

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	221	Curious Dreams	229
An Apparition	222	Mrs Godfrey quotes T. L. Harris ..	230
Some Needed Definitions	223	Clairvoyance	231
Capital Punishment	224	Mr. Gladstone and Genesis	231
Mr. T. Adolphus Trollope	226	Resurrection of the Body	231
The Veil of Isis	227	Mr. Tindall and the Bible	231

NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

I am always glad to be put right when I go wrong. Even when the putting right involves a public exposition of my errors I frankly say that I welcome such correction. But I do not abrogate my right to defend myself when I am not convinced of my error. Now, a correspondent in the last number of "LIGHT" ("H. B. L.") comments on some remarks of mine (p. 197) touching Sir George Stokes's address, to which I had before referred in a more precise manner (p. 173). To these observations I must refer my critic. For I am unable to admit the adequacy of his criticism. I have taken no exception to the attitude assumed by the President of the Royal Society. He is absolutely free from obligation in this matter. He may think as he sees fit, he may speak as he thinks proper, and no man has any right to find fault with him. He is not under vows; he is not a religious teacher; he has not in a very solemn moment subscribed a categorical belief in certain dogmas and creeds which the Church, of which he is a prominent officer, declares to be binding on all within her fold, and to be essential to salvation. Sir George Stokes has no concern with all this. He may express his belief in a resurrection of the *spiritual* body, and of the hybernation of man's consciousness till this event takes place. But that is not the avowed doctrine of the Church of England. He may profess that the immortality of the soul is a "purely philosophical conception." The Church of England does not so profess. I have already pointed out with what seems to me sufficient clearness and precision that the Christian Bible and the Christian Church affirm what Sir George Stokes does not accept. I have the advantage of his address "revised and reprinted" from the *Family Churchman*, and I see no reason to modify what I wrote on perusing the report in the *Times*.

It is not, as should be very clear, to Sir G. Stokes that I except, but to the four Bishops. For "H.B.L." must pardon me if I demur to his statement that the immortality of the soul is "not a matter of direct revelation, but a philosophical induction, gathered from numerous declarations in Scripture." I have no concern with the grounds on which this article of faith has found its way into the creeds and formularies of the Church: but that it is there cannot be doubted. And if it is there, as it is, surely it is so placed by virtue of the fiat of the Church which, as "the witness and keeper of Holy Writ," finds it revealed there. That it is "a matter of direct revelation" to those who regard the Bible as the Church regards it is, I should say, a self-

evident proposition. I do not know what authority "H.B.L." has for saying that "every man is by birthright a son of God," nor am I clear what may be included within the terms of that statement. I do not even know whether every man is immortal. I do not know whether any, and, if any, what part of me will "rise" and where or how. My own belief on the subject is much simpler, and is not dependent on any dogma or revelation, which I believe to be progressive and in process of constant development, but on knowledge. I should not have thought it becoming to animadvert on any man's beliefs, were it not that they seemed to me as stated to be at utter variance with the tenets of the Church in which these men hold a very prominent position, and even then the matter would not have touched me, were it not that I regard it as a "sign of the times." They burned people in the good old times for more venial errors. Nowadays it seems that a Bishop may deny in the most open way what he has sworn to teach, no man making him ashamed. That strikes me as curious.

The *Lancet* on hypnotism (April 26th) is instructive. "The general attitude of the profession in this country has remained one of great reserve, for which there have been at least two excellent grounds."

First, those who have the advantage of familiarity with the literature of Mesmerism and Braidism are aware that much that has been lately paraded as novel is really a revival of ideas that had their day of fame, but which speedily fell off into quackery and thaumaturgy, and of which the net result was discredit to science and disappointment to hopes incautiously excited. Secondly, the good sense and good feeling of many have been outraged by the practice, which unhappily prevails in some parts of the Continent, of holding hypnotic séances and show-exhibitions at which the public are invited to be present on payment of an entrance fee. We cannot conceive anything more repugnant to sound humanity or more foreign to the true scientific spirit than such deplorable performances. We rejoice to recognise that the British nation has no monopoly of its detestation for this prostitution of science for the gratification of vulgar curiosity, and we welcome the news that the French Minister of Marine has within the last few days issued a circular forbidding such performances in the French sailors' hospitals and convalescent homes. The abuses of a system, or method, must not blind us to its uses, but the facts just adverted to are at least an explanation and justification of the tardy recognition of hypnotism on this side of the Channel.

