

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

No. 463.—VOL. IX. [Registered as a Newspaper.] SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1889. [Registered as a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

There was a letter in last "LIGHT" (p. 543) headed "Mr. Ruskin on the gods," which I hope will not escape careful notice. He uses the word, he tells us, in the plural to denote "the totality of spiritual powers." These range from the Angels, Principalities, and Powers of Heaven to the "spirits ministering and guardian, or destroying and tempting," whose mission brings them to this lower world of ours. To all these, in all their several spheres of being, in all their varieties of occupation, Mr. Ruskin applies the term "gods" "as the best understood in all languages, and the truest and widest in meaning," adding characteristically, "myself knowing for an indisputable fact that no true happiness exists, nor is any good work ever done by human creatures, but in the sense or imagination of such presences." So, then, though Mr. Ruskin professes no personal knowledge of these "gods," but "in meekness accepts the testimony and belief of all ages," he has no difficulty in stating, "as an indisputable fact," that true work and true happiness exist only in the recognition of the informing and guiding presence of this great cloud of witnesses. This is excellent Spiritualism; a noble and a worthy faith, more fitly described as true Spiritualism than that half disguised Materialism which delights only in phenomena that belong exclusively to the plane of matter, and may or may not have their connections behind the veil. An ennobling and aspiring faith, it seems to me, that which would raise incarnate spirit to the plane where its home is, and would not drag down to the plane of matter any poor being which has been emancipated from its thrall.

For it is one thing to receive with gratitude that which is vouchsafed, the fruit of self sacrifice and love, and quite another to demand imperiously with loud and persistent knocking at the wall of partition, that it shall be thrown down and the Heavenly hosts shall mingle amongst men. There is evidence enough to the observant eye that there is in process a serious and sustained attempt on the part of missionary spirits—if the term be permissible—to influence those whom they can reach. To this end it was necessary to attract attention. The readiest means was to approach men on the plane of thought to which they had allowed themselves to sink. The age was Materialistic: for men had crushed out evidence of the existence of spirit, and had turned their attention as students of exact science to that alone which lent itself to observation and experiment on the plane of matter. Spiritual things, being spiritually discerned, fell into

oblivion, and faith grew cold. At this juncture came this Gospel of God to an age that needed it, given in a way that was most likely to attract its attention.

Attention has been attracted, and men are busy on their several grades of intelligence in seeing what they can make of this new thing; how they can fit it in with their prejudices, twist it into agreement with their previous knowledges, or get rid of it as an inconvenient and intrusive novelty. "Spirit is the last thing I will give in to," is forcibly shouted all round us. The man of science will none of it, for he does not believe in its existence, or, at least, in its interference with our world. The Psychologist puts it aside, seeking in psychical vagaries of the human system for his explanations of what he sees. He studies his psychic or medium, and ignores the operating intelligence that uses the instrument. He cuts open his drum to find the noise. The so-called Spiritualist whose interest never gets beyond the phenomenal evidence of spirit-power talks much of spirit, but his words are loose and meaningless. Spirit does not dwell on the plane of matter, though its effects be traceable there. To direct all attention to these material evidences of spirit-action which are intended only to attract preliminary notice, is to keep on ringing the bell after the attendant has answered the call; to forget the message in the jingling din. It is not until the man who has begun by assimilating the evidence on a lower plane passes from that knowledge to a higher and a more spiritual that as a Spiritualist he becomes worthy of his name. Until his Spiritualism spiritualises him it is dead and worthless. When he learns that man may live, as Ruskin puts it, "in the sense or imagination of spiritual presences" so that he may develop that which is good in him and crush the evil, he has got hold of a fruitful faith. When in the development of his own spirit, he learns that man makes his own future, and is, while on earth, a radiating centre of good to his fellows or a pest-centre disseminating evil, he has got hold of the great truth of the brotherhood of man—members one of another, suffering and blest in communion with all, never isolated or alone. And when he has added to that the knowledge or realisation of the Fatherhood of God—though it be to him but a metaphor to shadow forth what finite minds must fail to understand—he stands four-square, a Spiritualist indeed, thoroughly furnished and equipped for his life-work here and his higher work hereafter.

There is in Mr. Ruskin's brief note that which indicates that he has put the right construction on Spiritualism. His sense of ministering and guardian spirits and their work among us is one side; the other is the doing of "good work," honest, unselfish, and real, because of these witnesses, because of our brethren, because, lastly, of ourselves and our own development. I have more than once before been moved to notice how ideas get "into the air," and circle round in the thought-atmosphere. It seems as if this attempt to lift Spiritualism on to a higher plane were in the air now. Unity, unselfishness, brotherhood, and community of

interest one hears of all round. The time seems to have come when another effort is to be made to overcome the disintegrating forces which make of Spiritualism an incoherent mass. If I do not mistake it will need many efforts to overcome the dead weight of resistance. But each fresh effort commands my attention, and shall have such discriminating support as I can give. The chief effort now is that being made by the *Journal* at Chicago. Of this readers of "LIGHT" are kept informed. The end has not yet been reached, and it would be premature to prophesy the event. But no one is more aware than its promoter that care, judgment, and patience will be needed in full measure to avoid dangers that lurk on every side.

"THE ASTRAL LIGHT."*

(Concluded from p. 535.)

Psychical energy is never lost or wasted. That which is thought out is wrought out, and occult publication does not merely offer ideas for sale, but carries them straight to some mind that is working on the same lines, or consolidates them with others which are forming the pabulum of a new Zeit-geist. So we may hear of simultaneous and identical discoveries, or of literary "coincidences," or of concurrent manifestations of similar social tendencies in different and apparently unconnected quarters. "To send out one thought upon the astral currents is oftentimes sufficient. Its light is sure to impinge upon some receptive mind, which, sooner or later, gives it utterance to the world."

The astral ether—the "magnale magnum" of Van Helmont—is the transmitting agent of the will, whenever that is actuated by a vehement desire and embodied in a well-formed and sustained imagination. Hence, "sorcery and witchcraft are by no means imaginary things, nor are they follies of mere superstition. They are real potencies on the side of evil and have always existed." Here, however, we must interpose the remark, that the mystical powers of evil, as those of good, require *faith*—just such unquestioning faith as that whereby we move the organs of action in the body. This faith belongs to all spontaneous activities, and, as Paracelsus pointed out, the human will, to act magically, must have the absolute assurance which is evinced in spontaneity. That these powers always exist is therefore a proposition to be qualified by the consideration, that in a sceptical age the first condition of their operation is in general wanting. No one, for instance, will set himself to "bewitch" another, unless he has confidence in his power to do so. Thus the contention of the rationalist, that what he calls "miracles" are only alleged to occur in ages of what he calls "superstition," is certainly true, but for a reason very different from that which he assigns—"It is possible to kill a man by projecting upon him the poisonous magnetism of an evil thought. Only the truly good, spiritually uplifted above such a plane of evil by self-purification, are safe from the poisonous auras of evil thoughts. A thought of hatred, and desire to injure, projected upon such an individual, is repelled by the impenetrable positive aura of good which surrounds him as with a wall of brass, and recoils with redoubled potency upon the projector, whose own life becomes poisoned thereby, sometimes to the extent of causing disease or death." Eliphaz Levi said: "It is dangerous to health to have enemies." But to "Nizida's" statement the addition should be made, that protection is also afforded, as well by a sound and close "sphere"—the danger of sensitivity in advance of moral elevation being thus apparent—as by the shield of sympathetic auras. Few prominent public leaders could live against the malignity projected upon them, and which would in most cases break through their

individual spheres, were not the latter reinforced by the *æs triplex* of sympathetic currents which encompass them.

From Magic and its operations, "Nizida" passes to Spiritism and its phenomena:—

To re-establish equilibrium in the mental growth of mankind, that they should not perish by the complete negation of spiritual life, a reactionary current is making itself felt, which will eventually bring human evolution into a more perfect harmony with the intentions of nature. Spontaneous ebullitions of astral existence, or life on a stage of greater substantial tenuity than ours, are borne in upon the plane of matter more dense, exciting comment, and awakening intelligent inquiry. The dividing line, which exists only in man's grosser senses, is at such times leapt over, and the physical man is suddenly aroused to a sense of an additional mode of existence for himself, which he has always looked upon with that awe which we give to the unknown, calling it supernatural, when it is only super-physical.

Modern Spiritism has built up for itself a fairy palace as frangible as glass, which the strong winds of spiritual science will blow to the four points of the compass one of these days. . . . That which seems spontaneous to the gross senses of unspiritual man is by no means so, but connected by a long chain of causal precedents, which disappear ultimately into the depths of arcane nature. In childlike ignorance he accepts as correct the first reason for a thing happening which presents itself. It is probably the proximate cause; but there are others beyond, which, if known, would throw a different complexion upon the first in presentation.

The following is a restatement, open to some criticism, of a view which probably is in substance now tolerably familiar:—

His [man's] memories live around him in actual forms; his mental calculations, his thought-processes of the most minute and varied kind, are indelibly inscribed in that diaphanous element, the astral light, and from it may be brought into actual, vivid presentation by any adjacent will power so determined. A man's aura, his soul's absorbent and reflectant atmosphere, is thus a life-mirror in which may be read every secret of his mind; and this is continually open to the vision of any astral visitant who may desire or be invited to explore it. In it are indelibly photographed the faces of those he has loved or been associated with; and events of which his time-personality, as yet, knows naught, are already *present* with the astral half of himself, whose existence has no connection with time except by the earthly organism. Therefore he should be prepared at any moment, if he seeks communion with the denizens of the next world, to receive any number of "*tests*," as they are called, of identity, from operators at "the other end of the line," who represent themselves, whether truly or not, to be the beloved he has lost.

