imagination, emotional and spiritual life are nourished. We are all in solidarity, and could not exist for a moment without perpetual intercommunion, however unconscious we may be at the moment how this is effected, or even that it is a fact at all. If we dream of our beloved, then surely they influence, and are indeed present with us. Hence this doctrine of *Devachan*, as a substitute for the Christian Heaven, appears not only unsatisfying in regard to our holiest and most human aspirations, but also quite unphilosophical. Equally unphilosophical, and repugnant to the claim of our most sacred human ties is the entirely monstrous doctrine that young children have no future life, and that imbeciles are for ever relegated to limbo! I have argued in former papers against the dogma of "conditional immortality."

But in conclusion I may venture to observe that the much vaunted teaching concerning *Karma* seems to possess rather less value than is claimed for it—though "what a man soweth that shall he reap," here or elsewhere, is doubtless sound moral teaching, and wholesome as protest against the caricatures of Christ's doctrine, which Protestant orthodoxy preaches. Still, is it not a somewhat crude theology that insists on the apportionment of material rewards and punishments precisely adapted to the *Karma*, the moral character, through successive re-incarnated lives of the individual? No doubt there is something in this ordinary idea of justice and injustice in the dispensation of outward happiness and suffering. Still, Christ discourages such a natural, but perhaps rather too naïf conception in His answer about why the man was born blind. Does not the real reward and punishment rather lie in the very possession of that self-engendered, and slowly accumulated character? Outward prosperity is of little use to a bad man or a fool, while by adversity the good and wise man is assisted, shining all the more brightly, resigned, beneficent, and conspicuous. That he is to be uniformly rewarded by temporal prosperity seems to some of us rather a Hebrew notion, which we are anxious to outgrow. Moreover, that the fatal consequences of evil can never be destroyed by transmutation into good in the regenerated spirit is a terrible doctrine, worthy of a rather crude, severe, and undeveloped theology, or of a so-called scientific system of thought, which knows of no Divine alchemy beyond the phenomena appertaining to nature, and the natural man. The beliefs in propitiatory sacrifice, vicarious atonement, and remission of sins through shedding of blood, however offensive, mischievous, and perverted, appear to me to embody a wholesome, though half-sighted protest against this doctrine of despair,—that evil must propagate itself for ever and ever, and is absolutely indestructible. It may surely be absorbed, and transmuted through the magical power, and touch of the higher Life, the

true philosopher's stone.* It is curious, by the way, that the adepts appear to hold what I cannot but regard as the metaphysical figment of Free Will, holding it, too, as popularly defined, and defended by European advocates of this tenet. Differences, moral, emotional, intellectual, these, truly, are terribly difficult to understand. But Free Will pretends to cut the Gordian knot, without really affording any help whatever towards the solution of the problem—Free Will, I mean, as it is commonly understood, and advocated in this book. In our deeper universal selves alone is Will Free, and necessary at the same time. In our present, lower, conditioned selves it is not free in any sense, save with an illusory freedom of mere chance and capricious motives. The self being in embryo, it is not truly self-determined. But I have said more than enough, and must apologise for the length of my comments upon a very important and striking work.

INVOLUTION AND EVOLUTION.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

"An animal is an infinity of plants."—*Oken*.

"This world came forth from the former spiritual world, and after due elaboration, shall be exalted to it again."—*Van Helmont*.

Before the pages of "LIGHT" are closed to further disquisition on Mr. Sinnett's fascinating *Esoteric Buddhism*, I think it may help some of its readers to a little better understanding of Chapter III., where he tells of successive periods of evolution in seven planets, if I pass on what has helped me,—as to that—in several other books; more especially those of Mr. Oxley and *Le Monde des Esprits*, by M. J. Roze (medium), published in Paris twenty-one years ago.

While I accepted Mr. Sinnett's statements, or at least offered no mental resistance to them, on this theme, I still found it impossible to imagine how a powerful being who had become compacted from vast size to microscopic dimensions, could evolve itself as a mineral; and by what process of transition the spiritual force which had formed a mineral in one planet should in the next round of existence form a vegetable; for clearly the one did not become the other, as both remain extant; even as the lower animals remain, while man in his present phase of being aspires after true humanity.

If I rightly understand the communications of *L'Esprit de la Vérité* recorded by M. J. Roze, he agrees with the spirit-teachers of the Baroness Von Vay, in describing a state of dispersion of life germs in the *Cosmic Ethert* of Allan Kardec, prior to what we call the creation of material bodies.

What was antecedent to this diffused potentiality of life must not be even glanced at here, though on this point the spirit instructors of the Baroness von Vay are very precise; and with their evidence, and that of Mr. Oxley, I believe we might construct a partly intelligible outline of creative history, on the lines which one sentence of M. Roze briefly indicates:—"The continually renewed existence of spirit which arises, descends, and rises again ceaselessly, in helping—just by his ascension—his fellows to arise." (*Monde des Esprits*, p. 191.) An idea exhaustively impressed on us by the angels of Mr. Oxley's circle.

But assuming as a foregone conclusion the descent of the spirit which is ultimately to be incarnated as man, and re-ascend as angel to Godlike being, let us notice the agreement of the "controls" of both the Baroness von Vay and M. Roze. "Let us place ourselves in the furnace of creation, in the central point of the universe: see! from thence goes life and animation in the form of beams! Millions of life germs yet really only forming one beam of light, pour themselves out of this infinite centre into the universe by rotatory movement, animating in their first turn chemical and subtilised fluids and matter—these only revolve and move themselves downwards. Here the life beam which came out of the Great Unity, already broken, multiplies and forms its own circle of beams in the fluids of other circles and suns. These fluids now rotate, always downwards as they animate; the principle of life works now solidifying, forming what is firm. In this way every light atom finds its own clothing, form, and development from the spiritual to the material, through all minerals and vegetables. But these transformations are always superintended by the animating spirits of the universe. From the life of the mineral the rotation of life germs introduces that of vegetables, where they in

* The characteristically Aryan protest, however, that mere religiosity, or even moral goodness is not enough to secure an elevated re-incarnation, does seem very important. Surely the intellect, and all our powers, require cultivation and development; our future state must depend largely on this also—though certainly love and goodness are primary. Of course, Buddhists do admit that by arduous self-discipline and contemplation, the force and consequences of *Karma* may be conquered, and we may reach Nirvana. But they insist less on active love, and more on solitary contemplation than Christians, and they direct us to look into ourselves, not out of ourselves, for regeneration. In looking away from self to God as the Absolute Love that embraces all, and to one another as needing our love, and giving us the love we need, herein we Christians find strength, and deliverance from our own lower selves. The aim, however, is much the same: one is glad to believe.