It may be permissible to remark that the practical extinction of mesmerism in those old days was largely, if not wholly, due to the treatment that it received at the hands of the medical profession, whose business it surely was to rescue it from the alleged uses to which it is said that it was put by "thaumaturgists" or others. As a matter of fact, their persecution of those who expounded what was then new truth crushed it out, and it does not lie in their mouths now to say that what they are once more beginning to recognise as true is not new. It is not; and it would not be necessary to contravene any such pretence were it not that orthodox medicine so hounded it out of popular

knowledge that it is, on its reappearance, practically a new thing in this generation.

The *Lancet* thinks that there is "no reasonable doubt that some persons possess the power of inducing varying degrees of somnolency in certain subjects." "We know nothing (as Hume said) of mind but its manifestations." We do not know what is that influence of mind upon mind which produces the phenomena called hypnotic. We do know that a "subject" may be so influenced by suggestion as to "bring about real changes in certain morbid states." Accordingly the *Lancet* would "anticipate that in functional nervous affections hypnotism might be a therapeutic agent of real value; for example, in the relief of a sufferer from insomnia and in the treatment of insanity." The *Lancet* is less sure as to the utility of hypnotic treatment as an anæsthetic. It prefers chloroform and ether as at present advised. The most important part of the *Lancet's* article must be given in its own words:—

As regards the drawbacks, inconveniences, and positive evils which beset the practice of hypnotism, we are hardly yet in a position to speak confidently. Analogy would lead us to fear that, inasmuch as the best subjects for hypnotic experiment are persons of mobile, susceptible, and unstable nervous systems, the risk of aggravating a nervous disorder which we aim at removing would be not inconsiderable. At least three distinct dangers may be apprehended from hypnotism: first, that a general condition of neuro-muscular excitability may be induced, as has been shown by Preyer, Seeligmueller, and others; secondly, that the operator may not always be able to secure a speedy and complete return to the normal condition after the hypnotic trance; and, lastly, that in unscrupulous hands the patient may be impelled by suggestion to perform acts which he might afterwards regret. These dangers are so grave that they must never be left out of account in striking a balance between the benefits and evils likely to accrue from the general adoption of hypnotism as a recognised resource of the medical art.

It is unsatisfactory that a subject of so much interest should remain in this doubtful state, and that practitioners in general should, for want of leisure and opportunity for investigation, be compelled to maintain an attitude of hesitation and reserve. We think the subject is ripe for thorough and independent investigation, and we would earnestly commend it to the attention of our medical societies. If the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society would take it up and submit it to a searching inquiry, the result could hardly fail to prove of great value, and might dispel some of the darkness which still hangs over the question of hypnotism.

AN APPARITION.

Viscountess Maidstone writes to us (*Pall Mall Gazette*) as follows with regard to an occurrence which took place on the evening of the performance last week, at Westminster Town Hall, of Sophocles' *Antigone*, in which Lady Maidstone took the title part:—

Coming out of my dressing-room, I saw Mr. H. standing against the wall, opposite the door of the dressing-room. I went up, putting my hand out, and said, "How do you do, Mr. H.? I am so pleased to see you here." He made no reply, shook his head, and turned away. Knowing him to be a peculiar man, but never doubting that it was he (being a person of such strong individuality that he couldn't well be mistaken), I thought, "How funny!" and, hurrying on behind the scenes, I gave the matter no further thought. The following day a friend called, and in the course of conversation said, "You will be sorry to hear poor H. is dead." "Impossible," I replied; "I saw him and spoke to him at the play last night." "I can only tell you," was the answer, "that he died on Thursday last" (the day before the performance) "and is to be buried to-morrow."

"The fact," adds Lady Maidstone, "of the *Antigone* being entirely based on the solemn rites of the sepulture, make the facts curiously significant."

THE multitude itself cares little for philosophy, and is chiefly amenable to the simple truths of ethics which are delivered to it from heart to heart. These are its medicines for the ills of life, and it has neither time nor inclination to enter into details either with regard to the character of the medicines or the nature of its disease. All that most of us care to know in that case are names—what our complaint is called and with what drug we are being dosed, and this is very true also in matters philosophical. —"ALPHA," in *Theosophist* for February, 1890.