Now, it seems to us, on the one hand, that the accessibility of our memorial impressions to outside inspection is here too generally and broadly stated, and, on the other, that in the explanation should have been included the "blending of the spheres" of medium, or clairvoyant, and investigator, by which the former becomes often directly cognisant, in a fragmentary way, of the memorial record, without intervention of any "adjacent will-power." Whatever we say on this subject at present must be rather crude and conjectural, but it seems probable that only persons with more or less "open" spheres betray their secrets to the extent alleged, and certainly different investigators have very different experiences as to the readiness with which such "tests" are obtainable. There is also too much obscurity in what is stated concerning prevision, or predictive manifestations, for which a more metaphysical explanation seems to be requisite, and is, perhaps, not very far to seek by the light of metaphysical conceptions. Nor can we assent to the proposition, as it stands, that our astral existence "has no connection with time except by the earthly organism." But to quote on:—

If those relatives or friends have been the victims of accident, or committed suicide [generally, if the death has been premature], they have to wear out in the next stage of existence the period of life they would otherwise have lived upon

* *The Astral Light*. By "NIZIDA." (London: Theosophical Publishing Company, 7, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C.)

the earth had nothing occurred to cut it short. If, for instance, a man or woman, destined to reach [*i.e.*, who ought to have reached] the age of eighty or ninety years had been killed at the age of twenty, they would linger in the earth's attraction for sixty or seventy years ere passing finally through that change essential to reach the plane of subjective rest. Such persons (who are, if recently deceased, *full* personalities, not "elementaries") can, and do, communicate with friends on earth. But it is quite possible for any of them to be personated, &c.

In other words, Nature's seasons will maintain themselves notwithstanding any apparent interference. Moreover, her cycles, whether relatively large or small, whether of her conscious or apparently unconscious life, contain the same great divisions of objective and subjective states. The divisions of the day are thus strictly analogous to those of the year, and the life of man is similarly distributed into periods. He cannot anticipate his night—the subjective state—by prematurely "dying," though he may deprive himself, or be deprived, of the means of waking activity. The "insomnia" of the suicide must be a terrible experience! What to say of the victims of other fatalities we know not yet, but we may be sure that rest only ensues on the fulfilment of the true period of objective existence, whatever that should be in any case. It is almost superfluous to remark that to those who see in the argument from analogy a right generalisation of nature's laws, the alternation of waking and sleep in the physical life, points immediately to a similar succession in the larger cycle of human existence, and the renewal of objective experience, which is called re-incarnation (active functions requiring organs of action and relativity to an external world), is a necessary part of the teaching which accepts the clue of analogy, though by no means depending on this for its entire justification.

The final chapter of this book, concerning Spiritism and mediums, should be studied by all who are interested in occult phenomena.

The medium [we are told] is an *unconscious* natural magician, whose astral self exercises the potencies of a science it intuitively understands upon the astral plane; but when conjoined again with its physical double, becomes unconscious of it or only vaguely dreams of it. . . . We have constant proofs of the transcendent powers of the soul in mesmeric subjects who, in the state of trance, display extraordinary abilities, which are completely foreign to them in the bodily condition. This should explain the fact of a medium, when in the bodiless condition, understanding and putting into operation the powers of a science of which he knows nothing when in the body. The extraordinary evidences of the action of the "double," even whilst the body is awake, with which the literature of occultism is plentifully stored, would, if rightly considered, throw a great light upon much that is inexplicable in mediumship.

And with this most fertile hint, we must conclude our extracts from an interesting and thoroughly readable book. "Nizida" needs no recommendation to readers of "LIGHT," her contributions to which, for some years past, have given evidence of an intelligence at once luminous, earnest, and unassuming. Those characteristics are conspicuous in the book before us, which has also the merit of being a singularly forcible exposition, in brief compass, of a subject as important as it is ill-understood.

We are asked to give insertion to the following corrections in the book which our reviewer here notices:—

P. 118, line 2, for "soul-splitting" read "soul-stiffing"; p. 160, line 22, for "increasing prayer" read "unceasing prayer"; p. 180, line 17, for "this merely criminal soul" read "the merely animal soul."

THINK what it is not to hate anything but sin; to be full of love to every creature; to be frightened at nothing; to be sure that all things will turn to good; not to mind pain, because it is our Father's will; to know that nothing—no, not if the earth was to be burnt up, or the waters come and drown us—nothing could part us from God who loves us, and who fills our souls with peace and joy, because we are sure that whatever He wills is holy, just, and good.—GEORGE ELIOT.

JOTTINGS.

Respecting the story of the "Fall of Man," a Hindû version of which we lately printed, Professor Max Müller states in his *Introduction to the Science of Religion* that he considers it the invention of some Brahmin who wished to impose on Jaccoliot.

Psychic Studies (No. 6) contains an excellent article on "Our Relations to the Spiritual World," and another on "Spiritualism as a Religion." Some examples:—

"Our responsible relations with the spiritual world begin with the first dawn of consciousness, as embodiments of the Divine essence in an individuality which is the highest product of animal life that relates us to the spiritual, and in accordance with the conscientious performance of our duties toward ourselves, and our brothers and sisters in earth-life, shall we be prepared to accept the invitation to 'come up higher,' and share in the grand conditions of the celestial life when we pass out from this primary school."

"If the knowledge that the loving eyes of a mother or father, a beloved child or companion, are watching us with tender solicitude is not a restraining influence from evil courses, and an incentive to a higher, purer life—is not an influence for good—then, indeed, may we ask what good is Spiritualism doing for us; we have not arisen above the restraining influences of fear into the realms of love, and perhaps need to be kept in the straight and narrow way through fear of the displeasure of the fabled, vindictive God portrayed by unprogressive theologians. To those who—by the exercise of their own reasoning powers—have rejected the cruel and irrational dogmas of theology, the knowledge of the possibility of communion with the spirits of the loved ones beyond the veil, leading to a realisation of the great assistance and instruction to be gained through such communion, must be one of the greatest incentives to the cultivation of nobility of living it is possible to conceive of."

"We need not wait for death to unbar the doors to a higher life; it is here within our reach, if we will stretch forth our hand to grasp it. Purity of act and purpose is the Golden Key which will unlock the treasure house of the spirit."

"It appears to me," says a writer in the *Spiritual Telegraph*, "a perfectly clear and reasonable conclusion that the future life is, in its main features, a continuation of this—that is, of the spiritual part of this; and, strictly speaking, it may perhaps be said that all the modes, manners, and customs of this life are *internally* spiritual, and will exist as much hereafter as here; only their outward appearances, their husks, which we generally suppose to be the realities themselves, will be left behind."

Emerson was a grand, whole-souled Spiritualist. Hear him—"A man," he said, "who has read the works of Plato, and Plutarch, and Seneca, and Kant, and Shakespeare, and Wordsworth would scorn to ask such *school-dame* questions as whether we shall know each other in the world beyond the grave. Men of genius do not fear to die; they are sure that in the other life they will be permitted to finish the work begun in this; it is only men of affairs who tremble at the approach of death." Again, "The soul does not age with the body. On the borders of the grave the wise man looks forward with equal elasticity of mind and hope; and why not after millions of years on the verge of still newer existence? For it is the nature of intelligent beings to be for ever new to life." At the dedication of the Free Library in Concord, October 1st, 1873, he proclaimed the highest spiritual truths in these glowing words: "Every attainment and discipline," he said, "which increases a man's acquaintance with the invisible world lifts his being. Everything that gives him a new perception of beauty multiplies his pure enjoyments. A river of thought is always running out of the invisible world into the mind of man. Shall not they who receive the largest stream spread abroad the healing waters?"

In an article on "Spiritualism as a Religion," quoted in *Psychic Studies*, Herman Snow, an old and highly-respected worker in the field of Spiritualism, answers the question, Do you regard Spiritualism as a religion? very appositely:—

"If by the phrase here used is meant some compactly defined system of worship, based upon an authoritative written word, then it is clear that Spiritualism is not a religion; but if,

instead of such a theological technicality, an enlarged philosophical use of the term be substituted, one that interprets religion as being in full harmony with nature and reason, then it is equally clear that our faith in its more enlarged and elevated phases cannot be separated from religion. For what is religion, rightly understood, but a just perception and use of the relations between the seen and the unseen, and the finite and the infinite? In its primitive root derivation the word implies this. It is simply a binding together of the human and the divine, and a right observance of the obligations growing out of these relations."

And yet again:—"We are beginning to understand the laws which connect us with a spiritual infinity. We now know that, as are our spiritual aspirations and self-helps, so will be our invisible surroundings; and that it rests with ourselves as to whether our career shall be upward or downward, and whether humanity shall be better or the worse for our membership. It is to a right understanding and observance of the laws of inspiration that we are to look as the main helpers of our race. By these all who look upward may be so quickened in their intuitions as steadily to receive a conscious inbreathing of soul-lifting, Divine helps, not only from the Infinite Fountain, but from and through the hosts of angelic agencies whose joy it is thus to do the Divine will. For what nobler employment can there be for those worthy ones of the higher spheres—once faithful workers in the struggles of earth—than thus to come near to an earthly brother, and breathe into his spirit cheering words of comfort and strength? Do not all such still live and labour for humanity, and all the more faithfully as they become more elevated and God-like?"

This is pure and true Spiritualism, respecting alike the friends who have preceded us and the development of our own spirits: regarding with equal eye the life that now is as well as that which is to come.

The Religio-Philosophical Journal has been preaching to its readers some much-needed self-denial and self-sacrifice. Its queries are pertinent and may be laid to heart by us all:—"Is your knowledge of Spiritualism a comfort and a benefit to you? If so, what are you daily doing to repay the obligation? How much has Spiritualism cost you in dollars and cents for the past twelve months? How often have you gone out of your way to alleviate the physical needs and the heartaches of those poor and worthy Spiritualists whom you must know? In a word, how much better off is the world because you have lived to see another summer pass?"

Can we so conserve our forces as to use them to a better advantage than we do? Prentice Mulford, in his *White Cross Library*, says that we can. Through forty-three numbers he has been dealing with the question, "Our Forces and How to use them." The various topics discussed are such as "Sleep and Dream," "The Travelling of the Spirit in Sleep," "The God in Us," "Force and How to Get it," "Spiritual Gifts," "Positive and Negative Thought," "The Uses of Reverie," "The Healing Force of Spring," "The Source of Strength," "The Drawing Power of Mind," "Mental Intemperance," "The Church of Silent Demand," and many similar subjects.