† "This fluid penetrates bodies like an immense ocean. It is in it that the vital principle resides which gives birth to the life of beings, and perpetuates it in every globe according to its state, source of the latent condition which sleeps where the voice of a living being has not aroused it. Every creature, mineral, vegetable, animal, or whatsoever it be—for there are other kingdoms of nature of which you do not even suspect the existence—by virtue of this universal vital principle, knows how to appropriate to itself the conditions necessary to its existence and prolongation of life."—*Allan Kardec's La Génèse*, Chap. 6 par. 18.

‡ "Feuerofen" in text.

their future transfusion with animal life, attain to a soul's, i.e., to a consciously progressive life. Here the life germs develop themselves, each after their kind, and derivations and modifications from one another begin." (*Studien über die Geisterwelt. Von Adelma F. von Vay*, p. 9.)

M. Roze inquired of his *esprit de la vérité*, "when the spirit departs from the Divine centre to go and co-operate in creation," "what motive impels it to such self-devotion?" Reply: "Extreme charity or the desire to create, and the necessity of escaping from eternal inactivity." [Pardon me, so-called Spirit of truth, if there I find you little removed from a Frenchman in the flesh!] "Being thus transformed, does the spirit always form the same individuality? Does it remain whole while losing the greater part of its qualities?" "It divides itself infinitely, but inevitably regains its individuality at a later epoch, by the care of those who are charged with directing it in its new condition." (*Monde des Esprits*, p. 189.)

"What," asked M. Roze, "is the office of a spirit in creation upon the globes?" "The spirit acts in different ways according to the state of advancement in which it finds itself. This action works in the elementary and divisional state in the mineral and vegetable; in the mineral it is merely attractive and directive of fluids; attractive and intuitive in the vegetable; more or less intuitive and intelligent with the animal; and intelligent, reasonable, and free with man. Only we must take into grave consideration that these different states in which spirit exerts its activity are not followed one after the other on one and the same globe; and that the perfection gradually acquired before it attains to man takes place in worlds more and more advanced in progress. When it reaches that point, its intelligence, as an animal, has reached all the development of which it is susceptible; the light that enlightens it and gives it knowledge of good and evil, of its freedom," (of choice) "these are given by spirits commissioned by God for that purpose." (*Ibid.*, p. 195.)

Query: "The true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." (John i. 9.)

Like the teachers of the Baroness von Vay* who insist on spirit, force and matter as the three factors of spiritual existence; the spirits who instructed M. Roze specify a *spiritual*, *fluidic*, and *material* molecule as indispensable for life; but clearly, according to their doctrine, these molecules are not vivified without the co-operative agency of a spirit, for at p. 209 we read that "intelligence and love emanate from the spirit, and that the spiritual molecule transmits their effects."

I should have been quite at a loss to imagine how the molecule can be spiritual and yet *not* the quickening spirit had not Mr. Oxley, both in his *Angelic Revelations*, and in his admirable introduction to *The Philosophy of Spirit*, made us understand that every human body throws off particles susceptible of future evolution to true spirit life. "Every particle, every atom that composes the human organism during any part of its integrity, has a spirit life of its own, and is subject to the laws of involution, evolution, and development as the centre spirit principle, or first form itself." (p. 14) In the necessity of a higher spirit descending to quicken the *spiritual molecule*, Christians will recognise the same law which makes the agency of the Holy Spirit (doubtless a *complex unity*) essential to the life of Christ in them.

Now, when in the air or on any earth we find spirit spoken of as uniting itself to the most inert receptacles of life—material molecules—in order to begin the externalising of the human microcosm, we must, according to Mr. Oxley, assume that these molecules are the *débris* of a formerly ultimated spirit, and vague thoughts arise of possibilities too vast for mention here. The "homogeneous ground" of *Fabre d'Olivet*,† in his translation of *Genesis* ii. 7, comes to mind; and Van Helmont's account of Adamah, in his "Thoughts on the First Four Books of Moses." "Adam in framing his own body did thereby contribute to the formation of animals, inasmuch as the world itself is in Adam." . . . "Adam was taken out of Adamah, that is, out of the mass of imperfect seeds." . . . "He himself and all other things are forced to return to Adamah and dust, until all the smallest particles of the dust of seeds awakened and stirred up in the *Æon*, after having been baptised with light be restored again to a spiritual nature."

Nor will the Bible student fail to recall that mysterious saying of Jesus Christ, "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." (Matt. iii. 9.)

As long ago as 1858 Mr. T. Lake Harris said, while in a state of trance: "Through the world soul of the orb there is a flowing in of the mineral spirit. A second flowing in from the vegetable spirit establishes the vegetable kingdom. A third flowing in of the animal spirit establishes the animal kingdom." (*Arcana of Christianity*, p. 200, par. 343.)

The context is well worth reading by anyone interested in this subject, and especially par. 351, where it is said, "There is in man a mineral, vegetable, and animal spirit." . . . "The vegetable, animal, and mineral spirits in a man never die, but are withdrawn at the moment of dissolution on our orb."

But here a new aspect of the subject has slipped in "through the world soul." And at p. 303, par. 548 of the same wonder-

ful book we find it said: "When a spirit ascends and becomes an angel, the spirit of his mineral, vegetable and animal life is discreted from the plane of Nature, and becomes the continent or basis of a new earth in the Heavens through the mineral degree of his angelic body. By means of this composite form there are projected into objective existence a new generation of infinitesimal particles. Each angel throughout the Heavens is made the medium for the distribution of new molecules of substance into space."

Mr. Oxley's teachers speak with emphasis of the same fact. Yet the puzzle is—and on such totally unfixed premises the mind naturally *scabbles* a good deal—what has any *world soul* been before it descended?—whence got it ultimating particles? and can the grossness of *matter* as opposed to *substance* be due to the corruption of the soul of our world of which Mr. Harris speaks? I believe satisfactory answers to these questions can be drawn from Böhme, but they cannot be given briefly. To return to M. Roze, with his always *intelligible* spirits. He asked, "The action of the spirit being that of a director of the fluids, when this action has produced its effect on a body, whatever it be, does the spirit remain in it permanently? Yes, it remains in all that is endowed with life so long as that life itself lasts, but it leaves as soon as this leaves: in the mineral it is only attached to it during its formation, and it abandons it as soon as its labour is accomplished, since its action is only that of a director of the attractive force of fluids. In the vegetable and animal kingdoms its action in a divisional state is the same, and ceases as soon as life withdraws: it returns, as in the case of the mineral, to the atmosphere, and remains there ready to serve, following the laws of progress, for a superior creation, and so on, until passing to a kingdom more elevated than that which it has just quitted, it acquires individuality first in animating a microscopic Being. Progression is then effected by incrustations until it attains to animals of highest intelligence. It then forms the *Unity* which later on is to become a human soul." (*Monde des Esprits*, p. 203.)