SOME NEEDED DEFINITIONS IN SPIRITUAL SCIENCE.

BY MR. EDWARD MANTLAND.

(Continued from p. 216.)

Comprehending the nature of the soul and its relation to the spirit, on the one hand, and to the personality or character begotten of it, on the other hand, our position becomes such that so far from finding a stumbling-block in that most stupendous and ill-understood of all the mysteries of Spiritual science, that of Divine Incarnation, we can receive and assimilate it as a necessary and self-evident truth, founded in the very nature of being. And we must so accept it for it to be of value for us, since it constitutes, when it occurs, a demonstration of the inherent divinity of humanity and therein of the truth of the doctrine of Pantheism. Wherefore it is a tenet, the omission or denial of which by any system of religious doctrine is to deprive such system of any title to represent spiritual science. This, then, is the next and tenth of our needed definitions, that of Divine incarnation. *Wherever the soul of a person in the flesh has attained to a state of freedom from materiality, such that it is animated by a spirit perfectly pure, there is God incarnate. For pure spirit is God, and God is not the less God because individuated in a human soul which is itself clothed upon with a human body.* Now, of the spiritual man, or substantial character, resulting from the operation of such a spirit in such a soul, the mystical name is Christ Jesus: being called Jesus, which means liberator, by reason of his being the new interior personality in and by which the individual is released from material limitations; and Christ, because he is at once *Christos*, which means anointed or suffused of the spirit, and *Chrēstos*, which means best, and He is the best that humanity has, is, or can be.

But this is not all that the term "Christ" implies. For it is at once a principle, a process, a state, an office, and a person. And the person it implies is not only the single regenerated human selfhood, but also the regenerated selfhood of humanity at large throughout the universe. For, just as the individual human Ego is an essence compounded of the associated consciousnesses, or spirits, of the individual system, so is the Christ, in the collective and supreme sense of the term,—that is, the macrocosmic as distinguished from the microcosmic, Christ,—constituted of the associated spirits of all perfected human Egos. And whereas such Egos, being perfected, represent and are microcosmic individuations of Deity, or God made man in the particular, so the being in whom they converge and blend to form one vast perfected Ego, namely, Christ, represents and is the macrocosmic individuation of Deity, or God made Man in the universal. And just as the individual human Ego is not limited to the mere sum total of the associated consciousnesses of its system, but represents these fused into a unity and polarised to a plane indefinitely higher, so the Christ constituted of the spirits of the regenerated human Egos is not limited to the mere sum total of these, but represents them fused into a unity and polarised to a plane indefinitely higher. He is thus "not one man, but ten thousand times ten thousand, the Son of man," even the whole perfected humanity in whom the universe is redeemed. And inasmuch as he has the Divine Spirit for His Father and the Divine substance for his Mother—the pure *Maria*, or sea of infinite space, which is the substance of all souls—and his generation is in and through humanity, He is truly said to be begotten of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin *Maria*, and to be Son, and only Son, at once of God and of man.

Our next and eleventh definition, that of "Christ," will now be readily intelligible. *Christ is both the principle of personal perfection, whether in the individual or in the universal, and the personality itself resulting therefrom; and in virtue of his dual derivation and pure'y spiritual nature is at once God individuated and man divinised. And he is a Christ in whom, while yet in the flesh, this process finds exemplification, and in such measure as this occurs.* From this it follows that the sin of the current orthodox presentation of the doctrine of the incarnation, is that by making of the historical Christ a being altogether apart and unique, it deprives humanity of its Divine potentialities, and so ministers to the condemnation instead of to the salvation of the race. This as regards man. As regards Deity; by restricting the process of the self-individuation of God to a single instance and making this abnormal, special, and exceptional, instead of recognising that process as manifold, normal, continuous, and universal, it deprives Deity of the satisfaction and compensation due for all undergone by It in creation, and misses altogether the meaning and purpose of the universe.