The current number is on "Courage and its Cultivation." Mr. Mulford opines that "Courage and presence of mind mean the same thing. Presence of mind implies command of mind. Cowardice and lack of mental control mean about the same thing. Cowardice is rooted in hurry, the habit of hurry or lack of repose. All degrees of success are based on courage—mental or physical. All degrees of failure are based on timidity."

The whole discourse is characterised by the virtues and defects of the series. Mr. Mulford exaggerates habitually, perhaps with an idea that over-statement may lead to partial acceptance of his views. We do not affect this opinion ourselves. We prefer precision and exactitude in all things. We are, however, quite willing to take from Mr. Mulford what is sound and good in his teachings and to be thankful for them.

We should be more thankful, we must say, if Mr. Mulford would look after the forces that propel his *White Cross Library* in our direction, and see that they are more regularly used. There is a steady demand for his publication. We always notice the numbers when we get them. Yet we are vexed by constant

irregularity, and are obliged to tell customers that we cannot supply their wants.

The Golden Gate gives a little bit of testimony which works in with Mr. Mulford's idea that we can conserve our forces. "A lady, nearly sixty years of age, who had tramped all day through the busy streets, preparatory to departing on a long journey by sea, dropped in to spend the evening with us recently. She bore not the slightest appearance of fatigue, and was bright, convivial, and full of life. We inquired the secret of her freshness and strength. She replied that she had learned the art of holding herself together, as it were, and not exhausting her vitality in her physical labours. She could find rest while walking along the crowded streets, by not allowing other persons or things to draw upon her strength. If she found herself becoming wearied in the least, she immediately called a halt of her forces, and rallied to the support of herself. Thus, by a prompt and wise exercise of her will powers, she was able to ward off physical fatigue, and at the same time perform a vast amount of work. Here is a fine illustration of the power of mind over matter, and one which we recommend others to imitate."

"Sister Ursula's Story," in the autumn number of *All the Year Round*, is a tale of hypnotism, very well told and worth reading.

The International Magazine of Truth, newly edited by Miss A. A. Chevaillier in place of Mrs. Worthington, replaces the *Magazine of Christian Science*. The former editor takes a pathetic farewell of her former readers. She has been through the fire, and we do not judge her. It is not our business: but we are bound to say that if she meant well she did unwisely in her methods of attacking a tangled problem. She comes very near to that ideal Christian state which the Bishop of Peterborough tells us is not workable in nineteenth century civilisation.

The abandonment of the confusing name "Christian Science" in favour of a simpler designation is commendable. The nomenclature recently affected in America, such as Metaphysical Healing and other like terms, fills us with surprise. They connote nothing; they cannot live, for they have no meaning; and the sooner they are abandoned the better.

Moreover, as the Editor confesses, Christian Science is a term associated with a narrow sect with a bitter tongue and a vituperative vocabulary. Its professors repeat the worst faults of the old Puritans, and would persecute to the death all who do not see eye to eye with them. Truth is wide enough, broad enough for all. So good wishes to the *International Magazine of Truth!*

CANON FARRAR ON PREACHING.

In the November number of the *Forum* Canon Farrar writes upon the "modern claims of the pulpit." He does not share the frequent belief in the badness of sermons. He is much more surprised at their average goodness than at their average futility. But he adds:—

I maintain that the modern preacher must never forget that though sermons yet retain an immense force in the moral, the spiritual, and even the intellectual world, they can no longer occupy the place which once they did. There was a time when to most hearers the sermon was the Bible, the history, the romance, the newspaper, and the political harangue, all in one. It occupies a different position in these days. The schoolmaster is abroad, and of writing of books there is no end. Not only is the Bible in every hand, but the best information respecting its meaning and history has been so widely popularised that even a hearer of moderate attainments may know as much about it as the preacher. Science has been revolutionised, opinions altered, doctrines reconsidered and set in new lights, Scripture re-translated, and multitudes of texts rescued into their true significance. Let the modern preacher adapt himself to these changed conditions. Let him do his best to keep pace with the advance of knowledge. Let him be quick-eared to the whispers of all new or rediscovered truths. Let him cease to be so intolerably dictatorial. Let him learn tolerance and modesty, and endeavour to the best of his power to preserve some freshness of thought. Above all, let him sink himself and his party as far as possible out of sight. And then, amid his thousand failures and imperfections, he will still find that sincerity and simplicity have not lost their power over human hearts.—*St. James's Gazette*.

THE GOD-IDEA.

The Rev. J. Page Hopps, in his November number of *Sermons for Our Day*, has some very suggestive remarks on "the three stages in man's development of the consciousness of God." These three are Agnosticism, Theism, and Faith. The three stages he finds in the Bible, and three modern representatives he discovers in Herbert Spencer, Matthew Arnold, and "the great representative of all the ages, Jesus."

Herbert Spencer reduces the God-idea to the bare recognition of the "omnipresence of a something which passes comprehension." That is pure Agnosticism (except for the bare recognition of an incomprehensible "something" beyond).

Matthew Arnold goes farther. He sees that this great, mysterious, omnipresent "something" is not entirely unknowable. He looks upon it (or upon its working) until he sees intention, drift, moral purpose; and he names it "the Power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." I call that "moral sympathy,"—and it is well worth consideration.

Jesus takes the final step. He seems to pass behind the veil. He says, "My Father hath sent me." "I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day." Here God is not "something" but some One. He is, He knows, He wills, He commands, He sends.

Of these various phases of development each is in its way true, each leading to the next stage. "Each is tenable, logical, useful, and true, as far as it goes."

1. It is altogether true that there is a mysterious omnipresent something which passes comprehension. That must be inferred. An Atheist—a genuine denying Atheist—is almost what the Hebrew Psalmist called him—a "fool." That was a simple but most wise saying—"As soon as I can do everything, I will declare that there is nothing and no one above me in nature; but so long as one thing is done in spite of my efforts to prevent it, I know that there is in nature a power greater than I." The same might be said of knowledge as well as of power. While there is manifestly anything I do not comprehend, I am bound to conclude that there is someone somewhere who is wiser than I am. But this omnipresent something is incomprehensible. The ancient philosopher was right:—"Who, by searching, can find out God?" We are but as the motes in the sunbeam. Besides, so far as it goes, it is solid and good ground,—that the omnipresent Power is far beyond our comprehension, and he who stays with this may be gentlest and humblest.

2. But the second stage carries us far on in real comprehension and appreciation of the manifest fact. For the fact is that intention is everywhere, and the nature, drift, and aim of that intention are manifest. It is a really fine conception of God—"The Power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." For how much does it account? and what hope does it give?

3. But how absolutely perfect this last. That omnipresent something not only persists but chooses, and not only chooses but plans and aims at a chosen end, and not only chooses and plans but loves, and commands, and sends. There may be daring in it—and something that may be called crude or child-like,—but who does not feel the beauty—ay! the depth and height of that conception or consciousness of God which we find in the Gospels, and which, told in the fewest possible words, is simply belief in God as the ever-present Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, and the recognition of ever-active Power and Pity in the life of Man? Contrast all this with the modern philosophic whispering about the "unknowable," the "unconditioned," the "absolute," the "stream of tendency"! Well said one lately:—

The "Being immanent in things," the "Thought Incarnate in the world," the "Absolute,"
The "Unconditioned"—Dost thou give us nought
But husks like these, Philosophy, for fruit?

What room or reason for "I love," "I ought,"
In mouths of men who stand in barren awe
Before—nay, in—this vast and shadowy All,
Worshippers and self-worshipt? Guiding law,
Protection, love, communion, where are these?

How, for this limitless Impersonal,
Resign that wealth of tender images,—
The Father with the father's eye and hand,
The Shepherd with the sheep about his knees,
The Great Rock-shadow in the weary land?

This conception of God, as Jesus presents it, includes all others. That is why it lasts and lives. The "Lord's Prayer" is absolutely universal. It is the "Our Father" that is the key-note to the splendid burst of confidence and aspiration—"May Thy Kingdom come! and Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven!"

EDISON'S QUEER POWER.

Mr. Edison, the great inventor, was interviewed lately in Paris. He is reported to have said that he is possessed of a faculty which is a close approach to a "psychic power." Listen:—

"You know," said he, "I have a big bump of locality. Yesterday evening, soon after my arrival, a friend took me out for a drive, and offered to bet that he would get me all turned around before we got home. He said Paris was worse than Boston. I told him to go ahead. After riding for an hour he told me to guess what part of the city we were in. I shut my eyes a minute to look at the map, and then said we must be within 100 yards of the Place Vendôme. I was right. Then I took a sheet of paper and drew a plan of our drive, which my friend admitted to be exact. It was easy enough to do, for I had the whole thing here," and he tapped his white forehead, with its overhanging masses of grey hair.

"You spoke of shutting your eyes and looking at the map; what map do you mean?"

"Why, the map of Paris. I can carry the plan of any city in my head by taking a good look at it. It is the same way with machinery. If I have seen some new machine and want to remember it, I have only to shut my eyes and there the whole thing is working away as large as life. Great scheme, isn't it? I don't remember faces, though, as easily, or perhaps I don't take as much pains with them."

Edison's opinion of "savants" is not very high:—

"I don't pose as a savant. Men of that sort are a great success at explaining in learned language what other men have done, but it is the simple fact that all their formulated knowledge put together has never given the world more than two or three inventions of any value. Then about inventions in general—I'll give you my idea. It is easy enough to invent wonderful things and set newspapers talking, but the trouble comes when you try to perfect inventions, so as to give them a commercial value. That's the only sort of invention I go in for."

It is curious that Mr. Keely, of Keely Motor fame, like Edison, is constantly occupied in trying to reduce his inventions to practical commercial form. Both of these men of true genius are said to be indifferent to money personally. Edison, however, is very rich, and Keely very poor.—*Theosophist*.

FREEDOM AND LAW.