This statement is signed "*The Spirit of Truth*"—and such, no doubt, the speaker supposed himself to be, but in calling that the *becoming of a human soul*, I make bold to say he was mistaken. Had he said its *manifestation*, he would surely have spoken more accurately.

"A divisional state." How much that term suggests to a mind which has pondered on the fetters which our present *conscious* existence seems to put on sub-conscious faculties! No doubt, in the human being at its present stage, the great disguised spirit we call man is still in a divisional state, not only severed into myriads of human atoms, as many as the plants into which vegetable life is divided, but employing even in all these but a small fraction of his latent original powers.

"Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

By the curious expression "*incrustations*" I understand an aggregate of atomic life, each with the *spirit* of each particle drawn together by the force of attractive affinity, and forming an organic whole; for "*the human organism is a collection of spirits drawn together by the Divine Spirit.*" (*Angelic Revelations*, vol. III., p. 325.) And again we are told on the same authority:—

"The human organism is a composite form, built up and maintained in its integrity by the continuous action of countless atoms of spirit essence and existence, in conjunction with the central or ruling atom, which itself changes as they change and forms a one with them, as they form a one with it." (*Oxley's Philosophy of Spirit*, p. 24.)

"The molecules of matter obey incarnate Deity: *these molecules are in their inmost atomic men.* At his past commands they stood arrayed in serried ranks to form the first types of the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms." (*Harris's Arcana of Christianity*, p. 182, par. 344.)

To accept the assertion that our bodies now are a complex life of molecular individual *embodied spirits*, is to go a long way towards believing Swedenborg's doctrine as to the *grand man* of whom all races of spiritual beings are constituent members.

One of Mr. Oxley's instructors tells us that "every individual form of life coming forth from the great fountain-head has the power to attract to itself, and to assume the many forms and degrees which are called *soul*," also that "the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms come forth from that wondrous fabric—the human soul." (*Angelic Revelations*, vol. III., p. 154.)

I am too deeply indebted to Böhme to accept any modern revelations without comparing their upshot with his, and as I gather from his writings that the world soul formed the "coats of skin," (i.e., the gross animal body) with which Adam and Eve were clothed on leaving Paradise—"God had clothed them, through the spirit of the Great World with the skins of beasts instead of the heavenly clothing of clarity and brightness." (see *The Becoming Man* Part I, chap. 6, p. 5), as in the same chapter, par. 37, the Spirit of the Great World is said to have "*figured the woman in such a form as it could in possibility; for the angelical form was gone.*" It appears to me very probable that the same Power was the Executive of the Divine Word in evolving man's animal body from the dust of the ground, in long cycles of ages, before the breath of life was given and man became a living soul, in contradistinction, as I suppose, to the animal soul. Of course, it will be objected to this that by "the first-born of every creature

* *Geist Kraft und Stoff.* By Adelma von Vay.

† "Adamah, principe élémentaire, terre homogène et similaire à Adam; terre primitive très éloignée de celle qui frappe nos sens, et ainsi différente de la terre proprement dite, que l'homme intelligible, universel est différent de l'homme corporel et particulier."—*Fabre d'Olivet's La Cosmogonie de Moïse.*

were all things created"; but let it be remembered that a word includes letters, even in our language; in the Word that God spake, by which all that exists was made, every lesser spiritual agent is necessarily included. Let Böhmé explain my meaning: "As the Alphabet is the whole understanding of all things or substances, so is *God's Word* the only and sole understanding of all things, and the Angels are its letters." . . . "As a man with his senses and thoughts, governeth the World and all things or substances; so God the Eternal Unity, ruleth all things through the management and doings of the Angels; only the power and the work is God's." . . . "The visible world is no other than the *outflowed Word*, with both the central fires, which have again made to themselves a subject or object with or out of the outward elementary fire, wherein the outward creatures live." (*Theosophic Quest.*, 5, par. 20. *Ibid.*, 6 pars. 7, 41.) Thus can I, a little help myself to understand the connection of the world soul and individual man's. As to what Böhmé designates elsewhere (*Mysterium Magnum*, chap. 22, verse 4), "*the Elemental Compaction*, viz., *the body which the Eris hath attracted to itself*," I can believe that the original soul of man was the pre-existent fire that, in temporary abeyance of conscious life, worked out its divisional ultimates—body—through and with the ultimated body of the world soul on which it still has the basis of all animal life; just as I believe the physical particles, and the spirits of the particles of my hand or foot to be the outcome of my animal soul; and both the world soul and that of every human being are the product of the ceaseless working of the seven Spirits of Eternal Nature: out of harmony in both, and consequently making our world and our nature what they are.

And it seems to me that Böhmé's term "*generating*" is more likely to be accurate than "*attracting*" as to the molecular outbirth of soul; the attraction (I speak as a fool!) would begin from the spirit evolved from soul, for a higher spirit in descent, seeking out what it would best combine with, and assume and elevate.

And here we meet the omnipresent law of actives and passives, male and female, spirit and matter, the force that seeks a subordinated co-agent and the potential force that, being found, intensifies the power of its counterpart. Also, I dimly apprehend how the spirit of the universal Adam descending may thus have assumed the world-soul, when on the sixth creative cycle its astral spirit was evolved, when the understanding which, according to Böhmé wakens with the predominance of the sixth form of eternal nature, was ready to receive the perfecting completion of the seventh. By this assumption, his frequent saying of man having all beasts in himself—and Van Helmont's "The body of Adam was made out of the dust of Adamah" "and every least dust of this dust is a creature hidden as yet," are explained.

And, finally, when once we grasp the idea of humanity being a sum total of the antecedents of life on every lower plane; the spirit of man having assumed the lowest and worked its way upwards, and every human body being constituted of myriads of spiritual entities awaiting their future development on a similar route, we not only see what has been gained by man having been made lower than the angels and ultimated in matter, but we see what was effected by the Word being made flesh. In assuming the human soul the first-begotten Son of God took man into His nature, made man capable of sharing His progress from glory to glory, as more and more a victor He subdues all things to love, till having destroyed all the works of the adversary, death is conquered and God is all in all.

A. J. PENNY.

October 15th.

A PROTEST OF THEOSOPHISTS.