Prominent among the few remaining terms to the definition of which this paper must be restricted are those of "Atonement" and "Regeneration," the failure to comprehend the process denoted by which has led to the most disastrous results at once for religion and for the happiness of mankind. I say "process," using the singular, because while in one sense they denote two things they are really identical. For Atonement, at-one-ment, or *atunement*, and Regeneration are at once the cause and the consequence of each other, each alike implying a state indispensable to man's perfectionment, the state of order evolved from disorder, of harmony from discord, of kosmos from chaos. It is in this sense that Shakespeare—whose spiritual depths have yet to be sounded and disclosed—uses the word "atone," as when, in the last scene of *As You Like It*, he says:—

Then there is mirth in Heaven,
When earthly things made even
Atone together.

Precisely defined, and these will make our twelfth and thirteenth definitions:—*Atonement is the harmonisation of the will of man's whole system with that of the highest in his system, namely, the Spirit, in such wise that the will of the Spirit is the will of the man.* And *Regeneration is the reconstitution of the man thus atoned, of the higher elements of his system, the spirit and the soul, in such wise that he becomes a new, or a spiritual man.*

Both processes are entirely interior; and whereas this new or spiritual man has his generation from the above and the within of his system, he is called also the heavenly man, and is said to come down from above. And whereas, also, as already defined, the soul and spirit of whom he is generated are for their purity and divinity mystically called Virgin Maria and Holy Ghost, and are further denoted by the terms "water" and the "spirit," it is obvious that the declaration of Jesus to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again of water and of the spirit," is a positive assertion of the necessity to everyone of being born exactly as he himself, as the typical Man Regenerate, is said to have been born, and of the purely spiritual nature both of the process and of its product.

Now, this new, interior, regenerate man or selfhood being wholly spiritual, even though invested with a material body, is that whereby in each person the summit of evolution is attained, since in it the man is sublimed, puts on divinity, and eternises his individuality. And in him is fulfilled the promise made to Eve, who stands for the soul in the stage in which it first falls under the power of materiality, that she should some day, through her seed, bruise the head of the serpent, that is, overcome the limitations of matter. By which it is clear that the doctrine of creation by evolution, on its invention of which modern science so greatly plumes itself, was an essential tenet of spiritual science untold ages ago, and in a sense and with an import indefinitely transcending any that modern science has even begun to surmise. And this in two supreme respects. For, first, by insisting on the permanence of the Ego which is the subject and object of evolution, ancient spiritual science made evolution—as alone it can be—possible. And, secondly, by extending the process of evolution into the spiritual, it made humanity divine.

And here a few remarks are necessary concerning Re-incarnation. For although Regeneration is not Reincarnation, Reincarnation is indispensable to Regeneration. This is because, in consisting of the evolution and elaboration of the Spiritual selfhood out of elements contained in matter, and by means of experience of matter, Regeneration is a prolonged and arduous process, and such as to require a prolonged association with matter, and consequently a multiplicity of earth-lives—whether here or elsewhere does not signify for our argument—for its accomplishment even in the smallest degree. And not only so, but it can hardly be said to commence until many such lives have been lived. As well might we expect to complete our education in a single term at school as to accomplish Regeneration by a single experience of the earth-life. In order both to learn the requisite lessons, and to acquire the necessary substance, for the soul's education and growth, we must return again and again to the school of the body. The end in view is the soul's conquest over materiality, and it is not by flight, but by struggle that strength, and skill, and victory are gained. Wherefore to tell us that we *must* be spiritually born again, and by denying us a multiplicity of earth-lives, to withhold the opportunities requisite for accomplishing the process, would be to mock us. What is said of the Christ is said for all. The life related of him on the exterior plane must be enacted by all on the interior. Only through suffering, or experience felt and

applied, and its lessons substantialised in the soul, can any be made perfect. And the suffering and experience requisite to perfection come of the soul's conflict with materiality. The mistake is to regard materiality as the cause only of the soul's limitations; whereas it is no less the effect. For when exempt from limitations the soul is not subject to materiality. That we are in the body is a proof that we still need the lessons to be got only through the body; and if it be asked wherein, precisely, soul-culture consists, the answer will serve for our fourteenth definition. *The culture of the Soul is the pursuit of the Ideal.* By always endeavouring to imagine and to reach the best alike in wish, thought, word, and act—not the apparently or conventionally, but the really best,—making intuition the guide and principles the criterion, the man and his ideal gradually but surely rise together higher and higher above the region of materiality, the ideal meanwhile becoming substantialised in the man, making him after its own image, until at length it lands him on the very shores of Divinity, a personal demonstration of the truth that the realisation of the Ideal is the finding of Christ. Then, and then only, is he really and fully Man. And as this also is a term which needs definition, and never more sorely than in these days when a materialistic science insists on making the body all, and maintains that it has adequately defined man when it has enumerated his physical characteristics, we will make man the subject of our fifteenth and penultimate definition. *Man is the manifestation in the individual and finite, of all the principles, properties, and qualities, masculine and feminine, of existence which subsist in the universal and infinite, and in their absolute perfection and plenitude constitute the nature of God.*

