

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

No. 442.—VOL. IX. [Registered as a Newspaper.]

SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 1889.

[Registered as a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

There has already appeared in "LIGHT" an announcement of the forthcoming Spiritualist and Spiritist Congress to be held in Paris between September 9th and 16th next. I have received from Mr. Leymarie an urgent personal invitation on behalf of the Executive Committee. It is suggested that I take that opportunity of bringing forward my views on the subject of confederation—"a durable general union of all Spiritualists." This, my correspondent tells me, is the end aimed at by all the members of the Executive Commission of the Congress. He requests me to contribute a paper stating and enforcing these views, and adds: "It is obviously of the highest importance that all that may be useful for the development of Spiritualism should be carefully considered, and it is therefore to be hoped that everyone who may be able to do so will send us a statement of his or her views." In the printed circular, which was distributed at the recent *Conversazione* of the London Spiritualist Alliance, it is explicitly stated that the fundamental points to be affirmed are, 1. The survival of consciousness after death. 2. The relations between the living and the dead. To this is added, "All questions that divide us will be set aside."

Adverting first of all to the last announcement, it is matter for gratification to me to find that the position I have consistently taken up in respect to union and harmony among all students of our vast subject is to be the position assumed by the Executive of the Congress. It is to be an essentially catholic body. Its promoters put aside matters of contention, and fix the attention on those respecting which we are united. The wisdom of this course is undoubted in my mind. Points of disunion are generally speculative: points of agreement are generally practical. The former we guess at, the latter we know. The one is in the air; the other has its foundation in solid fact. Let us then, admitting the wisdom of the course proposed, trust that the Executive will find itself supported by a large contingent of British Spiritualists. If it were in my power I would gladly go and add whatever sanction my presence and voice could give to a course which I entirely approve. At the request of the Executive Commission I gladly advise them of my own adhesion and of that of the journal which I edit. The London Spiritualist Alliance occupies already a position similar to their own, and led the way four years ago in advocating what the Executive Commission is now putting out as its programme. There can, therefore, be no doubt as to the course which that body will pursue. It is in hearty accord with the Commission.

With reference to the preparation of a paper for the Congress, I fear that I can add nothing to that elaborate address—"Spiritualism at Home and Abroad: its Present Position and Future Work"—which I delivered before the London Spiritualist Alliance on November 13th, 1885. It has been four years before the public, and I have nothing to add to it. It remains in my mind just as clearly and imperatively a duty to organise now as it was then. It remains an urgent duty to proceed with constructive work duly organised and with experiments rationally conducted. And I see no reason to modify the plan which was set forth in that address. But it must be admitted that four years' trial has not shown the progress that was anticipated. There can be no good end served by a refusal to face facts. Organisation has not succeeded; and the attempt at systematic experiment has not succeeded either. Yet a consideration of the replies made to my proposal causes me to speculate on the reasons why this plan should fail of success. I will print hereafter some extracts from French journals, and from some correspondence on the subject, which will show that the exceptions to complete acceptance were very rare. Yet neither confederation nor organised research has been successfully carried out. It may be that a dearth of mediums is accountable for the latter failure. It may be that Spiritualists refuse to organise from an apathy, a torpor, a lukewarmness, and, in the last analysis, a selfishness, the traces of which are over the whole movement in all its various manifestations.

It is worth while to look steadily at this point, for it is of vital moment. We have an experience and a knowledge beside which all other knowledge is comparatively insignificant. The ordinary Spiritualist waxes wroth if anyone ventures to impugn his assured knowledge of the future and his absolute certainty of the life to come. Where other men have stretched forth feeble hands groping into the dark future, he walks boldly as one who has a chart and knows his way. Where other men have stopped short at a pious aspiration or have been content with a hereditary faith, it is his boast that he knows what they only believe, and that out of his rich stores he can supplement the fading faiths built only upon hope. He is magnificent in his dealings with man's most cherished expectations. "You hope," he seems to say, "for that which I can demonstrate. You have accepted a traditional belief in what I can experimentally prove according to the strictest scientific method. The old beliefs are fading; come out from them and be separate. They contain as much falsehood as truth. Only by building on a sure foundation of demonstrated fact can your superstructure be stable. All round you old faiths are toppling. Avoid the crash and get you out."

When one comes to deal with this magnificent person in a practical way, what is the result? Very curious and very disappointing. He is so sure of his ground that he takes no trouble to ascertain the interpretation which others put upon his facts. The wisdom of the ages has concerned itself

with the explanation of what he rightly regards as proven ; but he does not turn a passing glance on its researches. He does not even agree altogether with his brother Spiritualist. It is the story over again of the old Scotch body who, together with her husband, formed a "kirk." They had exclusive keys to Heaven, or, rather, she had, for she was "na certain about Jamie." So the infinitely divided and subdivided, and re-subdivided sects of Spiritualists shake their heads, and are "na certain about" one another. Again, the collective experience of mankind is solid and unvarying on this point that union is strength, and disunion a source of weakness and failure. Shoulder to shoulder, drilled and disciplined, a rabble becomes an army, each man a match for a hundred of the untrained men that may be brought against it. Organisation in every department of man's work means success, saving of time and labour, profit and development. Want of method, want of plan, haphazard work, fitful energy, undisciplined effort—these mean bungling failure. The voice of humanity attests the truth. Does the Spiritualist accept the verdict and act on the conclusion? Verily, no. He refuses to organise. He is a law unto himself, and a thorn in the side of his neighbours.

Once more ; it is an accepted truth that no cause can be worthily advanced the votaries of which are not willing to sacrifice selfish aims and to throw into it that vitalising energy which comes of strong conviction, and of a readiness to bear witness to the truth that they hold, even at some personal risk of loss, at some self-sacrifice, at some cost of time and money, or money's worth. Bricks cannot be made without straw : great efforts to disseminate truth cost money : workers ought to be and must be adequately paid, unless self-respect is to be forfeited. How much do you believe—a shilling, a crown, a pound? is a question that is habitually found inconvenient by the average Spiritualist. He is content to let a few willing souls bear all the burden and heat of the long day, slaving in unrequited toil, or sacrificing of their substance for duty's sake, the while he frisks in heedless abandonment, sublimely self-contained and self-satisfied. Give tithes of his possessions? Not he. Tithes are a remnant of an ecclesiastical system happily past away. Give according to his ability, as the humblest sect gives to the necessary support of its minister and his work? No, he sees no reason. He has got all he wants out of Spiritualism, and the whole fabric may rot for ought he cares. Responsibility for knowledge? Not at all : he does not see it. He will instruct (save the mark!) any who place themselves in his hands, but he draws the line at subscriptions. And so while he and his sort enwrap themselves thus in a mantle of selfishness, work lags, men who would do good service drop out of the ranks of public workers because they must earn a living somewhere else, and Spiritualism becomes a byword for yet another cause than that which distinguishes it in the police-courts. These are a poor folk, men say, they cannot even support and maintain their own work, which they vaunt as Divine, and advertise as immediately introductory to the Millenium.

These are plain truths, and it behoves Spiritualists to weigh and consider them. For such a work as ours has grown to is not done by vapouring, by bumptious talk about what we know—the more we know the less we are likely to say about it ; it is the sciolist who shrieks—by selfish isolation, by feline scratches at a neighbour who sees not as we would have him see, by internal dissension, by quarrelling and strife ; by none of these, but by a resolute performance of the duty laid on each, by cohesion, by self-sacrifice, by steady determination, in short, by the employment in our specific work of those methods which have been found successful elsewhere and everywhere the world through.

THOUGHTS AND WORDS.

"Il n'y a point d'esprit sans parole, et point de parole sans puissance."

"Chaque mot prononcé devient substantiel, agit comme substance, et cesse d'être seulement l'expression de notre pensée."—ST. MARTIN.

As our souls develop and gain new power, we perceive that we no longer stand in the same relation to matter. The distinct boundary line once set between matter and spirit vanishes, and we no longer know where one begins or the other ends. Matter becomes more subtle, fluid, and manageable, and spirit tends more to present itself in form ; or perhaps it is that we begin to recognise that all matter is in fact but a form of spirit—a projection of its inner force.

Our thoughts become embodied in actual forms which float around us and are visible to spirit eyes.

A friend of mine who sometimes receives messages through a medium from her guardian spirit was told that she drew around her beings who derived their source from the depth and reality of her own thoughts. "You are surrounded," he said, "by beings of a real and humanised appearance. They are beautiful with the life of intellectuality, for no stamp of grossness or materialism appears in them."

On another occasion the same spirit said of my friend that the room she inhabited was peopled by creatures of her imagination, and that he perceived her own embodied thoughts above her, which she daily made more tangible by her desire to cultivate and bring out the power of spiritual intellectuality she possessed. As her mind developed she had come to be surrounded by a complete circle of tangible companions.

Thoughts are then substantial, and, as St. Martin says of words, can act as substances. The surrounding troop of companions produced by our minds will not be without effect. The decarnated spirit sees them and they are felt by the ordinary sensitive, for they must add tremendously to the impressing force of that person's atmosphere who has the power to produce them. We have each of us our particular atmosphere or emanation as those who are open to influx know, but when the thoughts are very intense, vivid, and concentrated, this atmosphere is heightened and receives more power. Thoughts well formed within and full of life form themselves without. The vague, dark, overhanging clouds are penetrated and lightened. The soul's individuality is strengthened by its own creations which serve as an armour of defence and weapon of attack against surrounding mortality. A fresh means of holding and giving out life is acquired.

And may not these "tangible companions" actually convey the thoughts they represent to the brains of others? May they not be sent as messengers to friends at a distance? If we believe in thought-transference it is surely possible that this may be done consciously and willingly. The mind has created its own agents which stand ready.

The individual atmosphere may, however, be intensified for evil as well as good. Evil thoughts may also be intense and formulated, and assume shapes of hideousness and darkness instead of light. We have most of us felt at some time the power of a strong evil personality. We may know nothing about him or he may not even have uttered a word in our presence, but we feel a shaft of pain and dread. His atmosphere has touched ours. His deadly thoughts are taking effect on us. If we have an instinct of self-preservation we escape. Who can tell how often the evil thoughts which arise in our minds may have their source not in ourselves, but may be transferred from other minds with which we come in contact?