Copies of the following "protest," signed by upwards of 500 Hindu Theosophists, reached us a few mails ago with a request for publication in these columns. Setting aside the question of space, it was manifestly impossible to print such a large number of names from, in many cases, badly written and illegible MSS., and after consultation with an official member of the Indian Theosophical Society, now in this country, we determined to publish the text of the "protest" and a selection of the names attached to that which emanated from the parent society. Beyond that we may mention that "protests" have come to hand from societies in all parts of India, each mail for some time past having brought us a bundle of these letters.—Editor of LIGHT.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The undersigned Hindu Theosophists having been made acquainted with the expressions used by "G. W., M. D." in your journal, with respect to Aryan Esoteric Philosophy and our revered Mahatmas, do indignantly protest. Such language as the gentleman has indulged in, every Hindu whether educated or not would regard as shocking and blasphemous, evincing in its author a bad heart, bigotted prejudice, and the grossest ignorance about our ancient Philosophy and Esoteric Science.

We are, sir, your obedient servants,

Dewan Bahadoor R. Raghonath Row,
P. Sreenivasaw Row,
T. Subba Row, B.A., B.L., Pleader High Court of Judicature.
A. Theaga Rajer

P. Murugesam Mudaliar.
P. Ratuavelu Mudaliar.
C. V. Cunniah Chetty.
P. Parthasarathy Chetty.
D. Mooni Sing.
Balai Chand Mullick.
C. Veneata Jagga Row, B.A.
Toke Joyarama Naidu.
J. Sarabhalingam Naidu, B.A.
S. W. Sithambaram Pillay.
B. Ramaswamy Naidu.
V. Sessa Aiyar, B.A.
R. Casava Pillay.
P. Narayana Aiyer, B.A., B.L., High Court Vakeel.
V. Coopposwamy Iyer, M.A., Pleader.
A. Narayanaswamy Iyer, Vakeel, High Court.
V. Subramaniya Iyer, B.L., High Court Vakeel.
M. Tillanayagan Pillay, B.A., Deputy Collector.
N. Soondram Ayar, B.A.
P. S. Gurumurti Ayer, B.A., B.L., District Munsiff.
N. Raghunathachar, B.A.
S. Gopala Krishna Iyer.
N. Subramanya Iyer, B.A., Pleader.
N. Samunath Punth.
C. R. Pathabhiramaiyar, B.A., B.L., Registrar.
V. Rajagopalachary.
S. V. P. Chinnatambier, Zemindar.
T. Vedadrissa Dasa Mudlyar, Pensioner Judge, Sadre Court.
S. Ramaswamier, District Registrar.
S. Sun dram Iyer, Teacher.
B. Ramaswami Naidu
T. Krishna Row
H. Sreenivasaw Row.
A. G. Hari Rao.
B. Virasowmiaah, Munsiff, District Adoni.
C. Authecasovalu Reddy, Postmaster.
C. Munisami Nayadu, Head Clerk.
P. Sama Rao, Pleader, District Court.
C. Surya Ayar, District Munsiff.
M. Natarajur, District Registrar.
S. Devanayaga Moodlyer, Municipal Commissioner.
S. Raja Gopalaiyengar, B.A., Head Master St. Joseph's Institution.
M. Muniswamy Naidu.
R. Ananta Rama Iyer, Tahsildar.
R. Narainswamy Naidu.
L. Krishnienga, Pleader, District Court.
D. Retua Mudlyar, Sowear.
P. Subba Aiyar, Pleader, District Court.
T. Pattabhiram Pillai.
S. Krishnamachary, Pleader, District Court.
N. Saminadaiyar, Acting District Munsiff.
P. Runganayakloo Naidoo, Private Secretary to Raja Murli, Mandar Bahadoor.
P. Jyaloo Naidoo, Retired Deputy Collector.
Moorti Ethirajulu Naidu.
Dorabjee Dosabloy, Taluqdar of Customs, H.H. Nizam's Dominions.
C. Kupperawami Aiyar.
J. M. Rajhoomayakulu Naidu, Officiating Manager, H.H. Nizam's Private Secretariat.
V. Balkrishnah Moodlyer.
C. Comarswamy Pillay.
Tookaram Taty.
Pandurang Gopal, G.G.M.C., Surgeon.
Vithobrao Pandurang Mhatre, L.M.S., Physician.
Janardan Damodar Kolatkar.
Jannadas Premchand, L.M.S.
S. Venkatarama Shastri, B.A.
S. Krishnaswami Aiyer, B.A.
V. Krishnaiyar, B.A.B.L. Pleader, High Court.
S. Sundram Iyer, Pleader, First Grade.
S. A. Saminada Iyer, Pleader.
T. K. Annasami Iyer, Pleader.
P. T. Sreenivasaiengar, B.A., Head Master, N.H. School.
V. Suyambu Iyer, Pleader.
N. P. Subramania Aier, Pleader.
R. Sreenivasaiengar, Pleader.
P. N. Ratnasabhapati Pillay.
K. P. Venkatavaniayar, Pleader, First Grade.
Ananda
Damodar K. Mavalankar.
Nobin K. Banerjee, Deputy Collector, Berhampore.
Norendro Nath Sen, Editor and Proprietor, *Indian Mirror*.
Mohini Mohan Chatterjee, M.A.B.L.
J. N. Unwalla, M.A.,
Bhowani Saunkar Ganesh.
Bhola Deb Sarma.
S.T.K. Chary.
Garga Deb.
Darbhagiri Nath.
T. C. Rajamiengar.

What shall make the truth visible? Through the smoky glass of sense the blessed sun may never know himself.—*Bailey's Festus*.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

Esoteric Buddhism and its Critic.
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

"BOTTOM. Let me play the lion. . . . I will roar, that I will do any man's heart good to hear me. . . . I will make the Duke say. . . . 'Let him roar, let him roar again'. . . . Masters, you ought to consider with yourselves; to bring in, God shield us! a lion among ladies is a most dreadful thing: for, there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion, and we ought to look to it. . . . Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck, and he himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect—'Ladies, or fair ladies, (or Theosophists) . . . I would ask you, or I would request you, or I would entreat you, not to fear, not to tremble. If you think I came hitherto as a lion . . . no, I am nosuch thing: I am a man . . . and then, indeed, let him name his name.'" (Mitsum r Night's Dream.)

SIR,—In "LIGHT" of July 21st, in the "Correspondence," appears a letter signed "G. W., M.D." Most transparent initials these which "name the name" at once, and shew the writer's face "through the lion's neck." The communication consists of just fifty-eight paragraphs, containing an equal number of sneering, rancorous, vulgar personal flings, the whole distributed over three and a-half columns. It pretends to criticize, while only misquoting and misinterpreting Eastern Esotericism. Its author would create a laugh at the expense of Mr. Sinnett's book, and succeeds in shewing us what a harmless creature is the "lion"—"wild-fowl" though he may be; and where he would make a show of wit, the letter is only—*nasty*.