It is not only true that most people entirely misunderstand freedom, but I sometimes think I have not yet met one person who rightly understands it. The whole universe is absolute law. Freedom only opens entire activity and license *under the law*. To the degraded or undeveloped—and even to too many others—the thought of freedom is a thought of escaping from law—which, of course, is impossible. More precious than all worldly riches is freedom—freedom from the painful constipation and poor narrowness of ecclesiasticism, freedom in manners, habits, furniture, from the silliness and tyranny of local fashions—entire freedom from party rings and mere conventions in politics—and better than all, a general freedom of oneself from the tyrannic domination of vices, habits, appetites, under which nearly every man of us (often the greatest brawler for freedom) is enslaved. Can we attain such enfranchisement—the true democracy, and the height of it? While we are from birth to death the subjects of irresistible law, enclosing every movement and minute, we yet escape, by a paradox, into true free-will. Strange as it may seem, we only attain to freedom by a knowledge of, and implicit obedience to, law. Great—unspeakably great—is the will! the free soul of man! At its greatest understanding and obeying the laws, it can then, and then only, maintain true liberty. For there is to the highest that law as absolute as any, more absolute than any—the law of liberty. The shallow, as intimated, consider liberty a release from all law, from every constraint. The wise see it, on the contrary, the potent Law of Laws, namely, the fusion and combination of the conscious will, or partial individual law, with those eternal, unconscious ones, which run through all time, pervade history, prove immortality, give moral purpose to the entire objective world, and the last dignity to human life. WALT. WHITMAN'S *Notes Left Over (Camelot Series)*, p. 170.

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

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Light :

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

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16th, 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.

ORGANISED SPIRITUALISM: IS IT PRACTICABLE AND DESIRABLE?

We make no apology for recurring to this most important question. The title placed at the head of this article is taken from the *Journal* (Chicago, U.S.A.), which again devotes a large amount of space to the consideration of the subject, and to correspondence arising out of the article on Unity that we reprinted (p. 527) and on which we commented at some length in our last issue.

On this occasion we propose to allow some of the correspondents of the *Journal* to give their views, and also to reproduce some Editorial remarks that seem to deserve attention. The first letter is signed by a *nom de plume* that is familiar to readers of the *Journal*, and is addressed to that portion of the Editor's queries which is concerned with the religious aspects of the matter in debate. "Athene" writes:—

Your welcome appeal for "Unity" I have read with care, and heretofore you have had two articles of mine showing the necessity of organisation, and the centralisation of our belief and doctrine into some simple form around which all Spiritualists might rally with as much enthusiasm as the old Osmanli and Turks did when they cried, "There is no God but Allah, and Mahomet is his prophet."

I supposed that in my article published in the *Journal* of March 2nd, I had embodied in a simple form our cardinal doctrine which I will here re-insert as follows:—

1. Belief in God, the Divine Being, a God of love, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent; the first and last, the beginning and end, who was, is, and will be; that He is essential love, wisdom, and the One from whom flow all things.

2. Belief in the immortality of man—that every soul exists in a spiritual body after it has put off its natural body, and exists through all eternity in a spiritual body, in a spiritual world; that by avoiding evil while living in the natural body it can progress to all eternity.

3. With every man there are attendant angels and spirits, and by them there is communication with the spiritual world.

4. The spiritual Church is universal, extending over the whole globe, and is within the reach of all, whether Christian, heathen, or pagans. It may include those who believe in the Bible as the Word of God, and those who do not; it will include heathen and Gentiles who are now considered as remote from any church, for Spiritualists believe that all who lead a good and useful life can receive rational illumination from the spirit-world.

5. This universal Church is both spiritual and natural; its essentials, love and wisdom, with an abhorrence of evil. It ignores all priesthood and ecclesiastical forms of government; but as some form of government is necessary, it must be simple and unostentatious; its manner and forms of worship are left to the free will and option of every individual society, providing respect is held for what is true, virtuous, and good.

6. The spiritual religion is true, rational, and philosophical, and based upon laws revealed from Heaven, it holds that nothing can exist without form; that thoughts, ideas, and affections have form, and that these in the spirit-world are represented by birds, beasts, reptiles, insects, houses, gardens, earths, seas, lakes, and everything therein or thereon.

7. The whole universe, therefore, is an expression in continual operation of the Divine mind, for subsistence is perpetual existence. The Divine activity is ever going forth as one of the Divine spheres, of which there are many; this activity causes the fires in all the natural suns from whence are born the planets and satellites; these latter are prepared, through lower to higher forms, to become the birthplace of man whose soul is immortal and his existence eternal.

But if this platform is not simple enough, then surely your declaration is so plain and easy to understand that all who are worthy of being called Spiritualists will exclaim as I do,—Well done, good and faithful brother, your simple creed, "God is the Universal Father; man is the universal brother; and the spirit of love and truth is the one working life of both"—this I say is the best and clearest form expressing our doctrine that I have yet seen; and to which I cheerfully assent, and I have no doubt the Spiritualists throughout the whole world will say Amen!

Now comes the task—How and in what manner shall we organise? I say, let the champion and defender of true Spiritualism, Colonel John C. Bundy, issue a call for a convention of Spiritualists to be held in Chicago on some date of 1889 or 1890, inviting Spiritualists from all parts of our country and from all quarters of the globe to send delegates; thither we will go and form a constitution under which we may organise and work in "Unity."

Washington, Arizona.

On another question, Mr. Geo. W. Walrond thus delivers himself:—

The question has been asked: "How shall Spiritualists utilise the vast work which has been accomplished in the last forty years?"

There is no denying the fact that at the present moment there is, in the field of Spiritualism, "a vast deal of undisciplined thought and conjecture," that every lecturer has his "fad," and that there has "accreted around the movement a sort of democratic iconoclasm, fatal to all unity or co-operation." How to ameliorate this state of affairs should be the question to be considered first of all. There is an almost unlimited supply of literature and record of phenomenal fact connected with the Spiritualistic philosophy, but the many writers differ largely in thought, though the facts related bear a resemblance in the majority of cases.

I beg strongly to recommend that almost the first duty in connection with the solution of the question stated should be to summarise and systematise, under recognised heads and subdivisions, the various philosophies and teachings, and the varied phenomena which, during the present century, have been recorded as coming under recognised spirit laws and conditions. All exceptional phenomena or facts which fail to come under such laws to be classed as exceptional *pro tem*. There is undoubtedly a lack of knowledge as to the uniformity in the operation of spiritual laws, which I think would be remedied were the already ascertained facts brought under scientific and systematic treatment.

Spiritualism reduced to a science would remove very largely the "democratic iconoclasm which is universally felt to be fatal to all unity or co-operation." A convention of all the most experienced Spiritualists, mediums, and others, possessed of educational or scientific ability, should be held, to examine into the literature on the subject, so that an essence of all the leading truths may, on broad lines, be promulgated everywhere. Unity in this particular phase of the subject would tend very much to produce unity of action.

As an addendum, tabulated forms of all the authenticated facts and phenomena that have been recorded during the present century should be gathered, each class of phenomena being

in a separate table. Each fact should contain the following information :—

| No. | Place and date of occurrence. | Nature of the phenomena, particulars, &c. | Evidence of corroborative testimony. |
|-----|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
|-----|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|

Great care should be exercised in the preparation of these tables, in order that each record may be placed beyond the reach of quibble or dispute.

Regarding the religious subjects, there is certainly a wide range of thought, as there is, indeed, in every phase of science or philosophy, but a general basis or foundation might be laid down containing the fundamental truths which are universally found in the teachings of every honest advocate of the philosophy. The spirits themselves vary widely in thought, but the same great truths are undoubtedly manifest, though differently expressed.

The religious element of Spiritualism should be broadly yet clearly defined, and stated in such a manner that the leading lines may be readily comprehended by one and all. Indeed, the majority should be enabled to penetrate beyond the surface of things and read between the lines.

That every lecturer has his "fad" is too true, but a collection of all the leading truths would largely check the unhealthy growth of "individualism."

A very great want is also felt in the absence of a dictionary of spiritual phrases, items, and expressions. To render the science, philosophy, and religion of Spiritualism more intelligible, a vocabulary of every prominent word, term, and phrase that are continually found in every book or pamphlet, should be prepared with full explanation of their meanings as generally understood.

How often do we hear the terms "spirit" and "matter"? What do we mean by them? If we cannot give a clear definition we have no right to use them. It is often noticeable that many lecturers and others have certain stock phrases, the meaning of which they are quite unable to explain.

A properly prepared list of all such terms, &c., with their full meaning would afford one and all the means of grappling with some of the mystical phrases so often encountered.

Montreal, Canada.

Dr. E. W. King sends the following suggestive letter, which draws from the editor some comments that will be read with interest and profit :—

The great need of Spiritualism is accurate scientific methods in the investigation of phenomena.

The first essential in any investigation is to acquire a knowledge of all known facts which have anything in common with the thing to be investigated.

A careful study of these facts, their relationship one to the other, and to the matter under investigation, will place us mentally in a condition to judge candidly and impartially of phenomena for which known laws do not furnish a solution. Every known fact, however unaccountable, should be carefully noted and recorded for future use, for we may be sure that however isolated it may be it forms one of the links of some chain which connects it to the fountain of truth, and when the links have all been gathered up it will be an easy matter to place each in its proper place.

We need unbiassed, cool-headed, trained investigators, not only to develop mediums, but to carefully observe and classify phenomena which may come through them. It seems to me that so far, in the history of Spiritualism, but one great central fact has been demonstrated, and that is a life of the individual beyond his physical existence.

The return of our spirit friends makes this conclusive. All Spiritualists agree upon this point. It forms the basis of all discussions, and by common consent is tacitly, at least, acknowledged to be the foundation upon which the temple of Spiritualism is to be built. All else is subsidiary. Remove this one demonstrated fact and the whole superstructure would fall.

Unity is not possible, nor is it desirable, except upon a basis of demonstrated facts. Before Spiritualists can unite as a body, a vast amount of work will have to be done in clearing away rubbish, carefully observing and preserving everything worthy of note. Spiritualism ought to be studied as a science and not as a religion. It is accurate, definite information that we want, not irrational fanaticism. In this work, it is but justice to say the *Journal* has been the pioneer, the advanced guard, and its

noble work is already fully appreciated by a few, and in the near future it will be by the many.

Ukiah, Cal.