If thought becomes thus indeed a consolidated tangible thing by which we can affect others for good or evil, and add to our store of true or false life, what fresh importance attaches to the act of thinking! All the time we are weaving ourselves garments our thoughts may float

around us chaotically as vague and formless mist, or they may take definite shape and being, under the power of the imagination—the creating of images. We can surround ourselves with light and purity, or with darkness and foulness, by simply governing the course of our thoughts, raising them to high objects, concentrating and connecting them or letting them loose to wander aimlessly in low and ugly places. We can create protectors or enemies for ourselves, each of whom will attract its like from the invisible world.

Thought, however, is not only a creator of atmospheric forms; it can occultly and mysteriously produce direct effects in other ways. It can bring about a state of health or disease in the body. By perpetually dwelling on earthly and evil ideas, by believing in dead and separate matter, corresponding diseases arise, and the thoughts in their turn, fixing themselves morbidly upon the disease, confirm it. On the other hand, fresh, healthy thoughts produce fresh and healthy bodies.

The life of the body and that of the soul are one. Thoughts of hatred, malice, fear, or depression, all effect some corresponding physical change. The vitality is lowered or perverted, and the result is very likely some disease which fastens on the weakened system lying defencelessly open to any influx. Thoughts of beautiful objects in nature and in art, thoughts of love, and hope, and reason, vitalise and harmonise the whole being.

Referring to the above quotations from St. Martin, we see that he believed that there is a means by which thought may acquire additional power—its expression in words.

The word also becomes a substance and acts as such. It ceases to be a mere expression—a mechanical means of communication—and becomes a power in itself. We are accustomed to look upon words very often as empty things. "Words, words, words! no matter." Yet it is possible that even the most parrot-like talking of the giddiest mind may leave its traces in some mysterious way. Is it that words are correspondences and each vibration affects a similar vibration in the unseen? Our words may produce effects beyond their apparent meaning that we know not of.

If thoughts are an outward form or manifestation of the underlying will or self, words are also a form or manifestation of thought, making it more concrete and adding to its force. The thought often becomes aware of itself in words, and the words take effect armed with the life of the thought. Perhaps the power of words lies in their being the most concrete of things. A name is given. We know what we mean and all vagueness is gone. Something has been brought into shape and therefore has become an available instrument. Spoken words, so Christian Science teaches, produce the healing of mind and body, not only of ourselves but of others both near and at a distance.

Religion recognises the power of words, for in most ceremonies certain sentences occur over and over again, and a peculiar efficacy is attached to the reiteration of one or two words. The more occult and mystic the religion, the more importance is attached to certain word-formulas behind which is hidden the deepest mystery. Do they act as sacred spells or invocations?

Apart from any deep meaning or mystery we feel that some words act as a spell upon us. Particular words appeal to particular minds which discover in them an indescribable charm and beauty. They have the sweetness and dearness of friends. It is not their meaning nor even association out a mysterious charm in the word itself that cannot be accounted for.

A word is a life in itself. It has floated off from its first source of being and become a separate entity. Our words like our thoughts are our children. Some day, perhaps, we shall be confronted by their visible forms. It depends on ourselves whether we are preparing ministering angels or serpents that will turn and sting us. G. M. S.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Re-Incarnation.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Allow me to commence by a well-deserved compliment to the merits of your journal, which I consider as decidedly the first on the list of those devoted to Spiritualism.

As authority for the following imperfect remarks, I cite your own recent expression. "We cannot claim for ourselves any monopoly of truth."

Like the majority in this part of the world, I profess the Spiritism of Allan Kardec, and it has pained me to note in the letters of some of your correspondents a want of that charitable tolerance which should be one of the first distinctive features of all Spiritualists.

To some, the mere fact of Allan Kardec having been a Frenchman seems to be sufficient warrant to speak of him and the Spiritist doctrine with a certain indifference tinged with contempt, though no impartial judge can deny the admirable clearness, logic, and good sense of all he wrote.

Moreover, he frequently declares that he was *not the author* of the theories expounded, but only collected, examined, and classified the communications obtained by mediums in all parts of the world, accepting only as fundamental those theories corroborated by the majority of evidence.

I am afraid that these works must have been sadly distorted in the translation, for I notice one of your correspondents asserting that "the Kardecian philosophy of re-incarnation is derived from Metempsychosis!" For the complete refutation of this, I refer your readers to the *Livre des Esprits* (pp. 262 and 96).

Another classifies Spiritism as exclusively devoted to a study of phenomena, whereas the truth is we consider these only as accessories whose study has led to the comprehension of great truths. Allan Kardec divides Spiritists and Spiritualists into three classes—those who are attracted by the phenomena as curious facts; those who admire the elevation and sublimity of the communications; and, finally, those who earnestly strive to practice the advice received, and to whom it is a powerful lever to advancement.

In acquiring knowledge of any description, perhaps the best guide in judging contradictory evidence is common sense; and, on subjects yet in embryo, it is, at least, preferable to accept that which logically explains, to that which does not.

Now, with all deference to other opinions, I find in the theories propounded by Allan Kardec the only possible and reasonable solution of the enigmas of human life in accordance with a belief in an infinitely wise, just, and merciful God, without which attributes we cannot have real faith in His existence, and it appears to me absolutely impossible to harmonise these with the anomalies of a single earthly existence.

I do not mean that man is necessarily re-incarnated on this planet, but believe that all are the arbiters of fate, and that he who makes the most of the present, who attains a certain spiritual elevation by the domination of self, may reasonably expect subsequent existence in a world whose conditions, moral and material, are far superior to those of this.

I do not believe that the past is entirely a blank. For wise purposes, there may be a temporary void of memory, as waking life is to the sleeper, but if a present distinct remembrance of past existence is denied, each individual may, by the study of character, intuitions, and general conditions, form a very approximate estimate of what he has been. In short, the present may be considered as the mirror of the past and future; we are what we have made ourselves, and shall literally reap as we sow.

All nature demonstrates an eternal evolution; why should man be an exception? The butterfly and the caterpillar are the same individual, yet how different in physical conditions.

The alternation of physical and spiritual existence is a theory eminently rational, for, from the antagonism of matter and spirit and consequent necessity for exertion, is progress alone attainable. The one is a period of repose, reflection, observation, and renewal of strength for the coming struggle, as sleep renovates the forces of material life, and this, with the intuition of the past, gives to each the power to mount still higher, from existence to existence; from world to world.

Children, almost from the cradle, subject to the same family influences and independent of education, demonstrate a great diversity of character and aptitudes purely earthly. Men study arts and sciences, labour earnestly to advance, yet often when most developed, on the eve of some great discovery or improvement, death comes, and thus, all these exertions, which might

have been profitable to themselves and the world, are completely lost, for it is hardly logical to suppose that these special acquirements will be available in a future purely spiritual.

Yet we profess to believe that God has created all equal, that the same perfection is obtainable to all in proportion to the exercise of will, and that all allowed or given is for an unflinching wise purpose!

It has often occurred to me that without re-incarnation the fact of Christ's advent, which effected so great a moral revolution, cannot be reconciled with a conception of perfect Divine justice, as those living before were necessarily denied this immense aid to progress. The same may be said regarding the general conditions of humanity, for assuredly those living a hundred years hence will have greater facilities for advancement than we.

Thus, man would be, in a certain measure, the creation of the age in which he lives, and consequently all responsibility is subjective.

But, with re-incarnation, these and many other difficulties are dispelled; the generations of to-day are those of the past and future, and each may perceive the reasons of his own peculiar condition, the causes of present trials and suffering; may understand that the past, present, and future are links of the same chain, that each brings with him the consequences and intuition of the past, and that these are often, significantly of earthly origin; that, in short, this admirable doctrine is, *de facto*, the "Darwinism" of spiritual existence.

The Scriptures contain many passages evidently referring to this great truth; the Spirits also confirm the theories; in fact, from them they are derived. True, some of the lower order of Spirits, not yet free from material influences, will say anything and everything to flatter the foibles of too credulous mediums, but as sources of instruction or morality their communications are worthless.

But not so the superior Spirits. The elevation and purity of language, the independence often manifested by kindly severe admonition, the acute perception of the spiritual necessities of each, the perfect logic which the most critical examination cannot destroy, the immense benefit and moral reformation to be derived, are sufficient proof that they are the "Divine messengers" promised by Christ; and in these productions, the influence of the medium, beyond the mere clothing of the ideas in accordance with his mentality, is null.

To be real and durable, faith must be allied to reason, and I humbly believe that "re-incarnation" does much to effect this unity.

For these, and many other reasons, I think the subject merits more serious and impartial discussion than it yet has had, for what we all require is "Light! more light!" and not the confusing quibbles regarding that which, of itself, is pure and simple.

Rio de Janeiro,
May 20th, 1889.

EXCELSIOR.

The Rev. C. Voysey.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Mr. Henley's suggestion of the mesmerisation of Mr. Crookes' photographic apparatuses, together with the mesmerisation of Mr. Crookes himself and his friends, has driven Mr. Voysey into a corner: so that gentleman has made a *volte-face* and taken up with a new theory, which is this: "The alleged materialised spirit, 'Katie,' was a person who had never been dead and who had got into the company by some clever device." Does Mr. Voysey think it was somebody's double, then, some fair Mahatma from the mountains of Thibet? Let us dismiss the thought. These photographing nights were not the only occasions when "Katie" appeared to Mr. Crookes and his friends; indeed, the appearance was of frequent occurrence when Miss Cook paid Mr. Crookes a visit—that same Miss Cook through whom the dead soldier manifested himself at Sandown, Isle of Wight, according to the strange history that appeared lately in your pages, as recounted by Dr. Purdon, the medical attendant at the hospital there, where the soldier had lately died.

Moreover, these photographs, taken under Mr. Crookes' auspices, were not the first successful specimens of the kind; the editor of the *Spiritualist* had already photographed "Katie," with excellent effect, at the house of Miss Cook's father, before Mr. Crookes took her literally in hand; and soon after the editor of the *Spiritual Magazine* first met her, as detailed in your number for June 8th. The editor of the *Spiritualist* printed a copy of that photograph in his paper, and the figure and face, taken by the editor of the *Spiritualist*, is a

portrait of precisely the same individual as that taken by Mr. Crookes. I think it was in a number of the *Spiritualist* early in 1873, or it might have been earlier still. I have not that number in my possession now, but I have a distinct recollection of it, and I refer any person who has the *Spiritualist* of that period to seek it out if he doubts my word. It is strange that materialisation, in this materialistic age, should really be one of the strongest proofs of the existence of spirit life and of events which not only the Bible but the great authors of the Greeks and Romans so frequently and fully assumed and asserted. Indeed, some of the experiences of the more modern mediums, such as St. Theresa and Marie Alacoque, not to mention those of Mr. T. Lake Harris, really seem to come nearly up to the Pagan standard.