I should not address your public, even in my private capacity, but that the feelings of many hundreds of my Asiatic Brothers have been outraged by this, to them, ribald attack upon what they hold sacred; for them, and at their instance—I protest. It might be regarded as beneath contempt, had it come from an outsider upon whom rested no obligation to uphold the dignity of the Theosophical Society; in such case it would have passed for a clumsy attempt to injure an unpalatable cause—that of Esoteric Buddhism. But, when it is a wide open secret that the letter came from a member of about five years' standing and one who, upon the prolongation of the "British Theosophical Society" as the "London Lodge of the Theosophical Society," retained membership, the case has quite another aspect. The cutting insult having been inflicted publicly, and without antecedent warning, it appears necessary to inquire as to the *occult* motive.

I shall not stop to remark upon the wild *résumé*, which, professedly "a criticism from a European and arithmetical standpoint," passed muster with you. Nor shall I lose time over the harmless flings at "incorrigible Buddhists and other lunatics," beyond remarking a *propos* of "moon" and "dust-bins," that the former seems to have found a good symbol of herself as "a dust-bin" in the heads of those whose perceptive faculties seem so dusty as to prevent the entrance of a single ray of occult light. Briefly then, since the year 1879, when we came to India, the author of the letter in question has made attempts to put himself into communication with the "Brothers." Besides trying to enter into correspondence with Colonel Olcott's *guru*, he sent twice, through myself, letters addressed to the Mahatmas. Being, as it appears, full of one-sided, prejudiced questions, suggesting to Buddhist philosophers the immense superiority of his own "Esoteric" Christianity over the system of the Lord Buddha, which he characterised as fruitful of selfishness, human blindness, misanthropy and *spiritual death*, they were returned by the addressees for our edification, and to show us why they would not notice them. Whoever has read a novelette, contributed by this same gentleman to the *Psychological Review* and entitled "The Man from the East," will readily infer what must have been his attitude towards the "Himalayan" and Tibetan mystics; a Scotch doctor, the hero, meets at a place in Syria, in an Occult Brotherhood, a Christian convert from this "Himalayan heathen Brotherhood," who,—a Hindu—utters against his late adept masters the self-same libels as are now repented in the letter under notice.*

The shot at Theosophy being badly aimed, flew wide of the mark; but still, like Richard III., "G. W., M.D.," resolved, as it appears, to keep up the gunnery—

"If not to fight with foreign enemies,"

Yet to beat down *these rebels* here at home."

The three indignant answers called out by "G. W., M.D.," having emanated from an English lady and two genuine English gentlemen, are, in my humble opinion, too dignified and mild for the present case. So brutal an attack demanded something stronger than well-bred protests; and at the risk of being taken by "G. W., M.D." as the reverse of "well-bred," I shall use

* The mythical hero of the story would seem to have met at Paris with a certain *pseudo* Brahmin, a convert to Roman Catholicism, who is giving himself out as an *ex-chela* of the Hindu Mahatmas. As he is neither a Brahmin nor was ever a *chela*,—his statements and all corroborative ones to the contrary, notwithstanding—he may have misled, if not the mythical Scotch doctor, at least the actual "M.D.," of London. And, by-the-way, our French Fellows may as well know, that unless this pretender ceases his bogus revelations as to the phenomenal powers of our Mahatmas being "of the devil," a certain native gentleman who has known this convert of the Jesuits from childhood, will expose him most fully.—H. P. B.

Plain words about this whilom friend, but now traitor;—I hope to shew the term is not too harsh. As an ardent Theosophist, the grateful, loyal friend of the author denounced—who deserves and *has* the regard of Mahatma Koot-Hoomi—and as the humble pupil of those to whom I owe my life, and the future of my soul, I shall speak. While I have breath, I shall never allow to pass unnoticed such ugly manifestations of religious intolerance, nay, *bigotry*, and personal rancour resulting from envy, in a member of our Society.

Before closing I must notice one especially glaring fact. Touched evidently to the quick by Mr. Sinnett's very proper refusal to let one so inimical see the "Divine face" (yes, truly Divine, though not so much so as the original) of the Mahatma, "G. W., M.D." with a sneer of equivocal propriety, calls it a *mistake*. "For just," says he, "as some second-class saints have been made by gazing on half-penny prints of the Mother of God, so who can say that if my good friend had permitted my sceptical eyes to look on the Divine face of Koot-Hoomi I might not forthwith have been converted into an Esoteric Buddhist?"

Impossible; an Esoteric Buddhist never broke his pledged word; and one who upon entering the Society gave his *solemn* Word of Honour, in the presence of witnesses, that he would "defend the interests of the Society and the honour of a brother Theosophist, *when unjustly assailed*, even at the peril of my (his) own life," and then could write such a letter, would never be accepted in that capacity. One who unjustly assails the honour of hundreds of his Asiatic Brothers, slurs their religion and wounds their most sacred feelings, may be a very *Esoteric* Christian, but certainly is a very *disloyal* Theosophist. My perceptions of what constitutes a man of honour may be very faulty, but, I confess that I could not imagine such a one to make public caricatures upon confessedly "private instructions." (See second column, paragraph 14 of his letter.) *Private instructions* of this sort, given at confidential private meetings of the Society in advance of their publication, are exactly what the entering member's "word of honour" pledges him *not to reveal*. "Esoteric Buddhist?" No, tell him—

"Thy broken faith hath made thee prey for worms;
What canst thou swear by now?"

Your correspondent deprecates "at the outset this Oriental practice of secrecy"; he knows, "that Secrecy and Cunning are ever twin sisters," and it appears to him "childish and effeminate" to pretend "by secret words and signs to enshrine great truths behind a veil, which is only useful as a concealment of ignorance and nakedness." Indeed! so he is *not* an "Esoteric Christian" after all, else I have misread the Bible. For what I find there in various passages, of which I cite but one, shews me that he is as disloyal to his own Master and Ideal-Christ, as he is to Theosophy:—"And He said unto them," (His own disciples) "unto you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God; but unto them that are without, (the "G. W., M. D.'s" of the day?) all these things are done in parables, that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; *lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.*" (Mark iv. 11, 12.)

Shall we characterise this also as "childish and effeminate" say that the twin sisters "Secrecy and Cunning" lurk behind this veil, and that in this instance, as usual, it was "only useful as a concealment of ignorance and nakedness"? The grandeur of Esoteric Buddhism is, that it hides what it does from the vulgar, not "lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins forgiven them," or as they would say "cheat their Karma"—but, lest by learning prematurely that which can safely be trusted only to those who have proved their unselfishness and self-abnegation, *even the wicked, the sinners* should be hurt.

And now, may the hope of *Bottom* be realised, and some London Duke say to this harmless lion, "Let him roar, let him roar again."

H. P. BLAVATSKY.

Nilgherry Hills, August 23rd, 1883.