E. W. KING.

The comments to which we refer are these :—

"Unity," says our correspondent, "is not possible, nor is it desirable except upon a basis of demonstrated facts." True! but something more than mere agreement as to demonstrated facts of spirit manifestation is essential to make unity either possible or desirable. To unite now in an organised body all who claim to be Spiritualists is as impossible as it is undesirable, and we can command no language to emphasise our convictions with more forcible conciseness. Such a union would concrete Chaos and enthrone Disorder. Instead of "clearing away the rubbish," such a coalescence of antagonistic elements would soon make of the whole world but a heap of rubbish. Happily, most happily! such a coalition is impossible; there is no danger that the power of "irrational fanaticism" will be thus augmented.

There is in the great body of nominal Spiritualists a large number who pine for congenial association, contact, and co-operation with those in sympathy with them, who know that without this sympathy there can be no lasting bond of union. With Walter Scott they say :—

It is the secret sympathy,
The silver link, the silken tie,
Which heart to heart, and mind to mind,
In body and in soul can bind.

With the bulk of this class the religious sentiment dominates the scientific, yet they demand and will have a scientific basis for their religion. "Spiritualism," says the eminent scientist, Alfred R. Wallace, "is an experimental science, and affords the only foundation for a true philosophy and a pure religion." Epes Sargent, than whom Spiritualism has never had an able or better equipped advocate, was fully imbued with the scientific spirit and yet his nature was deeply religious. His last work on Spiritualism, *The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism*, stands to-day without an equal in the field it covers. In that book he treats at length not only of the scientific but the religious side of Spiritualism. Referring to the various definitions of religion he adds one of his own, prefacing it with the candid acknowledgment that it is a limited one. His definition is this :—

"Religion is the sentiment of reverence or of appeal, growing out of a sense of the possibility that there may be in the universe a power or powers unseen, able to take cognisance of our thoughts and our needs, and to help us spiritually or physically."

We quote again from Sargent, *Scientific Basis*, p. 170 :—

"To say that religion cannot have science—i.e., a knowledge of the phenomena of nature, including the soul of man—for its basis, is as absurd as it would be to say that mathematics do not require axioms for their foundation. Religion may transcend phenomena and rise into a region which mortal science may not enter; indeed it must do so—the more it ascends to the height of its great argument, the more it expands and draws near the Infinite; but if it have no other basis than the emotions, and reject all that intuition, science, and reason may offer for its justification, it may not soar to that 'purer ether, that diviner air' where faith is merged in knowledge."

Again, p. 334, Mr. Sargent says: "I have said elsewhere that Spiritualism is not a form of religion. So far as it is a realisation of the great facts of God and immortality, it is religion itself."

There is a host of Spiritualists—Spiritualists, not Spiritists—anxious, we think, to unite in an organisation where character shall be the qualification of membership, supplemented by a general assent in a large and broad way to a few fundamental statements resting upon the broad foundation of the central claim of Spiritualism.

No better witness could be called than Epes Sargent. He fully recognised the paramount necessity of the scientific method in investigation: but he would have protested as stoutly as ourselves against narrowing down investigation, as some would seek to do, to what are called the objective or physical phenomena. He was deeply religious in his nature, and some papers of his in the *Banner of Light* entitled "Devotional Spiritualism," together with a MS. volume of excerpts and original matter, collected with a view to prepare a service-book for the public worship of Spiritualists, show how he grasped the great truth that

Spiritualists must be spiritual. A man may spend a long life in collecting evidence for the reality of certain phenomena and at the end of it drop into his grave a melancholy instance of a wasted existence. It passes our comprehension how some warm advocates of the truth of Spiritualism never seem to see that the most cogent evidence of the action of a force cannot lead them to the conclusion which they build upon it. If by rappings our attention is attracted, we must go on to know what these sounds mean. In many cases we shall fail to find a coherent meaning in them. If we are so fortunate as to get a step in advance, we have by no means done with our perplexities. For we then come face to face with the great question of Identity. Are these signals the work of the intelligences that profess to make them? Our answer to that question will solve or fail to solve for us the real crux of Spiritualism. And the answer is so far from being discoverable on the phenomenal plane that we must penetrate to the plane of morals, of ethics, and even of most interior religion before we can find an adequate solution.

If every rap or movement of our furniture was assuredly caused by one of our departed friends—a statement that needs only to be made to show its weakness—if every communication so made were demonstrably true and trustworthy—and again the rashest of us would hesitate to affirm so much—if the return to us of our lost ones were as assured by these material means as it is assuredly not—we might find in the circle-room our Mecca beyond which none need seek to go. But in view of the perplexities that beset our every step in advance: in view, further, of the fact that even an assured communion with our dead need be no more than a sublimated form of selfishness, we must seek for something more. Both on the lower ground of perfect evidence and on the higher ground of our own spiritual development we must mount to a higher plane. The divorce of Spiritualism from Religion will leave the former a mere husk and will deprive the latter of her most efficient support. For, in these days, religion cannot lean on faith, as once she did. And we have already seen what Spiritualism may come to when it descends from the moral plane into the gutter where fraud and folly run their unholy riot. In the fact that unseen beings wield an unknown and unmeasured force lies the real danger. To safeguard this intrusion on our plane of thought and on our lives in the world by every moral means is a plain duty.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

Mr. and Mrs. Everitt gave a séance, on Friday evening November 8th, at the rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance, to Mr. Dobbie, who is now visiting this country from Adelaide. There were also present Mr. and Mrs. Morell Theobald, Mr. Dawson Rogers, Mr. and Godfrey. It is seldom Mrs. Everitt's mediumship fails her—nor did it on this occasion, although the power was weaker than when exercised in home surroundings. We had the marvellous spirit lights darting about the room, and knocks of all kinds, some well known as characteristic of the spirits using them, and then the direct spirit voice in conversation for over an hour. During this time Mrs. Everitt retained her normal state and joined in conversation, as did all in turn, with the spirit. The circle was harmonious and successful in showing to Mr. Dobbie other phases of mediumship than those with which he is most familiar. Mr. Dobbie has himself been very successful in developing *clairvoyantes* for medical diagnosis chiefly, and he has great power as a mesmerist and healer.—(Communicated.)

THE King took the hand of Dumourez in his own, and said to him in a voice, sorrowful but resigned, "God is my witness that I only think of the happiness of France." "I never doubted it" replied he, deeply affected. "You owe an account to God not only for the purity, but also for the enlightened use of your intentions. You think to serve religion; you destroy it."—LAMARTINE'S *History of the Girondists*, Vol. I., p. 464.

PSYCHIC TELEGRAMS.

PART I.

Certain messages received from time to time in a private circle have been placed in our hands for publication. As we believe that truth is best sought by a careful comparison of various aspects of spirit-teaching, we gladly comply with the request made. It is only necessary to premise that they were given to four sisters and occasional relations and friends either by Tilts, Planchette, or Voice: the voice being that of one of the sisters. The process was this:—As the table tilted the letters one by one, or as Planchette slowly worked, one of the sisters became conscious first of the letters, and then of the whole word. As torpor came on, she was raised up and supported, while the replies which came from her lips were written down. But too often the mere words would be lost in a rapture of intense perception, and then the message ceased with the power of dictating. It has been within our experience that every form of spirit-teaching commends itself to some inquiring souls who are on the same plane as those to whom the messages were originally given; and we do not doubt that such will be the case with the present communications.

DEVELOPMENT

(BY PLANCHETTE WRITING WITH TWO SISTERS, 1ST AND 4TH, IN SEPTEMBER, 1869.)

Development of races is a wonderful subject of inquiry, but the development of individuals is more so. The species is improved while still in the flesh, but you cannot trace for more than seventy years the development of a *soul*. This is accomplished through manifold experiences; some in a material body, some out of it.

Incarnation is useful by burning into the soul qualities it lacked. Thus with an earth-body it gains some virtues and capacities; in other bodies the same soul gains other virtues. You in your present bodies gain endurance; you learn what weakness is, and you begin there to learn what love is, but you only begin. Elsewhere larger love is experienced, vaster capacities for good or ill, and larger intelligence; fuller senses give means of greater good as of worse evil. And elsewhere self loses itself in a way of which you cannot yet dream. In some embodiments universal interests are the only sources of emotions of praise or of blame.

So does an individual develop. (The spiritual development of races by-and-bye.) But in the innermost circles of life—spirits generate new spirits, which go through individual development by incarnations, and which come into bodies that are made ready for them by the physical development of previous generations. And these former generations, landed like emigrants on the shores of the after-life, continue their national development. Thus it is that still by peculiar modes of thought we can, in this after-life, distinguish the sensual Syrian from the fanciful Greek, sensual as he, too, was!

Already in your advancing world you see the germ of universalism in the blending of races, for no longer is each nation so entirely singular in its qualities. Imagination appears in all; sensualism is diminished in all. But here we watch races of spirits; the same race being spread over oceans of worlds; yet we recognise each race as by his language you know a Frenchman in either hemisphere. The bodies of some spirits (who deem themselves as limited into a body as you are) are yet so spiritualised that what you call space does not exist for them; they reach from earth to earth as a thought can.

QUESTION.—*Can people on this earth attain to such a state?*

ANSWER.—Such will never be on your world, or not for endless, endless ages. They are more free than many poorly developed spirits who are disembodied from your earth.

QUESTION.—*Are such beings on any worlds or suns?*

ANSWER.—Not on any new earths like yours; some on suns, but they are on certain elements; too subtle for me to express to you; on atmospheres, something not material at all. But this comes of what I said that there is much you cannot be told for want of ideas and of language in you. Conditions of thought are as *terra firma* to spiritualised beings, I mean to disembodied souls who are really spiritualised. But you must give up such materialisms as space, distance, or time, when you think of these things.

INSPIRATION OF TRUTHS.

(WRITING BY SISTER 1ST, IN OCTOBER, 1864.)

Truths, though universal, can always be individualised, even as the All-pervading is capable of the minutest development. To live is to lose your own identity, finding it again in new spheres of animation.

It is to spread yourself over nature, only to concentrate again in yourself new and greater powers. Over space there mixes the air of millions of thoughts, which, ever intermingling and separating, keep up the ebb and flow of life in the universe, and the grosser sink, and the lighter ever rise, the heavier of one sphere being the lighter of another. Wait patiently yet expectantly for the moment of Inspiration, for in a moment, at such an hour as ye expect it not, we will come.