Materialisation is nothing new, only our knowledge of it as a contemporary wonder gives us the rationale of the emanation of Eve from Adam's side, for example. We can thoroughly believe now about Abraham and Sarah, Lot and his family, Manoah and his wife holding converse with materialised spirits, and can read the story of Balaam and his ass without a smile. These are all instances, when, as in the case of Mr. Crookes and his company, materialised spirits were seen by more than one person at the same time. And though there was no witness of the patriarch Jacob's struggle with a materialised spirit, we may well take his word for it, not only because he got the worst of it, to which his after lameness bore witness, but by our knowledge of the utter inability of modern physical mediums to cope with their controls, as in the case of Mr. Home and other modern sensitives for materialising phenomena, and not least in the case of Miss Cook, an account of whose persecution by a spirit who wished to control her, was given in your number for June 8th.

The story of Gideon as detailed in the Book of Judges is remarkable; and that young medium seems to have had an unusually decided will of his own. He was intelligent and of a doubting nature, and combined the natural strong will of the born investigator with the receptivity of the sensitive. At the time we are introduced to him he had, probably, like other physical mediums, and Miss Cook in particular, been "previously subject," as she says, "to entrancement, while the more powerful manifestations were going on," but, like Miss Cook, "that had then gone off."

This being the case, when Gideon's control now manifested and talked with him, Gideon doubted his own eyes and ears. "Show me a sign that thou talkest with me," he exclaimed, and the sign that he contracted for was that the control should still remain under an oak tree where he then was, until Gideon had cooked him some food. The young medium, no weak enthusiast, apart from hospitality questioned his own senses until he should see the spirit eat and drink, and his eating and drinking would be the solution of his test.

The spirit agreed to await Gideon's return, but not to eat and drink, and the way he treated the food, when presented to him, was such as to fill his medium with mortal fears, while he recognised the power of his master.

Nevertheless, once more, we find Gideon relapsing into doubt, and prescribing two new tests to his powerful control; but the dry fleece in the surrounding dew settled his faith. Shall we, after this, be too ready to doubt the fortitude or the honesty of purpose of physical mediums, though we may doubt their judgment or the moral sense of their controls? Nor is it wise to be too ready to doubt our own senses, still less the word and the photography of an investigator like Mr. Crookes.

A system of negation is an unhappy principle to rest on. The very laws against necromancy among the Jews were the strongest arguments that the dead could return. But then the followers of Jesus have no such laws, they were annulled by Jesus at the transfiguration. To deny materialisation is as reasonable as to say that the clear atmosphere cannot be clothed upon by a fog. It is, I say, an unfortunate position for a man to have so clogged his apprehension, so choked his appetite for spiritual fact, and be so blinded to the closeness of things supernal to things of earth, as to have lost all faith in the clouds of witnesses who surround us. Such an one can have no logical satisfaction in reading Shakespeare's greatest works. What is it to him, an unbeliever in such things, that Hamlet's father was seen materialised by the material eyes of the soldiers on the ramparts, and seen clairvoyantly by Hamlet in his mother's apartments? How absurd it seems to him that on the ramparts, the spirit was "in complete steel," and "in his habit as he lived" in his lady's chamber! Spirit photography, one of the most beautiful and instruc-

tive processes of our times, wondrous as it is rare, yet one of the most convincing witnesses of future life that we have, especially to one who has seen and assisted at the whole process in the dark room and out of it, over and over again, is to such a man a mere phantasmagoria; he cannot believe that in broad daylight, a spiritual body can be sufficiently materialised to catch the sensitive plate but not the retina of the material eye. How much is hidden from the man who will not see! In what a narrow prison house are the senses of such an one crystallised and confined and wedded to prejudice ancient and modern!

The question before us is not necessarily—Did "Katie" ever live upon earth? We believe that she did, because she understood the ways of earth, but that premiss is by no means essential any more than what her moral status may have been. It is sufficient for us that she came frequently to earth from fluidic life, for a short time, clothed upon by flesh and blood, and clad in flowing garments. It is sufficient for us to feel assured that she came to earth in a way that readers of literature sacred and profane, and hearers of folk-lore, perhaps in every country since the world began, have been informed about during the better part of their lives.

AN OBSERVER.

Apparition of Master to Coachman.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The following incident has just occurred:—Mr. F., residing at Enmore Park, South Norwood, S.E., had to see the coachman of a gentleman who is abroad. On seeing him he said: "Oh, sir, I am in such trouble, my master came to me last night and we shall be having a telegram soon of his death; don't speak to me of business." Shortly afterwards while the gentleman was there, the death telegram arrived.

I give the narrative as heard by me, and trust I shall obtain the narrative in its fulness from Mr. F. Many such incidents are occurring around us, but the natural desire to avoid badgering keep the lips closed. Physical death is not psychical death.

J. ENMORE JONES.

Hypnotism.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have read the remarks on hypnotism in your issue of the 8th inst. with great interest, and as you refer to my book on the subject, perhaps you will allow me to say a few words.

I consider the dangers of hypnotism, if it is allowed to fall into ignorant and improper hands, very real, and that its use should be confined to medical men or qualified persons acting under their instructions. I should forbid the public parade of hypnotic phenomena at entertainments and as an amusement, and I should surround its practice with restrictions somewhat similar to those which regulate the use and sale of poisons. In responsible and capable hands no danger, either moral or physical, can ever result from its use; but, as the reports of scores of eminent physicians on the continent attest, the greatest benefits accrue to humanity by its judicious application as a therapeutic agent. If its success were confined to the treatment of dipsomania alone its good results would exceed the possibilities of evil. Hypnotism, used medically, is widely different to the thing we see on the stage. Out of 100 patients susceptible to hypnotic influence, not more than nine or ten lose consciousness, or fall into the state in which delusions of the senses can be suggested. The remainder will be influenced in various degrees, and it is found practically that a very slight lethargy is sufficient to permit of curative suggestions taking effect.

Again, the physician does not, except in exceptional cases, attempt to substitute his own will for that of the patient, but rather strives to evoke and act in sympathy with the patient's higher nature and wishes. If he endeavours to control or traverse the patient's inclinations and convictions, he will probably completely fail by arousing resentment and opposition.

It seems to me a weak argument to insist that because a thing is capable of being turned to bad uses it is, therefore, to be ignored. This is just the way to hand it over to unscrupulous and incompetent persons, with results which would prove disastrous to society.

In Holland, Switzerland, and other countries, where it is widely practised by medical men, public performances are forbidden by law, and it is a fact that almost no authenticated instances of its employment for criminal purposes have come before the tribunals. It is looked upon as a medical process similar to the taking of chloroform or laughing gas. As for the assertion of the writer in the *Tocsin* that hypnotism is a diseased state

and shows a weak mental condition, I entirely deny it. Some of my most intellectual and healthy medical friends have proved my best subjects for demonstrating its medical application, but here again, perhaps, we are at variance as to what we mean. "Le grand hypnotisme," of the Salpêtrière, is perhaps never seen except in hysterical or debilitated subjects, and these are the people, of course, whom we should feel especially called upon to protect from the unscrupulous. If such a person is hypnotised day after day by the same operator there seems little room to doubt that eventually he may become a mere automaton in his hands. The recognition of such a danger should be sufficient to obviate it.

CHARLES LLOYD TUCKEY, M.D.

Spiritualism and Christianity.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am frequently surprised and saddened by the essential differences which find urgent voice in the public professions of Spiritualists, to which, I take it, may be attributed much of the disfavour with which the name is received among the multitude.

Into my hands came this week a small tract headed *Christianity and Spiritualism Irreconcilable*, beginning with the words "Spiritualism and Christianity are radically antagonistic and impossible of assimilation."

To many, I fear, such a statement would prove a death blow to any timid seedlings of faith in our cause which might be springing. To myself—whose belief is too firmly rooted on the very ground that Spiritualism has brought light and vitality into Christianity (if by that word is meant the teaching of Christ)—such words only added another regret to the many I have felt at the misleadings of some lights (?).

But to-day accident, it seemed, brought to me "LIGHT" for May 4th, containing that fine address of Sidney Dean. How constantly does the balm follow upon the wounding! Glorious utterances were those in the second column, page 212, to which I will hope and believe the majority of your readers will say "Amen."

Surely we need more of such teaching. For myself I speak from a peculiar standpoint, never having formed one at any séance, or even intimately known a medium, or in any way sought in the smallest degree enlightenment on Spiritualistic matters. I became assured of the facts from an experience purely personal, entirely objective, and which subsequent events have day by day confirmed, to a degree which (were it not presumptuous) I might call knowledge. Yet, I am bound to confess, I do meet with more to deplore and to shrink from in the attitude of many who assume to know the ways. Why is this? Hard to say—of a belief, of a truth, which is capable of bringing peace, joy, and healing unspeakable. In that most precious and satisfying of books, *Scientific Religion*, the author speaks in no uncertain tones of warning against reliance on the pursuit of merely physical or material tests.

My own experience has so wonderfully in many points tallied with those of that writer—though in a humble way, and afar off—that I am moved to ask—May not this have much to do with the unsound attitude, the unsatisfactory utterances, of many who in some respects are gifted? All power is surely not of a source Divine. And may we not build up a wall of our worldly ambitions, and small conventionalities, which shall shut out the true light of the Spirit as the service of mammon disqualifies for that of God.

F. O.

[Our correspondent need not be disquieted by random utterances such as that quoted. There is no law to prevent Spiritualists or any other people from talking nonsense. But we pay such statements too much heed when we assign them any representative value.—ED. OF "LIGHT."]

The London Occult Society.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In your issue of the 15th inst., there was an article on the Christian Kingdom Society reprinted from the *Christian World*. In the course of that article the Rev. Mr. Smith is reported as speaking of "our room, 18, Baker-street, W." As the London Occult Society conducted its last course of lectures at 18, Baker-street, and as we also take interest in some of the questions which are said to interest the Christian Kingdom Society, it is possible that some misapprehension may arise. I trust, therefore, you will allow me, as secretary, to say that the Occult Society is in no way connected with the Christian Kingdom Society or with any Christian organisation whatever.

33, Henry-street, St. John's Wood, N.W. F. W. READ.