Esoteric Buddhism

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—"C. C. M.," in his answer to Mrs. Penny ("LIGHT," July 14th, p. 323), says:—"To know what Christianity is as a religion of the world, I must take what Christians and Christian Churches believe," and further that the Archbishop of Canterbury "is a representative of that power in the world, which we call Christianity." Are we to take the monks of Central Asia and the Grand Lama of Thibet as our exponents of Buddhism?

Is it a doctrine of Buddhism that a woman cannot take to herself an additional husband, without first paying two or three cows to the priest? Are we to look upon the water-wheels, which keep written prayers in motion night and day, as Buddhist institutions, which they certainly are? Or are we to make pilgrimages, as they do in Central Asia, to look for the glory of Buddha in the mists seen from the top of a vast precipice?

Is the letter of "A Catholic Priest" ("LIGHT," No. 137), to be taken as an evidence that the Catholic Church believes in Re-incarnation, and agrees with Esoteric Buddhism? I fancy the writer would receive scant countenance from his ecclesiastical superiors in his bold utterance.

"C. C. M.," quotes Colonel Ingersoll's remarks on the quotation from the New Testament—"He that believeth and is

baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be *damned*." The whole essence of these remarks depends on the meaning of the last word, and though Colonel Ingersoll may be unacquainted with it, I should expect "C. C. M." to be better informed, and to be fully aware that the meaning attached to it by many theologians is wholly unwarranted. If we used the English (or rather Latin) word in its true meaning, we should probably read in the morning papers that so-and-so had been *damned* to pay a fine of five shillings for being drunk, and whatever be the truth in question, the man who has the evidence before him, or even the means of obtaining the evidence, and either cannot believe, or refuses to examine, is undoubtedly *damned* to bear whatever penalty attaches to his consequent ignorance. This, of course, will be great or small in proportion to the character of the truth involved, and with regard to Christianity will be, if this be true, not quite as serious as we are told will be the consequences of our mistakes at the conclusion of a manvantara. The Greek word translated *damned* in the old version, and *condemned* in the revised version of the New Testament, is in no case entitled to bear the common theological acceptance of the old version.

The *damnation* of Esoteric Buddhism is far worse than that of the New Testament, the condemnation of which is no doubt to suffering, but in all cases for the purpose of purification, while according to the Buddhist teaching, that which is found reprobate is thrown to a real destruction.

Your correspondent "Vera" repeats the assertion that Jesus was a Buddhist, but He certainly taught a doctrine the very opposite of that laid down by the secretary of the Theosophical Society in the words "There is no God, personal or impersonal," and He never taught any doctrine from which we could infer the Esoteric Buddhist idea of the continued re-incarnations. His own direction as regards the teaching, which His hearers could not bear at that time, was that it would come from the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, whom the Father would send. The only adeptship known to His disciples is that obtained by this teaching which, though it does explain and enlarge what He said, cannot contradict it. The dispensation under which we live, and which He came to bring into the world, is that of direct communion with the Holy Spirit, and we need not that any man teach us, whether that man be the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Pope of Rome, or the mythical Koot Hoomi.

Those who talk and write about Buddhism should first recollect that Buddha cannot have been the name of a man. The ancient meaning of the word, one still in use in the oldest language known, shews how it was adopted. It is simply another name for the Lingam, the oldest idol known to man, worshipped as a symbol of creation, and its use is only an instance of the transference of names, as of festivals, from one phase of faith to another, accomplished by those who brought in and preached a new doctrine.

"C. C. M." must admit that he has been discussing a philosophy which, though called Buddhist, cannot be even known to one Buddhist in ten thousand, and of which most likely not one thousand of those now living have ever heard. The proportion of those called Christians, who know something of the foundation of Christianity, is infinitely greater, and seeing that, save in the Church of Rome, independent judgment with regard to the Bible is not only allowed, but preached as a right and a duty, "C. C. M." has no right to take his Christianity from other than the admitted source, which is the New Testament.

Creeds and theologies belong to sects who have practically, in putting them forth, said: "God gave us a revelation. But unfortunately He did not know how to make it clear to men, and now we have done this." The result is that ere long men quarrel over the meanings of the creeds and theologies, more bitterly than they did over the Bible, and simply add to the confusion which they had formerly created. Take as an instance of such confusion the two words quoted by "C. C. M." from the second Article of the Church of England, "Original guilt." Such a phrase is not to be found in the Bible, though men may argue that certain passages have a meaning which warrants the expression. With regard to Christianity, moreover, the candid observer must admit that there is among those classed as Christians no divergence of doctrine so great as is to be noted between Esoteric Buddhism and the doctrines and practices of the Tibetan and Chinese Buddhists. Nearly all the different bodies of professing Christians admit, if they do not preach, the doctrine of the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Most of them hold the Deity of Jesus Christ, and the doctrine of the Vicarious Sacrifice, as to the moral effect of which I may, with your leave, say a word at another time; and they all believe in God the Creator and in Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, though they may differ as to the nature or mode of the redemption.

"C. C. M." is much too logical not to know that in attacking the Articles of the Church of England, he is dealing with what may be no necessary portion of Christianity, though it belongs to one of the Christian bodies. If a controversy is to be carried on between philosophical systems, let us conduct it on plainly recognised lines on both sides; not upon an inner philosophy on the one side, and a sectional superstition on the other. I notice in the communications which have appeared in "LIGHT," attacking Christianity, that in most cases the writers make one fact very clear, namely, that they have never taken the trouble

to study either the Old or the New Testament, but have been ready to accept as Christian doctrine what they have obtained after it had been filtered through several human brains, rather than to go direct to the fountain for themselves. Let us not appeal to the Archbishop of Canterbury, when we can study the writings of St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. John, and the sayings of the Lord Jesus Christ.

H. T. HUMPHREYS.

Kennington.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I could not but expect that when the articles of such able writers as "Dr. W." and "M.A. (Oxon.*)" are subject to criticism, my simple views, however honestly and courteously stated, would share a like fate.

Though I might take exception to almost everything Mr. Gill says, respecting my communication in "LIGHT," I must especially protest against such a gratuitous expression (such, indeed, as critics too often allow themselves to indulge in) as "But, says Mr. Ditson in great glee." I wrote nothing in a mood in the slightest degree *gleeful*, but rather with regret that I had discovered no important revelation where much had been promised.