We come in every form and sound; in everything that meets your senses expect to meet with inspiration, for the spirit of all Nature shall teach your spirit, and the breeze of the morning and the dew of the evening shall alike instruct you.

Truths grow like forests, gradually:
Like the sunrise, you really rise to them!

"THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE."

(BY PLANCHETTE WITH SISTERS 1ST AND 4TH, IN APRIL, 1869.)

To every tree of knowledge there is a prohibition put. It is the prohibition of matter in conflict with spirit. And not in vain is it signified in the first Page, that Death lay in the Tree of Knowledge; and *Life* in the Tree of Life in the last Page.

So long as matter in any form hangs round a spirit; so long is the tree of knowledge thereby under prohibition, but when through many victories, all self is overcome, then the spirit eats in the New Jerusalem of the Tree of Life; that is, he needs no more to be embodied in a dying material body; but is alive in pure spirit for evermore.

OCKWELLS MANOR.

ITS OWNER AND ITS GHOST.

(REPRINTED FROM THE *Women's Penny Paper*.)

All lovers of English antiquities will be glad to learn that this beautiful Tudor House is in safe hands. It has been purchased by Mr. Stephen Leech, who is about to restore it in the most perfect and judicious manner. There seems every probability that the important work of restoration will be entrusted to the able hands of Mr. Wade, an expert in the architecture of this fine period. Mr. Leech, while at Eton, used to visit and sketch the house, and has, therefore, long shown his appreciation of its beauties. He is in treaty for the lands adjoining the Manor which are mainly held by Mr. Grenfell, of Taplow Court. Mr. Leech is at the present moment attached to the British Legation in Berlin.

A lady inspected the house in the summer with a view to purchase. In the best bedroom she was admiring a truly magnificent old four-post bedstead in black oak, very richly carved from top to bottom, and worthy of a place in a National Museum. Presently she remarked casually to the maid who was showing her round, "I suppose you have a ghost here?" To her surprise and amusement the maid looked very uncomfortable, and replied in a constrained voice, "I have never seen it, ma'am." On reaching the hall the then owner came forward and said he hoped the visitors were pleased. "Yes," replied the lady, smiling, "but I shouldn't like to buy it; I should be afraid of the ghost." She little knew that she was treading on ticklish ground. The owner of Ockwells turned round rather sharply to the maid, and said, reprovingly, "Mary! what is that?" Mary looked abashed and said, rather firmly, "The lady asked me, sir, and I said I had never seen it." "Ah," pondered the lady, "Mary has never seen the ghost! *Somebody has!*"

IF MR. F. REED (America) will call at this office he will hear of correspondence awaiting him.

ON TUESDAY, January 21st, 1890, the London Spiritualist Alliance will give a Soirée at the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall. Mr. Morse will deliver an address, particulars of which will be announced in due course, on his recent experiences in America.

MR. MORELL THEOBALD, as secretary of the London Spiritualist Alliance, desires to acknowledge with sincere thanks a Post-office order from Mr. S. Dodgshun, of Gisborne, New Zealand, given as an annual subscription to the Alliance, with a view to assist the cause of Spiritualism.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Spiritualism and Fatalism.

SIR,—Your correspondent "Disco" in last week's "LIGHT" raises the interesting question whether Spiritualism teaches Fatalism, of which he says he has "a wholesome abhorrence." Some months ago, in a circle in London, the control of a medium, whom he had never known or seen before, foretold a great change in his sphere of life, different to any he had hoped or anticipated. The change came as prognosticated, and on his relating the fact to his friends he was met with this objection: "If your experience be real, if this be no mere coincidence, Spiritualism teaches Fatalism; what is to be will be, let us follow our own sweet wills, let nothing ruffle our serenity."

Allow me to suggest that in this reply to "Disco" his friends were a little illogical, because it is obvious that if Fatalism be a fact it would regulate what they were pleased to call their "own sweet wills" just as surely as it would the events in "Disco's" experience; the one would come under the law just as certainly as the other. But "Disco" might further have pointed out to them that while it is not so clear that Spiritualism teaches Fatalism it is abundantly evident that Orthodox Christianity does so. The most that a wise Spiritualist would say is that a spirit, looking from a higher standpoint, may see further and discern probabilities more accurately than a mortal. But the Orthodox Christian holds that the Supreme is not only Omnipotent but Omniscient, and has the foreknowledge of every event that will ever happen; and, surely, if He has the foreknowledge of every event that will ever happen, that event must of necessity happen—"our own sweet wills" notwithstanding; hence Orthodox Christianity most assuredly teaches Fatalism.

And in this I am disposed to think that Orthodox Christianity is right, only that, if the term Fatalism is such a bugbear, I would substitute the terms Divine Law and Order. It seems to me that if the Supreme is all-merciful He can have no end in view but one of infinite benevolence and good; and that if He is Omniscient and Omnipotent that end will of a certainty be accomplished; so that our freedom of will, in the sense in which those words are generally understood, is only apparent, for were it otherwise we could in the exercise of this freedom thwart the designs of the Supreme.

I have no desire, however, to push this question further, as it is possibly one of which others of your readers besides "Disco" may feel what they regard as "a wholesome abhorrence"; though I have a strong conviction that the doctrine is one which is much more entitled to their reverent regard.

R.

"Clothed with the Sun."

SIR,—Your reviewer compels me again to address you on this subject. It is possible that in my endeavour to be brief, I may also have been obscure, and so used terms capable of suggesting a meaning unintended by me. Similarly with your reviewer, I may have misunderstood him. But be this as it may, I am unable to see any contradiction in the statements that the project of formulating religion anew commenced so long B.C., and nevertheless that the Gospels were not completed until so long A.D., their form being governed by events occurring during that period. Nor does it seem to me unlikely that the body which—operating from the sanctuaries of Alexandria—had originated and formulated the new system, should—though not responsible for, or able to control, its various collateral manifestations—endeavour to exercise some influence over it in respect of these, to the last. This was all that was contemplated in the suggested explanation by which I sought to fill a hiatus in a somewhat elliptical statement. But whatever the value of the explanation I must beg that it be not confounded with the text of the book, and regarded as in any way compromising that.

In thanking your reviewer for his reference to the *Bampton Lectures* of 1886—of which I hope to take advantage—I would remark that no vindication of Paul's meaning now, however well founded, can remove the original disastrous effects of his language, among which may, in my view, be reckoned the introduction of the tenet repudiated into the Epistles which bear the names of Peter and John, and its appropriation by the Church.

EDWARD MATTLAND.

P.S.—I take this opportunity to disclaim any connection with a circular now in course of distribution on behalf of a project for raising a fund for propagating the belief in a person

now living, styled by her followers, "The Mother, the Woman Clothed with the Sun," as being "the already come Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour." As expressly stated in a note on p. xv. of the preface to my book, the title *Clothed with the Sun* refers, in accordance with Scripture usage, not to a person, but to the soul under Divine illumination; and the application above specified is not only both blasphemous and ridiculous, but is in direct contravention of the warning of Jesus against giving any personal application to the "Second Coming" contained in the utterance, "And if any shall say unto you, lo! here is Christ, or lo! there, believe him not," &c. While so little advanced are they in the perception of things spiritual that they still see in the story of the Nativity a history of the birth of the man physical, instead of a parable of the birth of the man spiritual, and accordingly claim for the person called the "Mother" a corresponding origin, by representing her as born without participation of a human father!

Ever and Ever.

SIR,—While desiring in the first place to acknowledge the urbanity of "Optimist," and fully admitting in the second place the fallibility and limitations of seership, I am unable to read an endless duration of evil into the Apocalyptic vision. I look in the dictionary and find that "for ever" means endlessly. I look in the Bible and find it is not so. There is not one single passage in which the idea of absolutely endless duration was present to the mind of the writer when he used the words *eternal, everlasting, &c.* As he does not use the word *endless*, the burden of proving this assertion hardly lies with me. But let us see. In 2 Cor. iv. 18 we have: "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." That is to say, the former are for a season, the latter are for ages. Not *absolutely*, but *comparatively* endless is the utmost duration that can possibly be conveyed by the term. Take Psalm lxxviii. 69: "The earth which He hath established for ever," i.e., permanently, continuously, but no assurance of endless duration is meant, nor any denial of that future destruction which ancient poets and prophets foretold and modern science confirms. Yet taken in connection with any experience here, the duration is *comparatively* endless, and this *seeming* endlessness has come to be regarded as real, actual, and revealed. Again, in Rom. xvi. 25, 26 (Revised Version), we read of "the mystery kept secret for *times eternal*, but now manifested . . . according to the commandment of the *eternal* God," which becomes nonsense if we put "endless" for "eternal," and shows that after using the word of times past and gone, the Apostle could not have meant it to convey endless duration in using it of God. So in Titus i. 2, we have "eternal life promised before *times eternal*" (i.e., temporal ages), where a similar remark applies; that is to say, it is not likely the word is used in two different senses in the same connection. Thus in Hab. iii. 6: "The everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: His ways are everlasting." Now it has been argued by the upholders of the orthodox theory in their comments on Matt. xxv. 46, that "if the term endless is not implied in one case, it cannot be insisted on in the other," meaning that if future punishment be not endless, neither shall the promised life be so. Apply this argument to the above citations from Habakkuk and St. Paul, and it follows that neither the eternal God nor life eternal is endless. Probably it will be preferred to admit that the idea of endlessness was nowhere intended to be conveyed by the term. Accordingly in Isa. xxxii. 14, 15, we have "*for ever . . . until*"; and fairly assuming such declarations to be familiar to the Apostle, as is seen from comparing his phraseology with that of Isa. xxxiv., where the burning of Idumea "shall not be quenched night or day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever"—does it not follow that the seer's words, "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever," &c., are equally consistent with finite duration?