June 17th, 1889.

(For continuation of Correspondence see p. 304.)

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

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Light :

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

SATURDAY, JUNE 22nd, 1889.

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

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

THE RELIGION OF SELF-RESPECT.

The first number of the *New Review* contains an article by Mrs. Lynn Lynton which is timely and very deserving of attention from Spiritualists. It is a lament over the decadence of the grand old religion of self-respect, eaten out and dying of inanition between the spiritual abasement of the pious "miserable sinner" and the feverish money-hunger of the worldly. No sane man despises wealth; it is the mightiest engine that modern man possesses. Nor does anyone deny that sorrow for sin is a sincere step on the road to amendment. But there is something to be said for the moribund religion of self-respect:—

"It was the religion which ruled the lives of teachers like Socrates, Plato, and all those apostles of philosophy who insisted on the sublime dogma of a man's inalienable duty of responsibility to himself. It made Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius, Cato and Trajan, and a host more, the everlasting symbols of moral greatness and intellectual nobility. It gave its manly flavour to what else would have been the too effeminate, too artificial courtesy of chivalry. It made the Bruce heroic, and lifted our Third Edward above the rank of historic fribbles, where else he might have declined. It rounded off some of the ugly angles of Elizabeth, so that the lion heart redeemed the foxy mind; and in the last act of her tragedy it cast a halo of heroism round sweet, frail Scottish Mary. 'Divine right' is its exaggeration among kings; *noblesse oblige* is its formula among gentlemen; personal purity is its outcome with women. With politicians we know it as independence of judgment; as conscience put into the vote; as the refusal to endorse iniquity, though that iniquity be adopted by the party, and though expediency has for the moment displaced the eternal law of right; as the honest man's disdain to barter conscience for place or power; as the steadfast man's incapacity for turning his coat to be in the race for good things, or of leaving the foundering old vessel of Truth, with the rats who desert when danger is ahead. In private life we see it as fidelity, generosity, magnanimity, large-heartedness, and above all, as sincerity. We know that it inspires a man with the strength of patience and the heroism of forgiveness. Without it good breeding is only a school-taught shibboleth; with it ill-breeding is impossible. It is the honour paid by men to the highest thing in man; and he who goes security for one who respects himself need not fear for his bond when the day of reckoning comes. It is a virtue independent of outward circumstances and embracing all sorts and conditions of men."

It is our pseudo-liberality, in the writer's opinion, that is largely to blame for this loss of self-respect. We pour out money like water for all sorts of sentimental objects; for a dogs' home, for remote missions to the heathen, for this and

for that idle end, while we endure to see the starving millions at home, and grind down the workers who minister to their luxuries. We fuss mightily over concerts, and fancy fairs, and bazaars, for so-called charitable purposes: we wax eloquent over a horse straining at his load, or limping in his walk; but we will not waste a passing thought on those who are working themselves to death, nor try to picture their fate in a lonely old age, when they have fainted under their burden, and have dropped out of the struggle for bare existence. This is not Christianity, nor is it the practice of what Jesus Christ taught. "For the religion of self-respect in more places than one joins hands with that of Christ, and is the manly form of a virtue where the other is the feminine."

This habit of neglecting dependents, of beating down humble workers, of haggling with the poor was not a characteristic of the self-respecting gentry of olden times. The mediæval knights would rob and raid in a high-handed way, with a certain magnificent brutality:—

"When they had their Isaac of York, they pulled out his teeth or roasted him at the fire on a gridiron like to that of St. Lawrence. They compelled him to part with his rose nobles as if they had been so many daisies of the field; but they did not demand discount on a few shillings as we do; they did not chaffer with industrials of a painful hard-working kind, and they did not compete on their own ground with workers whose earnings were their very life, and the lives of their little ones. They were brutal but not mean; tyrannical and oppressive but not higgling. They built their robber castles and burst out on the luckless passers-by as so many kites swooping down on pigeons; but they would not have robbed the glee maiden of her guerdon, nor have entered into the contest with her on her own ground."

This descent of the gentry into competition with the legitimate trader Mrs. Lynton does not admire. She does not fancy the titled dame who sets up a milliner's shop, nor the gentleman of culture who devotes his time to editing a lady's journal, and discourses with finnickling particularity on the art of honeycombing and smocking. She exclaims:—

"Imagine a gentleman of the stately days that have gone with the snows of yester-year, dignified, self-respecting, knowing his social worth as well as his personal value, appraising the various kinds of work lying before men at their true value and according to their relative propriety—imagine such a one turning an honest penny by making women's gowns and devising dainty head-gear for pretty faces, while there was a tree to fell in the pathless forest, or a mine to dig in the harvestless waste."

If they were poor, well and good. Work is no disgrace. But they are not poor: they do but rob the struggling of their chance in life. This they do, and declare that they are not their brothers' keepers.

Much more does Mrs. Lynn Lynton write with all her wonted vigour, dealing blows that ought to tell even on this age of "sentimentality and a washy kind of pitiable philanthropy and negative morality." One passage more we permit ourselves to quote, for it is the sum of the whole matter. Self-respect is that quality which renders to every man his due, which refuses to take unpaid-for that which is produced at the cost of a man's health and strength, or even of his daily toil:—

"A man or woman who has true self-respect is utterly incapable of telling a lie, betraying confidence, failing a friend, or hitting a foul blow in any direction—utterly incapable, too, of truckling to power or calling evil good because practised in high places. This is not because he is afraid of the Eternal Wrath, but because he shrinks from his own self-contempt, and the 'un-lidded eye' is his private consciousness. For his own inherent dignity he could not do such and such things. He could not barter his sense of right for money, fame, position, place; nor could he prostitute his work to a lower level than his best to suit the debased taste of the purse-bearers and applauders. He could not even follow his flag into the wrong field, however flowery or fertile, though it would be easy to him to follow it into the desert for righteousness' sake. He could not prevaricate, nor glaze, nor bow the knee to Baal, even with a dispensation.

For self-respect knows no dispensation. Wherein it differs from all other religions. Everywhere else we meet with hierophants and pontiffs, synods and councils, who make and unmake, bind and loose, confer power and grant license. But the religion of self-respect is emphatically in a straight line and narrow—one and indivisible. The 'man-holes' of indulgences, extenuating circumstances, partial mercy, personal forgiveness, with the Divine power of granting to an individual the right of breaking a law imperative on the multitude, find no place in its compact and single-chambered tower."

We have the reverse side of this in our mind when we say, once more, with sadness and regret, what we have frequently said before. The religion of self-respect has too little place among us Spiritualists. Almost all, if not quite all, the work of public Spiritualism is done by unpaid workers, who are too often reduced to sore straits by the demands made upon them, to the ruin of health and in the end at peril of very life. The work of this great public movement has grown so big that it needs the sacrifice of all the time and energy of which the best of us is master, if so be we may do that portion of work only that falls to our share. But how can that be when the labourer receives no wage, but has first to earn his living by hard work elsewhere before he can do that more congenial and urgent work that lies ready to his hand? And what of the self-respect that permits Spiritualists, year after year, to accept this willing service till, tired and broken down, the labourer is fain to give in and lay him down to rest, spite of all that is still undone? This is not just nor right nor even decent. We need not further point the moral: it has been pointed many times before. But we may commend "the religion of self respect" as a working-day religion that Spiritualists must adopt if they are fitly to discharge their duty to those who bear for them the burden and heat of a long and trying day. The time has come, nay, it has past, when this matter must engage the consciousness of those who would not make acquaintance with remorse.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE LIBRARY.

The following books have been presented to the Library of the London Spiritualist Alliance, since the last published list (May 18th) :—

[Presented by the President.]

SPIRITUAL THERAPEUTICS; OR DIVINE SCIENCE.—By W. J. Colville.

SHORT LESSONS IN THEOSOPHY.—Compiled and arranged by Miss Susie C. Clark, from the Teachings of W. J. Colville.

THE TWO DISPENSATIONS.—By John Williams.

FORTY YEARS ON THE SPIRITUAL ROSTRUM.—By Warren Chase.

THE CHRISTIAN REVELATION OF GOD, THE BASIS OF TRUE PHILOSOPHY.—By the Author of the "Gospel of Divine Humanity."

THE PRACTICAL VALUE OF CHRISTIANITY.—By Rev. J. Broadhurst Nichols and Chas. W. Dymond, F.S.A.

THE GRAND REALITY.—Received through a Trance Medium and edited by H. Junor Browne.

THE SOUL WORLD: THE HOMES OF THE DEAD.—By P. R. Randolph.

[Presented by Mrs. Martin Smith.]

GREAT HARMONIA (Vols. I. to V.)—By Andrew Jackson Davis.

ANGEL TEACHINGS IN THE BOOK OF NATURE (Vol. I.)—By A. H. Davis, M.D.

PRINCIPLES OF NATURE (Vols. I. to III.)—By Mrs. M. M. King.

THE FOUR LEADING DOCTRINES OF THE NEW CHURCH.—By Emanuel Swedenborg.

DIVINE LOVE AND WISDOM.—By Emanuel Swedenborg.

PRIMEVAL MAN.

THE SOUL OF THINGS.—By William and Elizabeth M. F. Denton.

Sermons for Our Day. By JOHN PAGE HOPPS. Part III. now ready (twelve sermons). One Shilling. London: Heywood, Paternoster Buildings. Post free from the Author (Leicester).

As we learn from the *Leeds Times* (June 8th), Mr. E. W. Wallis has been debating with Mr. J. Grinstead of Dewsbury. Mr. Grinstead had expressed an opinion that Spiritualism was "not only worthless but wicked." Mr. Wallis brought out his arguments with effect, but what is the use of arguing with a man who advances an opinion of that kind? To him, none: perhaps to those who listened, some. But it strikes us as so much waste force. Let the facts grow, the arguments accumulate, and let the Grinsteads go their own way.