You will find in one of the early volumes of "Asiatic Researches" how a distinguished scholar (Mr. Colebrook, I think) was deceived (and deeply mortified thereby) by a native Brahmin or Buddhist who assisted (?) him in some translation which he had undertaken. I have seen recently, in print also, that one of our ablest Sanscritists has written as follows respecting M. Jacolliot:—"Many of the words which M. Jacolliot quotes as Sanskrit are not Sanskrit at all; others never have the meaning which he assigns to them." (See "Chips from a German Workshop," Vol. V.) A Brahmin, a friend, a graduate of the English College at Calcutta, assures me (after having read one or both of Mr. Sinnett's books,) that Mr. Sinnett's writings "are humbug." Now I do not agree with the Brahmin, and I regard Mr. Sinnett as highly honourable and intentionally truthful, but as mistaking the value of what he had to publish, "hearsays" being accepted as revelations; putting forth old ideas as new Buddhistic unfoldments; trying most honestly to shed light upon us, yet leaving us in the deep mist of *Devachan*.

The doctrine that there is one, but one, universal substance or principle, was promulgated, and, of course, ably sustained by Spinoza. Respecting the laws of light and of nature, of which "two years ago no living European" (and doubtless, or probably, it was intended to include poor uncultured America) "knew the alphabet of the science here put into scientific shape" (?)—(quoting Mr. Sinnett), I think our author and some of his teachers are mistaken. In a valuable work, "The Kabbala," by Dr. S. Pancoost, of Philadelphia; in some of Mr. Randolph's productions; in Dr. Draper's writings; in the *Duchess de Pomar's*, to say nothing of many more, every thought here advanced has been anticipated, except the method of evolution, the "corkscrewity," as Mr. Massey calls it, by which all matter is to progress to perfection. I say *matter*; but it should be, perhaps, the "universal principle"; still, if this be but one, yet divisible into positive and negative, male and female, "non-existing," yet producing life when they come together (according to Mr. Sinnett)—and if of this one, "non-existing," angelic beings emanate, why this vast round, perchance of some millions of years (more or less in *Devachan* or elsewhere), to effect what it is announced has already been effected by this "non-existing," yet productive, oneness?

Too much space would be required to give an analysis of what I, in my humble opinion, call illogical and unphilosophical in Mr. Sinnett's statements. I am, however, most willing to admit that I may not comprehend him.

"The views of Nature now put forward," says Mr. Sinnett, "are altogether unfamiliar to European thinkers." A reply to this has been partially made above, but I would here more particularly ask: What views? The exceptional view of evolution, unique in its method, and perchance true, will be, and is, gravely questioned, and with re-incarnation—here in the soul's vast round of unconsciousness till the end is reached—also in its unique method of evolution, has already been almost, if not quite, refuted by Mr. Gerald Massey. (See "LIGHT," August 25th.)

Again, Mr. Sinnett says:—"When a man is dead life is said to have departed from him; whereas *life* becomes the most potential from that very moment and awakens with a new vigour in every one of the molecules of the dead man—separately; *Prana*, the breath of life, stirs up every atom of the corpse." (P. 282.) Where is the proof? *Per contra*; put this corpse into a glass case, air exhausted, hermetically sealed, and I defy any manifestation that *Prana* can make upon it, except to let it alone—there alone, as inert matter through ages and ages. Put it in the ground, with moisture and warmth, and to be sure, it develops new forms. Or freeze the body and it will be a mass of dead material like those huge animals which have been found imbedded in ice in extreme northern latitudes. Where was *Prana* to make their particles fly round and "stir up their every atom"?

Further:—"When life has retired from the last particle of brain-matter his (man's) perceptive faculties become extinct forever, and his spiritual powers of cognition and volition become

for the time being as extinct as the other" and, "When a man dies his soul becomes unconscious and, loses all remembrances of things internal as well as external." (p. 88.) Now, do Mr. Sinnett's defenders accept this as a Divine disclosure coming from the Brothers? I do not so accept it, do not believe it; and I, from my high brotherhood of the spirit world, am authorised to proclaim it as false. But, kind readers, I do not ask you to accept my opinions any more than I would have you accept Mr. Sinnett's; for he gives us nothing in support of his assertion for instance, that "the tradition of countless ages is now being given up." His *ipse dixit*, without the showing, has no more intrinsic value than what is demonstrable to be untrue in the (supposed credible from their honourable source) productions above referred to, of Messrs. Colebrook and Jacolliot. My Hindu friend repudiates almost wholly and entirely everything Mr. Sinnett advances.

Mr. Gill, my critic, says: "This spiritual knowledge, exact and experimental as it is, cannot be proved upon paper, or tested in the laboratory." This is the reason why the teachings of the "Brothers" (in whose high spiritual endowments I believe) are so generally discredited—as were the Swedish seer's; but they are in harmony with the New Testament record that Heaven is within us and that we are gods.

"The object of the Mahatmas," further says Mr. Gill, "is to teach us . . . the way to work the great wonder of salvation *ourselves*, in which miraculous process miracles are but incidents of the march." I fear that here Mr. Gill is a little in the dark. Neither the *Mahatmas* nor any of the Oriental adepts believe in miracles. Everything is in accord with fixed laws. To learn how to become "saviours of ourselves," is, I think, no difficult matter; nor how to make gold; to make oneself insensible to pain, heat or cold; or, to make a plant grow from a seed in a few hours, or perhaps moments. By following the teachings of the *gurus*,—by isolation from the world, by fasting, contemplation (and prayer),—I have myself been enabled to rise through and become superior to matter; to see our earth rolling beneath me, and its little dark toilers digging there, heedless of the angel of light who seemed awaiting their looking up to him. I have risen in daylight to see one of the planets, Jupiter, I think, as a large black ball, holding its vast way in the heavens. All this may be a subject of ridicule, but that to me is of no consequence. I should say more if it had not the semblance of vanity.

Again, Mr. Gill, remarks on the "superiority of occult over spiritualistic methods." I conceive that there need be, and is, nothing "occult" in either. Both are purely spiritual, or if one does not comprehend it and cannot control his own forces, spiritual as well as physical, it is his own fault, and no *guru* can put into him the capacity. "One must become, but cannot be made an adept."

I am somewhat surprised that Mr. Gill presumes to use toward me the words "quibbles," and "jokes." I am not aware that there is a semblance of either in my plain (not elegant) statements of how I viewed Mr. Sinnett's "Occult World." I have had my own books reviewed favourably and unfavourably, and with perfect equanimity have read such, feeling that each critic had taken his own particular survey of my productions as he had a right to do, should do, and in fact, must do if honest.

G. L. DITSON, F.T.S.

"M. A. (Oxon.)" and Homer.
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Pray allow us to remind "M. A. (Oxon.)" that so far from Homer regarding the physical body as the real man, and the rest as an empty vanishing shade (as stated in the opening "Note" in last "LIGHT"), Homer (as shown by Dr. Anna Kingsford, in her paper on "Re-incarnation," in "LIGHT," April 8th, 1882) represents Odysseus as saying of Heracles, on meeting him in Hades, "There, also, I desecrated the mighty Heracles—his phantom, I say, for, as for himself" (namely, his true soul), "he is enjoying himself at the table of the Immortal gods. . . . And presently he—the phantom—recognised me, and on beholding me, spoke lamenting." (Odyssey XI.)