Dr. Arnold remarked that "the great secret of interpreting the Revelations is to trace the images back to their first appearance in the Old Testament prophets." Here the unquenchable fire threatened upon Jerusalem (Jer. vii. 20) is followed by pointing to the day when "the whole valley of the dead bodies"—the very figure of that hell supposed to be endless—should become "holy unto the Lord." (xxx. 40.) So in Ezek. xx. 47; "The flaming flame shall not be quenched. All

flesh shall see that I the Lord have kindled it; it shall not be quenched." Yet nevertheless "I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings." (xxxvi. 11.)

Nor is the vision of the Seer of Patmos inconsistent with these promises. There is indeed more ground for interpreting the "second death" to mean annihilation than endless torment. It appears that Irenæus (disciple of Polycarp, who was personally known to St. John), as well as Arnobius, thought that the confirmed in evil will be finally destroyed. Peter (2 Epistle ii. 12) says the same, and also Paul (Phil. iii. 19). But this is the same doctrine as the Seer's in Patmos, for death (not annihilation) is involved in destruction. And if the death of the body involves resurrection to another plane of consciousness, the death of the soul must involve the like result, or the promises of restitution will be of no effect. Indeed, there seems no other escape from the notion of endless evil. The least germ of remorse may develop into the state of the just, after ages of correction. But there is "a sin unto death" (1 John v. 16), and a power of resisting to repent in the future life as there is in the present. Therefore, there must be a "second death." I am, however, transgressing the purpose of my letter to maintain that the endless duration of evil is not taught in the visions of the beloved disciple who lay in the bosom of the Truth. W.W.F.

Spiritualism at Bedford Park.

SIR,—I was present at the lecture given by Mr. Henly in Bedford Park, and in justice to the audience and to the lecturer I should like to offer a few words of explanation of its apparent failure.

A few lines in one of Mr. Lewis Morris's wonderful poems, his "Songs of Two Worlds," may be somewhat of a solution.

And who would save his kind
Must spend, the clue to find,
Not heart, but mind.

May I say, therefore, that Mr. Henly's lecture was full of heart but not of mind?

The audience was a large one, and I know, from personal acquaintance with many, that people went with deep interest, and with no intention whatsoever of not giving the subject their fullest approbation, if so be it met their understandings. They went for bread, and I fear they only got a stone.

It appears to me that when a lecturer has a cultured and highly intelligent audience, such as this most certainly was, it is a mistake only to offer food for the emotions of love or fear, and so forth. The fear of death is no longer the sledge hammer by which opinions can be driven home. To some, death is already a little shorn of its terrors since flowers have bloomed with such luxuriance at funerals. The key-note of love is almost too exquisitely painful to some to be touched upon wisely by a lecturer; people either steel themselves or are not movable that way. It rests, therefore, for the lecturer to choose the more excellent way, and appeal to the minds of his audience, and choose not sensation, but philosophy.

All that Mr. Henly advanced, I, as a student of spiritual philosophy, knew to be true, and so I, in a few words, when asked to reply, so stated; but, nevertheless, I felt that it could not sound like truth to an audience who had not tried to investigate the mystery even of a single rap. They were well acquainted with the history of what I may call common Spiritualism, as many people are, as well as the ridicule heaped upon it by an ignorant Press; and to people whose minds are already tuned to a high key of metaphysical thought, though not occultly discerned, but who are totally ignorant of the correspondence on the phenomenal side of nature, it becomes almost, at first hearing, too grossly inconsistent with their *gaseous* conceptions of spirit life to make them able to receive the idea of correspondence. I feel it is nowadays impossible for the highly cultured minds trained on the usual lines to believe easily in "Peter" or "Irresistible," and "the direct voice," or other physical phenomena. To them, such idea of a spirit life is (and rightly so if it were to include all) a terrible come down; and they use their only weapon of defence—derision.

Would it not be wiser in a lecturer to study his audience a little? A skilful architect knows how much a fine building gains by suitable approaches. Why should not a lecturer, therefore, lead on his audience through the avenues of their already enlightened trains of thought? It is of no use rapidly to open the door of a new realm of conceptions and hastily and emotion-

ally point out novelties to people, who have as yet scarcely grasped the fact of these new conceptions being worthy of study.

It is certain, as a whole, that people do not rush in by the gate of the emotions so fast as some Spiritualists would like, or else there surely would be brought in, only too quickly, the "disorderly Spiritualism" so much to be apprehended. It is a good thing, to my view, that people's minds are being prepared more quietly, so that this outbreak of spiritual illness may not occur. But on the contrary, the greatest of all sciences, that of *soul science*, seems on every side to be sought and thirsted for; and I feel persuaded that had Mr. Henly offered a little more of philosophy and less of phenomena to his audience he would have been far less dissatisfied with the result of his kindly endeavours. It was not that the audience meant or wished to find Spiritualism either childish or ridiculous, but, as represented by Mr. Henly, to their uninstructed minds regarding spiritual phenomena it *seemed so*.

One of the audience, a well-known artist, spoke very warmly on the subject, stating that such an exposition of spiritual truth seemed a sad degradation, and that a very different aspect of transcendental truth had been known to him and to others psychically and sensibly for very long, and that modern Spiritualism as represented only by these phenomena of the senses seemed to him deplorable. This shows that the audience was not composed of people who from the obtuseness of their materialism might be disposed to be ignorant of metaphysical ideas even. Such people are occasionally tempted to begin at the foot of the ladder, and through their senses begin to believe in Spiritualism, but these people are getting scarcer. The lecture I may say, *par parenthese*, to explain the chairman's apparently strange remarks, about the unsuitableness of Spiritualism, was as it were sandwiched into a set of lectures that are usually given by "The Gardening Society" of Bedford Park on subjects of natural history. Therefore, the announcement of a lecture given on Spiritualism, though received with general approbation, required a few words of explanation, for certainly Spiritualism and gardening are not usually subjects running side by side.

58, Blomfield-road, ISABEL DE STEIGER, F.T.S.
Maida Hill, W.

P. S.—I do not, I would like to say, myself venture to under-rate in the slightest the importance of phenomena; but just because I consider them of such importance I deprecate the knowledge of them being, as it were, unwisely "placed."

Spiritism or Spiritualism.

SIR,—Much confusion of thought exists through the use (or misuse, rather) of the word Spiritualism. There are thousands of persons connected with all forms of religion who are Spiritualists (meaning thereby "spiritually minded") who yet do not believe in spirit-communion, because they have never witnessed any manifestation of the same; nay, more, I believe there are many amongst us who, whilst disbelieving altogether in any future life whatever, are still as spiritual as the best of those who call themselves Spiritualists. I am led to make these remarks from the fact that some who were present at the lecture I delivered at Bedford Park, a short time ago, and who agreed with what I said on that occasion, still consider that I should have done better had I placed the higher teachings of Spiritualism before the audience, and omitted the facts of raps and tips and physical manifestations generally; but to this I say No most emphatically.

Before a boy or man can read he must learn the alphabet, and if it is of any importance to humanity to learn the truth of the life hereafter you must demonstrate that fact if able to do so. Why, it seems to me that this was the sum and substance of Christ's teaching, the bringing of "life and immortality to light." And why so? Because, if true, it affords the greatest inducement of any that can be thought of to our leading a good life. As the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews puts it, "seeing, then, that we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses" (men who once lived on earth as we are now doing) "let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us." To attempt to teach people the higher truths of Spiritualism, which, as I have said, are common to all religions, is good enough, but all the same it is no demonstration of the fact of a future life, whilst if you are addressing people who are not "spiritually-minded," will they not say as Festus did, "Paul, thou art beside thyself, much learning doth make thee mad?" Do not the words of Jesus apply here?—"If I have told you

earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?"

Until the whole of humanity believes (or rather knows) that although man may die "yet shall he live" again, physical manifestations will be necessary to convince men of it; when these are no longer needed, the prayer "Thy Kingdom Come" will have been more fully answered than it is at present.

T. L. HENLY.

[There is grave danger of making confusion worse confounded in the use of terms. A Spiritualist cannot possibly be taken to mean a "spiritually-minded person," and the "higher truths of Spiritualism" are "common to all religions" only in the sense that they may be found by careful search as matters of faith imbedded in and buried under a vast mass of error which human ignorance has accumulated.—ED. OF "LIGHT."]

The Terminology of Mesmerism.

SIR,—Your note in last week's "LIGHT" (p. 534) respecting the "Magnetist" Congress in Paris draws attention to the objectionable nomenclature still retained in some quarters in connection with mesmeric phenomena.

With the ordinary terms "hypnosis" (to express extra-induced sleep) and "autohypnosis" (to express self-induced sleep, "statuvolism," or "Braidism"), no fault whatever need be found; but the continued use of the word "magnetism" and the clumsy qualifications "animal," "vital," "zoo-magnetism," &c., to define the agency acting on subjects through passes or contact (irrespective of hypnosis or hypnotic suggestion), is equally incorrect, misleading, and uncalled for.

Not only is the agency in question most certainly neither magnetism nor electricity (as scientifically understood), but there is ample evidence to prove that true magnetism (*i.e.*, metallic or metalloidal polarity) has its own independent and characteristic action in certain cases; and nothing but hopeless confusion can arise from applying the same term to two things having nothing in common.

There can be no doubt that the proper word to describe the emanation passing from operator to subject in curative mesmerism (when there is no question of hypnosis) is *ODYLE*, and the derivatives from this term—*ODYLISM* for the system, *ODYLIST* for the operator, *ODYLISATION* for his process—leave nothing to be desired in point of exactness and convenience.

It may be hoped that those interested in the question of a suitable nomenclature for this branch of the subject will support the efforts of the London Hypnotic Society to settle these and other disputed points upon a consistent and intelligible basis.

I may perhaps venture to point out the connection between what is urged above and the question (raised on p. 533 of last week's "LIGHT") of a proper term to describe the "auras of the sitters" at a *séance*. That the emanation in this case is either identical with, or closely allied to, that of the operating *odylist* seems more than probable, and it may be suggested that a term sufficiently differentiated to answer all practical purposes in this connection would be found in the word "*PSYCHODYLE*."

FREDERICK W. HAYES, Hon. Sec. L.H.S.

12, Westcroft-square, W.
November 11th, 1889.

Simple Raps on Wood.