CONVERSAZIONE OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

The London Spiritualist Alliance held their closing Assembly of the present session in the Banqueting Hall, St. James' Hall, on the evening of the 13th inst. There was a very large attendance, the company including :—

The President (W. Stainton Moses, M.A.), Mr. and Miss T. A. Amos, Rev. G. W. Allen, Mr. Audy, Mrs. and Miss Atkins, Mr. and Mrs. G. P. Allan, Major Burgess, Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Pitt Bryne, Dr. Bonus, Mr. E. Bertram, Mr. F. Berkeley, Mrs. and Miss F. L. Bell, Miss Z. Broderick, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Collingwood, Miss A. M. Collingwood, The Misses Corner, Mr. W. E. Carbury, Mr. and Mrs. Horace Carter, Mr. Newton Crosland, The Misses Dixon, Mrs. Desberre, Mrs. F. L. Dunne, Dr. J. Bowles Daly, Mr. C. Langdon Davies, Miss Dubois, Mr. N. Fabyan Dawe, Dr. and Mrs. H. Densmore, Mrs. Edwards, Mr. and Mrs. T. Everitt, Mr. T. H. Edmands, Mr. W. Scott Elliot, Mrs. Ewing, Mrs. John Edensor, Mrs. and Miss Edensor, Mrs. Wynne Ffoulkes, Hon. Mrs. Forbes, Mr. E. E. Fournier, Miss Farmer, Mrs. Frost, Mrs. FitzGerald, Mr. and Mrs. Desmond FitzGerald, Mr. St. George Lane Fox, Mr. J. Forster, Mr. S. Grove, Mr. B. D. Godfrey, Dr. Gutteridge, Mr. J. T. Grindrod, Miss Glanville, Mr. and Mrs. Biscombe Gardner, Lieut-Colonel and Mrs. Gordon, Miss Marie Giffard, Mrs. Hunt, Mr. Charles J. J. Hanson, Miss Hedges, Mr. Scott Hill, Mr. R. Hannah, Herr and Mrs. Carl Hansen, Mrs. Hawkins, Miss Harding, Mr. T. L. Henly, Miss Ingram, Sir Henry Isaacs, Major Jebb, Mrs. C. E. Jeffreys, Mr. G. and Miss Kennedy, Miss Kenealy, Rev. H. F. Limpus, Mr. H. Lane, Miss Lowe, Mr. Lloyd, Mr. R. James Lees, Miss Leslie, Miss Leeman, Mr. C. Y. Luson, Mrs. W. B. Lewis, Lieut.-Colonel and Mrs. Money, Mr. Edward Maitland, Mr. J. E. MacManus, Mr. Alan Montgomery, Mrs. and Miss Murray, Miss McGill, General Nuttall, Mr. P. H. Nind, Mrs. Noakes, Mr. and Mrs. R. Owen, Mr. and Mrs. John Owen, Countess de Panama, Miss Price, Mr. and Mrs. Packer, Mrs. Packer, jun., Mr. Osmond Packer, Mr. A. Pritchard, Mrs. J. Procter, and Master and Miss Procter, Mr. C. W. Pearce, Mr. E. Sheridan Purcell, Mr. Pearson, Miss Roper, Mrs. and Miss Rogers (Blackheath), Mr., Mrs., and the Misses Dawson Rogers, Mr. George Redway, Miss Rutter, Mrs. Murray Rolland, Mrs. Read, Miss Spencer, Miss Smith, Mr. and Mrs. R. Stapley, Miss Spicer, Miss J. Symons, Mr. and Mrs. B. A. Smith, Miss Siddons, Madame Von Slaphen, Miss Mina Stackpoole, Mrs. Henly Smith, Captain Wm. Eldon Serjeant, Mr. and Mrs. A. P. Sinnett, Mr. L. Sainsbury and Miss Sainsbury, Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Stacke, Captain and Mrs. Surtees, Mr. G. Milner Stephen, Mrs. Morell Theobald, Miss E. L. Theobald, Mr. Henry Thomas, Mr. Tapley, Mrs. W. and Miss Tebb, Mr. and Mrs. Coit Tyler, Mr. A. F. and Mrs. Tindall, Mr. E. A. Tietkens, Mrs. Vaughan, Mr. and Mrs. J. Varley, The Hon. Percy Wyndham, The Misses Withall, Mr. H. Withall, Mrs. Wolf, Miss Wyatt, Mr. H. Webb, Mr. H. Wright, Mrs. and Miss Wingfield, Mr. Wingfield, Mr. J. Walhouse, &c. &c.

In opening the proceedings of the evening the PRESIDENT said in substance :—

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—In the year 1888 we had five meetings only, all held in this hall. In the present year we have already had ten, most of them held on our own premises in Duke-street. We have found this plan very successful. The comparative smallness of the meetings in our compact and cosy rooms has promoted friendly discussion on the subjects which have been introduced. We have every intention of continuing the plan in the autumn. I am not without hope that our next session may contain three courses, one in the autumn of 1889, one before and another after Easter 1890.

During the present course of ten addresses, disregarding sequence of time in favour of grouping by subject, we have had a general survey of the situation, with which I opened the series; and a retrospect by one of our oldest and most experienced Spiritualists, Mr. Thomas Shorter. In the same sphere of personal experience Mr. Dawson Rogers gave us his experiences with a sensitive. Mr. E. Maitland and "1st M.B. (Lond.)" speculated, the one as to the "Raison d'être of Spiritualism," and the other as to the probable course of its development and ultimate issue. Mr. Paice went to the very root when he inquired into the difference between Matter and Spirit. Madame de Steiger discussed the question, on which much divergence of opinion exists among us, of the relation that

Spiritualists should assume to public worship. Lastly, Dr. Wyld spoke on a subject which he has largely made his own when he dealt with "Miracles as consistent with Nature, Science, and Religion."

And now Mr. Sinnett is about to give us his views on Re-incarnation. You will have the benefit of a clear and intelligible statement of those views which are already before the world in Mr. Sinnett's published works, especially in *Esoteric Buddhism*. And you will, I am sure, receive this exposition with the more attention because Spiritualists, as a body distinct from Spiritists on the Continent and Theosophists in England and elsewhere, do not hold a belief in Re-incarnation as a distinctive article of their creed. I shall express with general accuracy the feeling that prevails among those whom I unworthily represent if I say that our verdict is that convenient formula of Scotch legal procedure, "Not proven." It is important to state this, not because we are unaware of the fact that the doctrine has been held and taught in the past by a great number of students of occult subjects, nor because we ignore the light that the doctrine seems to many to cast on some problems of existence, such as the various planes of progression on which we find ourselves as incarnate spirits, but because, as a matter of fact, the ordinary Spiritualist does not hold the doctrine as part of his creed. The genesis of his faith has been of a kind that has not led him to devote attention to the subtler problems that have engaged Eastern thought, and are steadily forcing themselves on Western minds. He has been, I may say without offence, rather too exclusively attracted by the possibility of communion with those whom death has snatched from him, and by the objective phenomena which have presented themselves to his senses.

It has been my increasing endeavour to persuade those whom I can reach to widen their view, to take a broader grasp, to listen with attention to those who have arrived at conclusions other than their own. Comprehensiveness of outlook, catholicity of mind, tolerance, patience, breadth—these are qualities which seem to me indispensable to real progress in the psychological student. I have been reading but recently how the heroic life and martyrdom of the Belgian leper priest, whose praise is in every mouth, is to be commemorated as fitly as may be, so that his name and fame may never die. It is a sign of the times most acceptable to my mind that the committee formed for this purpose, should include within it such men as the Primate of all England, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, and Mr. Spurgeon: that Mr. Gladstone, Lord Randolph Churchill, and Mr. Morley should sit on it side by side, and that it should be presided over by the Heir Apparent to the throne. That is a blessed cause which evokes such harmony out of our ordinary religious and political strife. Is it too much to hope that the day may come when we may all approach the consideration of the subjects that we are studying, with a single desire to bring to the common store of knowledge that which we have found commendable ourselves, discussing without acrimony, without prejudice, without heat, matters that equally concern us all? That is a near approach to Utopia or the Millennium: and though it be but a vision I will cherish it still. We have made great strides during the last decade; I believe that the next will be even more remarkable.

RE-INCARNATION.

MR. A. P. SINNETT then delivered an address on Re-incarnation. He said:—

We cannot apply the same methods of investigation to all the problems we have to deal with in connection with what may comprehensively be called Spiritual Science. Sometimes we can make use of the experimental method as simply and straightforwardly as it is employed by the chemist or electrician. For example, when the problem is whether beings exist on some other plane of nature imperceptible to ordinary senses, but able to influence the phenomena of this plane under some circumstances, that can be proved, as the phrase runs, by actual demonstration. But when, for another example, the question is whether right conduct is conducive in the long account to happiness, that is a question you can only argue about; you cannot put human experience into a test tube, drop in good or bad conduct and see whether you get a precipitate. The experimental method is out of court in the region of metaphysics; there we have to dispense with its charming precision and certainty.

But it does not at all follow on that account that we must consent to remain with unsettled convictions in regard to all problems which belong to the region of metaphysics. We may

not be able to reach certainty concerning them in the same way that we reach certainty in questions where cause and effect lie entirely on the physical plane, but we may reach an approximation to certainty that is practically the same thing—just as an expression in decimals run out to a great many places of figures approximates to the exactitude of a whole number. The surviving error is reduced to a minute *quantité négligeable*.

So with the question whether the doctrine of human evolution summed up in the term "Re-incarnation," can be "proved" or not, in the sense that you can prove that writing will sometimes be produced without the intervention of physical hands, the answer is, of course, that is impossible. All we can do is to show that it would be profoundly unphilosophical to believe anything else, anything, that is to say, at variance with that doctrine; that Re-incarnation will satisfactorily account for all the phenomena of human life (which the idea can have any relations with), and that these would be chaotic and unintelligible otherwise; that without bringing in this all-important interpretation of its conditions the world around us would be the creation of malevolence and injustice, instead of wisdom and goodness; that only by recognising Re-incarnation can we account for one man being a Newton and another an ignorant blockhead. I will amplify these and other considerations directly, but what I want to emphasise for the moment is that in admitting the doctrine of Re-incarnation to be insusceptible of proof,—in the absolute, physical sense of the word,—I claim for it all the while that it can be so nearly proved by reasoning, that no intelligent man who correctly apprehends the idea, and who applies it with adequate patience to the experience of existence, whether in or out of the body, can possibly fail to believe it as fully, for example, as the modern scientific world believes in the undulatory theory of light. That theory is not argued about any more in these days. It is the only theory that will explain all the facts. And so with Re-incarnation in the domain of spiritual science, it is the only theory which will explain all the facts, and it is luminous with a truly scientific aspect; that is to say, it is in harmony with the uniformities of Nature, affording indeed the only way out of supposing that the uniformities of Nature are rudely violated in the laws which govern the evolution of humanity. Thus, in progress of time, spiritual scientists will certainly cease to argue about Re-incarnation, even before the development in ordinary mankind of those higher faculties to which the concatenation of successive lives will ultimately become as plainly perceptible, no doubt, as the identity of the sun is obvious to us, on his rising every day.