Mr. Cranstown's recent letters in "LIGHT" contained several other classical instances, all in accordance with the theosophic view—a view which, nevertheless, does not for us depend on any authority, but has the full confirmation of our own experience.

Allow us at the same time to correct the impression likely to be produced by the paragraph at the bottom of the second column of p. 454.

As all things proceed from mind, mind is necessarily competent for the comprehension of all things. So that there is not "an infinity of truth beyond the reach of human reason." But all that that reason has to do is so to purify and expend itself as to become one with the infinite reason which has produced all things. It is not that truth is not infinite, but that reason, when perfected, is also infinite. There is nothing that is incomprehensible or cannot be understood.

The doctrine of the paragraph in question has ever been the stronghold of superstition, and worst enemy of the faith that is based on the "rock" of the understanding, the only faith that "saves."

A. K. and E. M.

Elizabeth Squirrel.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

DEAR SIR,—As further confirmation of the story of Elizabeth Squirrel may I say that some years since a surgeon in this city (now deceased), Mr. J. Crawford Bell, lent me the "Autobiography," assuring me at the same time that the case was therein described with entire truthfulness as he had proved for himself by personal observation.

About two months ago I purchased a copy of the same book from a second-hand bookstall here; on the flyleaf was written by the author.

R. C. P.—s.

"Here lies a simple and unvarnished story,
Its tissues are all woven of the 'True.'
It does not seek to merit aught of glory,
But only to impart a rightful hue.

"With M. E. Squirrel's kind regards."

R.C. P.—s (Name was written in full) was a chemist in Norwich. Yours truly,

GEO. A. KING.

Norwich, October 16th, 1883.

Vision of Joseph Hoag.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Though I have not seen the vision of Joseph Hoag in print previous to its appearance in "LIGHT" for the 6th inst., it may be of some interest to you to know that its predictions, agreeing in their details with what appears in "LIGHT," were related to me in the year 1857 or 1858.—Yours, &c.,

H. T. HUMPHREYS.

Kennington,
October 17th, 1883.

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

The following is a list of eminent persons who, after personal investigation, have satisfied themselves of the reality of some of the phenomena generally known as Psychical or Spiritualistic.

N.B.—An asterisk is prefixed to those who have exchanged belief for knowledge.

SCIENCE.—The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President R.A.S.; W. Crookes, Fellow and Gold Medallist of the Royal Society; C. Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; A. R. Wallace, the eminent Naturalist; W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E. Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin; Dr. Lockhart Robertson; *Dr. J. Elliottson, F.R.S., sometime President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgica, Society of London; *Professor de Morgan, sometime President of the Mathematical Society of London; *Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., sometime Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; *Dr. Ashburner, *Mr. Rutter, *Dr. Herbert Mayo, F.R.S., &c., &c.

*Professor F. Zöllner, of Leipzig, author of "Transcendental Physics," &c.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig; Professor W. E. Weber, of Göttingen; Professor Hofman, of Würzburg; Professor Perty, of Berne; Professors Wagner and Butleroff, of Petersburg; Professors Haro and Mapes, of U.S.A.; Dr. Robert Friese, of Breslau; Mons. Camille Flammarion, Astronomer, &c., &c.

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Is it Conjuring?

It is sometimes confidently alleged that mediums are only clever conjurers, who easily deceive the simple-minded and unwary. But how, then, about the conjurers themselves, some of the most accomplished of whom have declared that the "manifestations" are utterly beyond the resources of their art?—

SAMUEL BELLACHINI, COURT CONJURER AT BERLIN.—I hereby declare it to be a rash action to give decisive judgment upon the objective medial performance of the American medium, Mr. Henry Slade, after only one sitting and the observations so made. After I had, at the wish of several highly esteemed gentlemen of rank and position, and also for my own interest, tested the physical mediumship of Mr. Slade, in a series of sittings by full daylight, as well as in the evening in his bedroom, I must, for the sake of truth, hereby certify that the phenomenal occurrences with Mr. Slade have been thoroughly examined by me with the minutest observation and investigation of his surroundings, including the table, and that I have *not in the smallest degree* found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations, or by mechanical apparatus; and that any explanation of the experiments which took place *under the circumstances and conditions then obtaining* by any reference to prestidigitation is *absolutely* impossible. It must rest with such men of science as Crookes and Wallace, in London; Perty, in Berne; Butler, of, in St. Petersburg; to search for the explanation of this phenomenal power, and to prove its reality. I declare, moreover, the published opinions of laymen as to the "How" of this subject to be premature, and, according to my view and experience, false and one-sided. This, my declaration, is signed and executed before a Notary and witnesses.—(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI, Berlin, December 6th, 1877.

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(With which is Incorporated the British National Association of Spiritualists, Established 1873.)

38. GREAT RUSSELL STREET, BLOOMSBURY, LONDON, W.C.

(Entrance in WOBURN STREET.)

THIS ASSOCIATION was formed for the purpose of uniting Spiritualists of every variety of opinion in an organised body, with a view of promoting the investigation of the facts of Spiritualism, and of aiding students and inquirers in their researches by providing them with the best means of investigation. The Association is governed by a President, Vice-Presidents, and a Council elected annually. The Reference and Lending Libraries contain a large collection of the best works on Spiritualism and occult subjects. Spiritualist and other newspapers and periodicals from all parts of the world are regularly supplied for the Reading Room, to which Members have access daily. The Reading Room and Library is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., during which hours books can be exchanged, and enquiries answered. The Rooms are also open on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday Evenings from 7 to 9 o'clock, when a Member of Council or the Hon. Sec. *pro tem.* will be in attendance to receive visitors and attend to any requirements of members and friends of the Association. Spiritualists and others visiting the Metropolis are cordially invited to visit the Association and inspect the various objects of interest on view in the Reading Room and Library. Information is cheerfully afforded to inquirers on all questions affecting Spiritualism. Discussion Meetings are held fortnightly during the winter months. Admission free to Members and Subscribers, who can introduce one or more friends to each meeting. Programmes can be obtained on application during the winter season. Soirées, at which all friends are welcome are held at intervals during the season. An admission fee is charged, including refreshments:

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Town members to be understood as those residing within the Metropolitan postal district. Prospectuses of the Association and forms of application for Membership can also be procured from the several allied Societies at home and abroad. All communications and inquiries should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, *pro tem.*, Mr. Thos. Burton, 6, Truro-villas, Station-road, Church End Finchley, N., and Post Office Orders made payable to him at the Great Russell-street Post Office. Cheques to be crossed "London and General Bank, Limited."

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