SIR,—The article by "M.A. (Oxon.);" in "LIGHT" for November 9th, is full of interest. Except the "sharp metallic crash on the table, infinitely startling," I have, myself, heard sounds similar to all those therein described, and, of course, many others besides: in excellent light, no paid medium present, and with every facility for minute examination. I have always thought that the photographs obtained by the late Mr. J. Beattie, 1873-4, are of great value; since they show accumulations of fine matter within and around the circle of sitters at the table, which nebulous accumulations were several times described by entranced clairvoyants before they appeared on the plates. Is it not probable that these *Nebulæ* (invisible for ordinary persons) are reservoirs of psychical force drawn from the sitters, by varied control of which through the brain of the medium not only raps but levitation are produced?

Speaking for myself, I, at the present time, desire to learn only about the simple rap on wood in the centre of a table, and I ask: *First*, What are these *Nebulæ* composed of? *Second*, by what means are they compacted? *Third*, are the brains of the

sitters, medium included, affected by, or in sympathy with, or producers of, these Nebulæ, or some of these Nebulæ? Fourth, if a sitter asks aloud for a rap on the table, what takes place within these Nebulæ to cause a rap to be heard, or seem to be heard, on the table? It is not sufficient answer to this last query to say a luminous sphere is seen to rap the table,—or sparks are seen to stream from the Nebulæ towards the table or something like a hammer is seen to hit the table. The sound itself remains to be accounted for. Suppose a luminous top-shaped cloud does jump up and down above the table, that does not explain how a sharp ringing sound results, seemingly affecting our auditory nerves by vibration of the air.

With your permission, I will next week send you a transcript of my account of a remarkable and very beautiful experiment I made with the Baron and Baroness Guldenstube, in Paris, in 1860,—the latter being entranced—when an infinite number of sounds (chiefly “scratching” sounds) made by myself on the top of the table, were (however complicated) faithfully reproduced beneath the surface of the table. Until she was entranced no imitation could be effected nor after she came out of her trance. This was in bright light.

Swanage.

J. HAWKINS SIMPSON.

SOCIETY WORK.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S.E.—Our meetings still continue to be very successful. On November 3rd Mrs. Spring gave us a short address and several correct clairvoyant delineations. On Sunday last Mr. Wallace spoke on the “Inner Life,” and was much appreciated. We had a full room on each occasion. On Tuesday next a social gathering will take place. Wednesday next, Mr. Lees. Sunday next, Mr. Veitch.—M. GIFFORD.

MARYLEBONE LYCEUM, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, W.—Sunday last, silver and golden chains, recitations, musical readings, and marches and calisthenics, led by Mr. Lewis. Four groups, led by the Conductor and Miss Smythe, Miss Cobb, and M. J. White. Recitations by Annie and Martha Cobb, Julia Clayson, Horace Towns, Lizzie and Ettie Mason, and Annie Goddard. Benediction by Harry Towns. We hope to have a Christmas Day festival should we receive sufficient assistance. Practice on Friday at 7.30 p.m.—C. WHITE.

LONDON OCCULT SOCIETY, CARLYLE HALL, CHURCH-STREET (THREE DOORS FROM EDGWARE-ROAD, CLOSE TO STATION.)—Next Sunday, 7 p.m., “1st M.B. (Lond.)” will deliver an address entitled “Death, and the State after Death.” On Wednesday, December 4th, at the Portman Rooms, Baker-street, Mr. Tindall, A. Mus. T.C.L., announces the production of his cantata, *The Worship of the Image*, with full band and chorus. The work is interesting to Spiritualists as having been composed under spirit influence. We trust there will be a large attendance.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Humphries spoke to a good audience, while at the evening service the hall was inconveniently crowded, a large number being turned away. We had a splendid address by Mrs. Stanley, which was duly appreciated. Sunday next, addresses by members at 11 a.m.; Mr. Wortley at 6.30 p.m. At the Society's Rooms, on Saturday, November 16th, for members, Mrs. Watkinson; and on Wednesday evening Mr. W. E. Walker will give clairvoyant descriptions. Strangers heartily welcomed at 8.15 p.m.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

KING'S CROSS SOCIETY, 253, PENTONVILLE-ROAD, ENTRANCE CORNER OF KING'S CROSS-ROAD.—On Sunday morning last the Secretary read a paper upon “Mesmerism,” which led to a good discussion. The subject of Phreno-Mesmerism excited considerable interest and, in response to a desire expressed, Mr. Mackenzie kindly offered to introduce the subject of Phrenology next Sunday morning. In the evening Mr. Everitt gave an account of some of his experiences at the Paris Congress. He complained that his address had been very inaccurately reported by the Press, notably the *Standard*. The lecturer had with him the specimens of direct-writing which he exhibited at the Congress, and favoured us with an account of the séances at which they were produced. Next Sunday evening, at 6.45 p.m., Mrs. Perrin.—S. T. R.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—The following is the balance-sheet of this society from May 31st to November 4th inclusive:—Receipts: Cash in hand, £2 3s. 11d.; subscriptions, £2 10s. 6d.; collections, £5 12s. 11½d.; sale of literature, 5s. 1½d.; donation for Lyceum, 10s.; total, £11 2s. 6d. Expenditure: Rent, £4; speakers' expenses, £1 8s. 4d.; strike fund, £1 11s. 2½d.; stationery, &c., 9s. 5½d.; literature, 15s. 10½d.; advertisement board and sundries, 16s.; cash in hand, £2 1s. 7½d.; total, £11 2s. 6d. We have now been in existence twelve months as a society, and, from the progress made, we feel justified in commencing a children's Lyceum. As this will fully double our expenses, we propose to give a concert on November 28th, in aid of the Lyceum fund. We hope that all who are interested in the proper training of the young, will do what they can to help us in this effort, by taking tickets, donations, &c. We hold our first session of the Lyceum next Sunday at 3 p.m.

at the society's room. Tickets for admission to concert, 1s., 6d., and 3d. Programmes and further particulars next week.—M. A. BEWLEY, Sec.

KENSINGTON AND NOTTING HILL SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.—At the morning service on Sunday last at Zephyr Hall, 9, Bedford-gardens, Silver-street, Notting Hill Gate, W., a reading was given from a “New Church” book, being a lecture on the resurrection, by the Rev. C. Giles. The reading engaged the close attention of a pretty good attendance. In the evening, after an excellent reading from *Progress* by J. Platt, Mr. Veitch delivered an interesting and instructive oration on “Our Principles,” pointing out particularly that of the brotherhood of man, and showing that slavery in America was abolished through a spiritual communication given through a medium to the President. Next Sunday evening at 7 p.m., speaker, Mr. Darby. Clairvoyance, &c., by Miss Marsh, who has kindly consented to favour us with her services. The secretary will be glad to receive the names, &c., of any persons in sympathy with us, wishing to help onward the cause in this part of the Metropolis. Choir practices every Friday evening at 8 p.m., at 68, Cornwall-road, Bayswater. Helpers in the choir are solicited and are invited to attend these practices. Next Sunday at 11 a.m. service as usual. We have arranged a visit from Mr. J. J. Morse on December 4th, and have engaged the Victoria Hall, Archer-street, Bayswater, for the occasion; admission by tickets, viz.:—Platform tickets (limited number), 5s. each; reserved seats, 2s. 6d.; admission 1s. and 6d., for which early application is advised; to be had of all the London Spiritualist Societies, Messrs. George Gordon and Co., 21, Archer-street, W., or of the Secretary. Further particulars to follow in future issues of “LIGHT.” On the 24th inst., at 7 p.m., Captain Pfoundes will lecture on “Theosophy: The Truth about it,” in the Zephyr Hall; also on December 1st upon “Buddhism, What it is and is not.” Captain Pfoundes, who solicits discussion, is a great authority upon Eastern matters. The next committee meeting will be held at 16, Dartmoor-street, at 8 p.m. Members are kindly requested to favour us with overdue subscriptions.—PERCY SMYTH, Hon. Sec.

ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BEAUMONT-STREET, MILE END.—We had a crowded hall to listen to Captain Pfoundes' address upon Buddhism. The lecturer said he came as the representative of those Buddhists who thought that it was quite time that the misrepresentations of Buddhism were put a stop to and a little light was let in upon their philosophy. The Buddhists had been to Europe and had watched closely the lives of the people and had gone back eminently dissatisfied with what they saw. They had gone back with the firm impression that the Europeans stood more in need of teaching than those they were so ready to speak of as heathen. He (the speaker), after years of study, had come to the conclusion that the philosophy of Buddhism was all that the most earnest seeker after truth could desire. The Buddhist had no personal God; they could not understand why the iniquity of the parents should be visited upon the children. They had no hell; no sacrifice to an angry God; no salvation in blood and fire. No Buddhist solaced himself with the reflection that he is saved, while another is damned; all this is expunged from Buddhism. This philosophy had not come to add another horror to our lives but to sweep away those we already had. Buddhism taught that man's responsibility increased as his knowledge extended; he is responsible not alone for what he does but for what he neglects to do; the responsibility of man was in the present and not in the future. Buddhists repudiated the idea of “Blessed are the poor in spirit” as an abasing maxim. They asked for no blind faith, they declined to take upon themselves the responsibility of dogmatically asserting this is right or that is wrong, but they would point out the source from which they believed truth to come and leave each to educate himself. The address, which occupied close upon two hours, made an evident impression upon all who listened to it. Questions and discussion followed, which brought out some very interesting details. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Emms on “Man's Spiritual Possibilities.”—C.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

SEVERAL letters and articles are unavoidably deferred on account of pressure on space.

A. O.—No; so far as we are informed.

ANXIOUS.—The fear is puerile. There are risks besetting the acquirement of all fresh knowledge. If these deterred all inquirers the world would stand still.

MISS A. A. CHEVALIER.—Sorry we can not find what you wish from your vague description. The files shall be searched again, and we will forward the number if we discover it. We remember the “English Clergyman's” proposal, but fear it has never taken root successfully.

R. S.—We are not able to recommend to you any good clairvoyant, though there must be such available. If those who can produce good testimony to their powers will leave it and their address at our Office we can place them often in communication with inquirers.

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.