The first step towards realising the truth of the doctrine of Re-incarnation is to obtain a clear comprehension of the views really held by people who recognise that doctrine as explaining the actual process of the soul's evolution. We possess a considerable mass of writing on the subject now which students of Oriental philosophy generally would recognise as setting forth the teaching of the most cultivated exponents of that philosophy, and we find, to begin with, that a good many popular notions on the subject which have floated about the world at various periods may be pared away from the central idea. The esoteric doctrine of Re-incarnation, for example, does not contemplate the descent of human souls, under any circumstances, into animal bodies. In the crudest presentation of the idea that has been treated as part of the scheme, but I do not believe it has ever been suggested except as a symbol of moral deterioration following on bad lives, or as a disguise of the true teaching. The only theory that I am here to support is that according to which the drift of successive Re-incarnations must always be progressive. Never mind for the moment from what phases of existence in the remote past human beings may have ascended: once on the human level they remain on that level, or, at all events continue to advance on that level. We may start, in order to explain what really is taught by the exponents of Re-incarnation, at a point in human evolution when human condition has already been fully attained and when life is going on under the circumstances with which we are familiar. The doctrine is that when a man of our kind dies—as regards the physical manifestation of his consciousness—that consciousness passes first of all into spiritual or relatively spiritual conditions of existence, which are calculated to endure for a long time and are immensely important. In regard to these conditions of super-material existence there is not nearly so great a discrepancy between the teachings of Eastern esoteric science—or Theosophy, let me say for convenience sake—and the experience of Spiritualists, as a great many adherents of both systems have sometimes been inclined to imagine. From some of the widely varied conditions

into which a soul may pass on the death of the body it is undoubtedly possible that touch may be maintained with the consciousness of people still in the earth life. And though I would venture to affirm that there are some spiritual conditions into which such a soul might pass which would be too exalted to permit anything resembling what is ordinarily meant by intercourse with friends still in earth life, I imagine that the experience of many Spiritualists would go far to confirm rather than to conflict with that view. Broadly, therefore, it will be seen that the theory of Re-incarnation does not enter into competition with any estimate of the probabilities of spirit life — except in so far as some of those estimates will be satisfied with nothing less than eternity as the duration of the conditions they predict. The theory of Re-incarnation contemplates with the progress of ages so great an advance and improvement in the type of humanity, both as regards earthly body and soul consciousness, that it would certainly shrink from supposing that any human being of an imperfect type should be doomed to preserve to all eternity any single personality which would perpetuate its imperfections. But that theory, let it always be remembered, is in no hurry to obliterate personalities. The spiritual existence following the release of the soul from any particular body may be prolonged, if the experiences of life in that body have been of a peculiarly vivid and inspiring character, for prodigious periods. But the contention of esoteric philosophy is that finite causes must have finite effects. The earth experience of any human being between birth and death is an accumulation of finite causes, summed up within the experience, the emotion, the thoughts of the life in question. Grant those subjective energies any range of amplification we please, a time will come, according to the doctrine I am now describing, when they are all distilled as it were into an essence of life. The soul has then absorbed into its permanent or truly spiritual nature all the capacities of emotion and knowledge, which its last life invested it with. It is once more a colourless, pure centre of abstract consciousness and in that capacity, under the affinities of its nature, it once again seeks a vehicle for the activity of its latent capacities. It finds that vehicle—not consciously, but under the operation of a comprehensive natural law, just as the appropriate molecules of matter from the atmosphere are drawn into the composition of a plant—in a newly developing human form.

So far we have just a bare outline of the theory of Re-incarnation. We start with a soul in physical life—we follow it through the experiences of life which develop all those innumerable memories and affections and associations of thought which make up the person or personality in question (a something quite distinct of course from the body which is its vehicle). We perceive that personality proceeding next to enjoy a spiritual existence (for periods enormously outrunning the span of physical life), and then we find it returning to a new earth life to carry on its work of acquisition, of acquiring experience, and capacity for knowledge, and of making that all-important moral progress which can only be accomplished in the midst of the temptations, the struggles, and the internal victories of the physical plane.

But to understand the doctrine aright, it is above all things necessary to keep in view the law under which the soul, at the expiration of its spiritual rest, is drawn back into earth life. That law is known to Oriental philosophy as the law of Karma, and it is the essential complement of the doctrine of Re-incarnation. The bodily form to which the soul is drawn back is not selected at random—as in a certain sense the rain drops may be said to fall at random on the shore or the sea—on the desert or the fruitful plain. Governed by the all-sufficient discernment of Nature, the soul ripe for Re-incarnation finds its expression in a body which affords it the exact conditions of life which Karma—in this sense its desert—requires. The circumstances of life in which that body bears its new tenant, the destiny of happiness or suffering which its leading characteristics provide for, its intellectual capacities as an instrument on which the soul can play, are all determined (with an infinite variety of other conditions) by the Karma of the Re-incarnating soul, or, to use what is, perhaps, a more scientific expression of the Re-incarnating Ego. No one need here for an instant be embarrassed by the familiar phenomena in human life of what is called heredity. Physical forms are transmitted on the plane of physical evolution from father to son with sometimes remarkable resemblances; in such cases heredity is not the cause, but the concomitant of the attributes manifested by the son. His independent soul Karma has required such a vehicle as the man who becomes his father was physically

qualified to engender. A hundred illustrations might be taken from Nature to show her various forces and powers playing in this way into one another's hands. Assimilation is the law by which Re-incarnation and Karma reconcile themselves with heredity.

Now this statement of the view really held by adherents of Oriental philosophy in respect to Re-incarnation should go far to answer by anticipation many objections to the idea often urged by people who acquire an inaccurate or incomplete notion of the teaching. The suggestion, for instance, that we cannot have passed former lives on earth because we do not remember them, might be an objection to some totally different theory, but it is no objection to the theory I have reviewed. For manifestly, by the hypothesis, it is impossible for any one returning to the incarnate life to remember that which he must wear out, completely distill, and forget, as regards its specific details, before he is qualified to re-incarnate. If it is alleged, as has, indeed, sometimes been alleged with great force as regards evidence in particular cases, that some rarely organised persons have maintained recollections of a former life of no very remote period, all we need point out is that few of the standing rules of natural growth in any of the kingdoms of Nature are beyond the reach of occasional abnormal exceptions. It is the rule, for instance, that men of our race live to about threescore years and ten, but there are many examples in which that rule is violated, and we may conceive in the same way that people sometimes "die" prematurely from the spiritual planes of nature and return before their time to the earth life. Nor in venturing that guess need we assume that accidents like those which terminate life abruptly sometimes amongst us are liable to befall the released souls of the higher levels. Premature returns to earth life in the rare cases where they occur may be due to Karmic complications too elaborate to inquire into now. The important point is that the regular course of events must necessarily clear the Ego of all specific recollections of our life before it is ready for another.

It might be desirable that this should be done in the interest of the soul's progress, if for no other reason. Life would perhaps hardly be bearable for human beings still in a humble phase of evolution, if the long and weary procession of uninteresting existences through which they had passed lay within sight behind them, before enlightened spirituality of consciousness had shown them the ultimate possibilities of progress in future. And each life in turn would not, perhaps, be fraught with its own lessons unless these were learned separately, as it were, and one by one. But above all the forgetfulness of each life is plainly due to that provision of Nature already referred to which ensures for each of us after death the maximum fruition of all our spiritual aspirations in the corresponding and appropriate realms of consciousness. It would be unjust to the soul that it should remember, before it is exalted enough to exercise faculties far transcending those of the present average mankind. Memories are apt to be tinged either with sad longing or regret. For a man to remember some long vanished happiness of a former incarnation would mean one of two things: either he would have been unfairly deprived of the spiritual complement of that happiness, turned out too soon from the Heaven in which it would naturally be protracted, or supposing his new conditions of physical life owing to bad Karma—i.e., to evil doing on his part in the former life—to be the painful penalty of such misdoing, he would be doubly punished if allowed the tantalising memory of what he had lost. Finally, as regards this point, though I have here been endeavouring to justify the law of Nature in question, it is not always to be expected that we can do this completely, and even if some critics remain inclined to dispute the wisdom of Nature in providing a draught of Lethe, "on slipping through from state to state," I would answer that the first thing we have to do in studying these mysteries is to find out what is, leaving to a more advanced period of our knowledge the task of ascertaining why it is.

At all events, the fact that we do not remember former incarnations, taken in conjunction with the merciful arrangement that provides us after each physical life a long and, in most cases, highly enjoyable and refreshing expansion of our existence on the spiritual planes, is no impediment whatever to the acceptance of the Re-incarnation theory, if we find it recommended to acceptance on independent grounds.

Coming now to some of those independent grounds, I would ask you to consider a somewhat recondite but extremely important argument, which is this. *Ex nihilo nihil fit*. That is a

rule which commands our respect as much on the spiritual as on the physical plane of nature. Now, a human soul will not be regarded by Spiritualists, at all events, as failing in its claim to be considered a something. If I were discussing this matter with a Materialist who started with the contention that the soul, with all its thoughts and emotions, was merely a function of matter, I should indent on the experiences of Spiritualism to refute that contention. But here we find ourselves in presence of the established fact that the soul is an entity apart from and independent of the body—capable of persisting in existence and consciousness after the body is no more. Now, where has that soul come from when we first begin to see it flutter in a young child? It is a something independent of the body, therefore it has had an origin independently of the body. It has not come out of nothingness—it is essentially of the nature of the spiritual plane to which we find abundant reason for feeling sure it will flit off whenever the body is destroyed. Is it not obvious, therefore, that it has emerged from the spiritual plane—coming into manifestation on the physical? "But," someone may urge, "what we see in the young child in the nature of a soul is something very different from that which we can follow to a certain extent on its departure from the worn-out body of a person dying in mature life. It may be that we have to recognise it as coming into the child's body, an entity already, but it looks very much like a freshly created entity. It is merely a centre of potentialities, a consciousness that may be taught, may acquire experience, may become a man, clearly *not* the trained soul of a man from the first moment of birth." Let me show how that objection is met. Firstly, for the purpose of the argument I am setting before you, all that matters is to establish that the soul is a continuous entity which is in existence before and is in existence after the physical life. That which we see before us, in the physical life of a man, is a bead, so to speak, upon the thread of life. When we fully appreciate the fact that the thread stretches into darkness in both directions, we realise that the process of birth is, at all events, the coming of a soul into incarnation, an emergence into physical manifestation from a spiritual state; and when we once realise that, we are, at all events, a very long way on the road towards recognising the doctrine of Re-incarnation in its scientific completeness. But, secondly, the vacuity of the child's mind, the emptiness of the soul on coming into incarnation, is exactly the condition of things which, on the doctrine of Re-incarnation, as I have explained it, we are bound to expect. All its specific states of consciousness, its definite possessions of knowledge and stores of emotional experience, have vibrated to their utmost capacity for vibration on the spiritual plane of being before Re-incarnation claimed it for earth once more. As a re-incarnating entity it can only be a centre of potentialities, a focus of consciousness replete with the power of acquiring knowledge and the power of developing thought, as soon as the new instrument, the new body, with which it is thrown into relations by its Karmic affinities, shall have grown into perfection sufficiently to give it free play.

To the mind's eye of the occult student the cycles of human progress which are worked out in this way are as intelligible, as coherent, and obviously fulfilling the natural idea in view, as the cycles of destiny governing the drops of water that fall on earth from the clouds—that flow over the land in streams and are lost for a time in the ocean, to be redrawn back into the atmosphere at last and so fall again on the earth—re-incarnated in the new raindrops of to-day after centuries or millenniums of existence, perhaps, in other conditions of nature.

But passing on now from subtle considerations which guide us to the discovery of the principle of Re-incarnation, let us consider for a moment the immensely powerful argument for its acceptance embodied in the condition of the world around us. On the hypothesis that each physical life is the only earth life of each soul in actual incarnation, could any cruelty and injustice be worse than that which the inequalities of life would exhibit in operation? We have not merely to consider the stupendous inequalities in the lot of the rich and the poor; we see these inequalities emphasised by all imaginable differences of health and physique, and by the terrible differences of moral surrounding. We see some members of the human family strong and robust, and gifted with brilliant faculties of intelligence; prosperous, carefully guarded in youth from evil, brought up in innocence and purity, drifted, as naturally as a river flows, into lives of benevolence and usefulness, and passing on into whatever spiritual existence may await them beyond the grave, with every advantage which the utmost

development of their loftier aspirations may bestow. Others we see crippled, deformed, miserable; steeped in poverty and, perhaps, painful disease; nurtured in crime, and fed on evil of every sort, living a curse to their companions, and destroyed at last perhaps by the human justice they have offended. With unfeeling foolishness some unintelligent defenders of the one life hypothesis will sometimes attempt to argue that beneath all the apparent inequalities of life, the relief the miserable and suffering may sometimes experience, during transitory moments, when their hard lot may be a little ameliorated, is so great that it may be set against their habitual misery, so that all have the same share of happiness on the whole. Words would fail me if I sought to characterise the grovelling and ignoble nonsense of this theory. Earthly happiness varies with different people in the proportion in which lakes vary in size; in which streams vary in length. There are boundless differences in the well-being of different men and women on earth, and these differences are of a nature that could not be equalised on the spiritual plane of life, in the way sometimes suggested. For if the poor and suffering on earth were translated to a Heaven superior to that provided for those who had been happy in earth life, that would simply be translating the injustice of Providence to the realms in which it ought to be especially operative. The persons wronged would then be those who had been, without reference to themselves, cheated of a blissful eternity at the poor price of transitory delusions here.

It is only by realising the long succession of earth lives which make up the individuality of each soul that we can discern order, harmony, and justice reigning in the destinies of man. By this interpretation of the phenomena of life we not alone restore justice to the government of the world, but discover the working of natural law in human evolution to be precise and unerring in its exactitude. The good and bad deeds of men are of a mixed and complex character. Some are spiritual in their colouring; others appertain to the earth life. These last find their fruition in the earth life when the soul returns to it. These in their boundless variety account for the boundless diversities of human lot. Such diversities are not the sport of brainless chance—the outcome of what by an absurd phrase—the expression of the world's ignorance in these matters—is sometimes called the accident of birth. There is no "accident" in the supreme act of Divine justice guiding human evolution. With the same inevitable certainty that force on the physical plane governs the combination of the molecules of matter—though the bewildering complexity of even that aspect of force dazzles the mind as we attempt to follow out its workings—so does the far more exalted force which gives effect to the primary laws of nature in the moral world operate with an exactitude that no chemical reactions can eclipse. The outward circumstances of each life into which we may be born are the mathematical result of the causes we have ourselves set in motion in former lives. The causes we are setting in motion now—the efforts of our own free will within the narrowest hedge of circumstances we can possibly imagine as confining it—will be the all-powerful, determining influence in the creation of the conditions under which we shall live on earth next time.

And these conditions, let it be remembered, are not merely a response to the moral requirements of the situation; meting out happiness or suffering in accordance with the Karma of the individual Ego at the time of each Re-incarnation, they are the expression, as well, of his intellectual and psychic progress. No human effort is wasted and resultless in the regions of such progress any more than in those of the great moral law. If a man labours, for example, during a whole life at some branch of science, at some art, or at some special department of study, the *specific* acquirements he may possess at the end of his life are not passed over, it is true, to the next life exactly as he lays them down. They would probably be of very little use to him in the altered circumstances of the world when he comes back, if they were. But they are thrown into manifestation again at his Re-incarnation in the appropriate form of highly developed aptitudes for the line of acquisition he has formerly been concerned with. Do we not observe, for instance, in such a very earthly matter as the power of learning languages great gulfs of difference between the aptitudes of different people? Some will learn a dozen languages with less difficulty than others will learn one. "They have an inborn faculty," says the careless commonplace critic, content as usual to libel nature by setting down to the accident of birth the symmetrical outcome of exquisitely adjusted law. So with the glaring examples of re-incarnating acquirements, presented to us by the case of people who show extraordinary genius for music at an age when less

"gifted" contemporaries can barely distinguish a tune. There is no gift in the matter—there is acquirement faithfully preserved in the Karmic affinities of the Ego and in its true individuality.

Surely no one who appreciates, even imperfectly, the fulness with which the doctrines of Re-incarnation satisfy the problem of life and human evolution, will be surprised to remember that it has always, as far as philosophical history can look back, been accepted as the keynote of spiritual science by the vast majority of mankind. Buddhism finds it established as the corner-stone of Brahminical teaching and takes it over as a matter of course. It would not be difficult to show that the Egyptian faith included it, but without putting any of the ancient systems of religious thought into what might seem to conflict with the creeds of Christendom, let me also venture to affirm that it is obviously taken over and included in Christianity itself, though the modern churches have forgotten it, together with so much else that lies only half concealed in the beautiful symbology of their much misunderstood Scriptures.

One of the most striking of the passages in the New Testament that recognises Re-incarnation is that in which Jesus refers to the prophecy in Malachi that Elijah or Elias would return to earth. The prophecy itself occurs in the last verse but one of the Old Testament, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Jesus refers to this, according to the eleventh chapter of Matthew, as follows: "But what went ye out for to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? . . . But wherefore went ye out? To see a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist . . . And if ye are willing to receive it this is Elijah, which is to come. He that hath ears to hear let him hear."

The same idea is expressed in the ninth chapter of Mark, as follows:—"And they asked him, saying, The scribes say that Elijah must first come. And he said unto them, Elijah indeed cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how is it written of the Son of Man, that he should suffer many things and be set at nought? But I say unto you, that Elijah is come, and they have also done unto him whatsoever they listed, even as it is written of him."

Again, in the seventeenth chapter of Matthew, we read:—"And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elijah must come first? And he answered and said, Elijah indeed cometh, and shall restore all things; but I say unto you that Elijah is come already and they knew him not, but did unto him whatsoever they listed. Even so shall the Son of Man also suffer of them. Then understood the disciples that he spake to them of John the Baptist."

In what sense these words can be taken except as meaning that John the Baptist was a re-incarnation of Elijah it would be difficult to say. The remarkable words above quoted, "He that hath ears let him hear," show that the information was given out rather for the use of the enlightened than of the common multitude, who might be expected not to understand its full significance; but it is evident, from another passage, that Jesus assumed a widespread knowledge around Him of the principles of Re-incarnation, for in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew we read:—

"Now, when Jesus came into the parts of Cæsarea Philippi he asked his disciples, saying: Who do men say that the Son of Man is? And they said, Some say John the Baptist; some Elijah; and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."

Jesus then goes on to repudiate any such specific individuality for Himself, but none the less does the conversation show that the idea of Re-incarnation was a familiar and accepted principle with those whom He addressed; while far from rebuking that belief as a principle, He explicitly affirms it in the case of John the Baptist.

That the principle in question was a generally accepted belief among the disciples is plainly shown by the passage in John ix., relating to the man who was blind from his birth:

"And as he passed by he saw a man blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Rabbi, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

It would be a degeneration if I went into an analysis of the answer which Jesus here gives—"Neither did this man sin nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." The value of the passage for my present purpose lies in the significance of the question. The man had been blind from

his birth, and yet the disciples asked did he earn that affliction by sin? The question was either nonsense, or it meant did he sin in his last incarnation?

The truth appears to be that it is only among the modern generations of the Western world, when the inner science of spiritual nature has been so deeply obscured by the acquirements of material civilisation, that people have lost touch with the all-important tenet that true Theosophists, students of Divine Wisdom, are at last struggling to restore. It has been forgotten so long that people who have constructed a fanciful scheme of human destinies for themselves are sometimes in the present day inconquerably loath to welcome back the truth. They find it uncomfortable, and regard that as a sufficient ground for its rejection, unaware of the fact that the other alternative—the perpetuation *ad infinitum* of the miserable personalities that so many men are doomed to bear, or, as I should rather say, have built up for themselves by the sad misuse they have hitherto made of their opportunities,—would be for the majority of the present race the most profoundly uncomfortable fate that could well be imagined. And it is but a short-sighted aspiration, indeed, which would lead even the most lofty-minded and cultivated members of that race to prefer the infinite perpetuation of their own personalities—to the infinite improvement of these which the principles of Re-incarnation hold out to them. I am not unaware of the hypothesis which some thinkers may vaguely cling to, according to which they hope for improvement along some unknown channels of progress in spiritual realms eternal to the life of this planet. Such hopes ought not to be the refuge of those whose experience, far transcending that of the common-place world at large, should show them how intimately the spiritual planes of Nature are linked with that on which humanity is manifest in the flesh. The simple creed that we shall go to Heaven if we are good, and there be taken care of and helped along somehow, may be a good working creed for men in an early stage of spiritual development who are drifting along from one unintelligent life to another, remitting to later opportunities the commencement of their higher evolution. But it is not a creed that can long suffice for people who begin to realise the intimate manner in which various states of existence in this highly complicated world around us are blended together. It converts the visible world—for one thing, as I have said—into a seething cauldron of injustice, and further than this, it degrades it into playing an almost useless part in the evolution of humanity—for by the hypothesis I speak of all that would be really important in that evolution would have to be performed elsewhere. We need not, however, disinherit the earth and deny it the fruition of its own suffering. As far as the human family, as manifested on earth, has already advanced beyond the condition of the lowliest savages—and further—will that family advance in the future. To question or doubt this would be an insult to the majesty of the Divine principle in Nature, with which most surely the human family must be in close relations. As we grow in moral nature and wisdom and in all the higher capacities, as we work our way on through the sometimes painful schooling of physical life, our souls grow gradually fitted to inhabit the physical organisms of the future which the progressive forces of the material plane will evolve for us as we successively return to them. We shall all of us see the world again, under those greatly ameliorated conditions, and looking back then to this period shall smile to think that it was ever possible for men to regard the present conditions of this now current race as a fitting platform from which to part company for ever from the sphere of incarnate experience.

After the address several questions were asked, and suitable replies having been made by Mr. Sinnett, the President announced the Congress at Paris, particulars of which have already appeared in our columns. He hoped that a large contingent of English Spiritualists would visit Paris during the Congress.

A cordial vote of thanks to Mr. Sinnett closed the proceedings, and the meeting then became informal for the purposes of social intercourse, music, and refreshment. The music was under the direction of the Misses Withall, who were ably assisted by Miss Dixon and Mr. E. A. Tietkens. The grand piano used on the occasion was generously lent by the Messrs. Brinsmead.

"He who reigns within himself, and rules passions, desires, and fears, is more than a king."—MILTON.

CORRESPONDENCE.

(Continued from p. 297.)

The Demons and the Herd of Swine.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Most of us have read, and been more or less interested in, the controversy in *The Nineteenth Century* between Professor Huxley and Dr. Wace on the story in the Gospels, termed by the former, "The Pig Incident." Many of us also have probably felt that, as it is as natural a statement of facts as any other in every day experience, it is a pity not to have a simpler view of it placed before the mind of the public. First, we will take St. Paul's view of the disembodied state generally. In 2 Cor. v. we read his earnest desire that, being freed from his earthly house of this tabernacle, he might at once be clothed upon with his house from Heaven, i.e., his spiritual body, belonging to the spiritual state. "If so be," he adds, "I shall not be found naked." St. Paul was an Initiate, as is apparent in the Greek, from many expressions through his epistles; brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, it could hardly have been otherwise. The astral plane, with its nerve body exposed to every evil influence, was present to him as he wrote.

Now take our Lord's parable in Luke xi. 24-26. Here he distinctly refers to the spirits wandering in the astral light between the spiritual and physical planes. It is to be observed here that the word "demon," as understood by the Jews, which is invariably used in accounts of possession and so forth throughout the Gospels, always means a human disembodied spirit, and never the devils, elemental spirits and worse, which also surround or inhabit our atmosphere. To the Lord, possessor "of the keys of hades and of death," the other side was as open as this side, and what He saw there forms the subject of this parable. He tells us that after wandering through dry places seeking rest and finding none, the particular spirit he had in view returned to the man he had previously obsessed. This man, apparently, while he had cast out the old, had not grace sufficient to enable him to admit the new and holier influences, consequently he was all in readiness for the demon to repossess him. The story ends with his awful fate, and the possession of seven others worse than the first bring him to his last and hopeless condition.

This introduces to us the incident under discussion in the *Nineteenth Century*, where we see the outward and visible signs of an inner obsession such as this. There being in those days no so-called "lunatic" asylums and padded chambers, this poor, maddened wretch fled naked to the rocky, hilly district outside the city, which forms the cemetery in Eastern towns. He remained there, as the dervishes in their frenzies to this day, cutting himself, and thereby drawing more evil influences closer and closer round him. For another instance of the same sort of attraction, see the knives of the prophets of Baal while imploring fire from their gods, and the rites of most heathen nations. After a time no one dared to pass him, and his case seemed hopeless.

At the approach of our Lord, however, the soul of the man reasserted itself, and a sudden impulse brought him to the feet of the Christ. Thus suddenly brought into the presence of Divine love and power, no wonder that the demons, through the voice of the man, cried out in anguish. Swedenborg tells us that if a spirit from the hells strays into the heavenly sphere he instantly falls and rolls in his pain, crying, as in this case, "Torment me not." No spirit, unprepared, can bear the spiritual fire, which scorches while it purifies and saves. Our Lord, for the time, addressed Himself entirely to the demons, who besought Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss—the great, cold, dreary space where they had wandered so long, with all its horrors, against which they were so defenceless. Anything "to be clothed upon!" How, they scarcely cared. "And there was near an herd of many swine feeding." Everything seemed hopeless, they felt obliged to forsake the man, they dared not enter any of the crowd assembled round the Lord, so they begged the only favour possible to them, "Send us into the swine." He said "Go." Now, surely it does not require the science of a Huxley to see that human spirits could in no wise fit into the organisation of swine, and the natural result followed. The maddened brutes rushed over the cliffs into the sea and were drowned, and the demons again went forth bodiless, to seek the rest they could only find in the cleansing fire of the Divine Spirit, for which they were not yet ready.

Instantaneous also was the effect on the man. Clothed and in his right mind he now sat at the Saviour's feet, "beseeching Him that he might be with Him," the cry of the human heart, if

in a natural state, at all times. When it is not, we may be sure we shall find the cause of spiritual insanity, as of natural insanity, in this, one of the most beautiful stories of the Gospel history. Beautiful, because so perfectly true to nature, in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. Y. Z.

Paul of Tarsus.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I observe in reading your article of last week on "Paul of Tarsus," (p. 287), it is stated that Paul never quotes the words of Jesus, &c. I beg to refer you to Acts xx. 35.

107, Caledonian-road,
June 17th, 1889.

A. W. RODGER.

[Quite so. But the quoted words do not occur in any of the Gospel narratives.—ED. OF "LIGHT."]

SOCIETY WORK.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S. E.—On Sunday last Mr. Lees gave an able address on "The Word of God: As it is Written." Sunday next, Mr. Denvars Summers.—S. E. COATES.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION.—The following meetings will be held at Goswell Hall, 290, Goswell-road, E. C., on Sunday, June 30th. Afternoon at 3 p.m. to receive reports of work from secretaries and treasurers. Tea meeting at 5 p.m.; tickets 1s. each. Evening at 7 p.m., addresses by Messrs. Lees, Drake, Rodger, Goddard, Veitch, and others. Several solos will be sung.—J. VEITCH, Sec., 44, Coleman-road, Peckham.

CLAREMONT HALL.—Last Sunday evening the platform of Claremont Hall was occupied by Mr. Herbert Burrows, well known as one of the most brilliant leaders of the young Socialist party. He delivered an able exposition of the principles of Theosophy, preceded by a severe handling of Professor Huxley and his "Scientific Method"; the discourse being received with great satisfaction by a crowded audience.—J. B. ASTBURY.

GARDEN HALL, 309, ESSEX-ROAD.—On Sunday last the guides of Mr. Savage gave an excellent address on "Spiritualism," showing that it affords consolation in this life, and points to a grand future, taking from death its sting, and giving us a joyful victory over the grave. Clairvoyant descriptions were also given, and were all recognised. Next Sunday, June 23rd, at 6.30; Wednesday 26th, a Séance for Investigators, at eight; medium, Mr. Savage.—G. CANNON.

HARCOURT-STREET, MARYLEBONE.—A very interesting Flower Service was held on Sunday evening, in memory of Mr. Cowper. Mr. J. Burns, editor of the *Medium*, an old friend of our risen brother, rendered valuable assistance by his excellent address. Mrs. Hawkins, who was controlled by an old labourer in Spiritualism (Mr. Cogman), and Messrs. Haycroft, Towns, White, and others gave efficient help. We thank all friends for their co-operation and sympathy.—C. J. H.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—The summer outing of the Lyceum and adult friends to Ashted Woods will take place on Wednesday, July 3rd. Particulars may be obtained from the hon. secretary. To enable the children and our poorer brethren to get a glimpse of the country, at least on one day of the year, a fund has been started to which subscriptions would be welcomed from those in a position to help.—On Sunday last we had a narrative of spiritual experiences by members at the morning meeting, and in the evening an address on "The Evolution of Ethics," by "An Oriental," which brought a large number of pertinent questions from the audience. Miss Bell sang an excellent solo during the evening. On Sunday next Mr. A. Major at 11 a.m. and Mr. Parker and other friends at 6.30 p.m.—W. E. LONG, 99, Hill-street, Peckham.

ZEPHYR HALL, 9, BEDFORD-GARDENS, SILVER-STREET, NOTTING HILL GATE.—On Sunday evening last, Miss Blenman addressed a fair audience, subject (by desire), "The Millennium." The address was well received, and some interesting expressions of opinion were given at the close. Next Sunday, at seven, Mr. J. Hopcroft; Friday, at eight, séance, at 16, Dartmoor-street, Notting Hill Gate. A large audience, including many Spiritualists, assembled in Hyde Park, at three o'clock last Sunday afternoon, when speeches were delivered by Mr. R. J. Lees, Mr. J. Hopcroft, and Mr. Drake, followed by discussion. Two hundred numbers of "LIGHT" and *The Two Worlds* were distributed. We are now in want of a fresh supply of weekly papers and Spiritualistic literature, and if any kind friends will send us some we shall be pleased. Next Sunday, at three, Mr. R. J. Lees, Mr. Hopcroft, and Mr. Drake, opposite the Marble Arch.—W. O. DRAKE, Hon. Sec.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

F. H. P.—Thank you. We think not.

J. R. LEE.—Many thanks. We are always glad to hear of progress, and thank you for your appreciation of our work.

TO THE DEAF.—A Person cured of Deafness and noises in the head of 23 years' standing by a simple remedy, will send a description of it FREE to any Person who applies to NICHOLSON, 21, Bedford Square, London, W.C.