It may be well to explain with regard to these definitions that, though expressed mainly in terms derived from the Christian presentation, it is with the desire to insist rather upon the truths themselves than upon any particular manner of stating them. For, however stated, they are one and all vital truths of which the witness is the soul itself, and for the recognition and verification of which appeal must be made to the soul. And being such, they must be taken account of in any system of religion claiming to be founded in spiritual science. But the class of souls competent to judge them, and to formulate religion anew, is not that of souls which differ from our own simply by the fact of their being disembodied, but of souls which, whether embodied or disembodied, are advanced and matured, and who in virtue of their grade have attained to a knowledge, not of spirits merely, but of Spirit, and have learnt by their own ripe experience the process thereof in the soul. For just as it is one thing to know men and women, and another thing, far transcending this, to comprehend *Man*, so is it one thing to have knowledge concerning spirits, and another, far transcending this, to comprehend *Spirit*. And in such measure as any do this, they are—whether embodied or disembodied, whether attached or unattached to any visible Church on earth—indefeasible members of the Church invisible and triumphant in Heaven, and, in virtue of the communion of all perfected souls, are dowered with the knowledges common to the members of that Church. For which reasons it is necessary that so far from discarding that which has come down to us from a remote past as obsolete or otherwise unsuitable, we should rather make the fact that it is thence derived and has survived the ordeal of ages, a reason for attaching special value to it, and, at the least, carefully collating our own experiences with it; and not for its antiquity merely, but because it hails from those who were less densely materialised than men now are, and whose faculties for the discernment of things spiritual were so much the more keen. The well-known and oft-vaunted motto of Catholicism which makes it the test of truth that it has been held "always, everywhere, and by all," is true of soul-knowledges and perhaps of these only. It is in the *consensus* of ripe souls that infallible truth is to be found; and in the very fact that the needs and perceptions of such souls have in all ages been the same, consists the best confirmation of the truth. All knowledge is by experience; and intuition, whereby soul-knowledges are obtained, represents the experience of the soul, and there is no substitute for it, since it is man's one avenue to the divine. The very fact, therefore, that the claim is made by any professor of spiritual science to dispense with the intuitions of the souls of the past, and to supersede them by contrary or independent teachings, constitutes of itself a reason, full and sufficient, for regarding him with profound distrust. It is not a new gospel that the world needs or that a new religion should propound, but a new interpretation, and one that, though new to this age, shall not be really new, but shall represent a recovery of that which is either so

old as to have become forgotten, or so profound as to have escaped recognition by superficialists—a recovery of that, too, which was intended by its original formulators.

Nor should we fail to take warning by the example of the controllers of the early Church, who, whether through ignorance or through the desire to exalt their system as wholly new and exclusively divine, having no root in, and being in no sense evolved from, preceding systems—with, at the most, one single limited exception—denounced and suppressed to the utmost all evidence to the contrary, and by this parricidal course deprived themselves of the key to the interpretation of their own mysteries. For they appropriated indeed the mysteries of their predecessors and adapted them to the new presentation, but failed to secure also the key by which alone they could be unlocked. And so it has come that, ignorant alike of the source and of the signification of its own dogmas, the Church presents as a superstition, to be accepted blindly and on authority, that which it would otherwise rest on its only proper “rock,” the understanding.

And now, having pronounced the word “Dogma,” we come to the sixteenth and last of our proposed definitions. There is a special and peculiar need for the definition of this term, owing to the fact that most, if not all, of the attempts now making on behalf of religious reconstruction are dominated by a revolt against the very idea of dogma, the cry being loud for a “dogmaless religion;” whereas the truth is that we might as well seek to dispense with rules in arithmetic, definitions in philosophy, axioms in geometry, or formulas in chemistry, as with dogmas in religion. For rightly apprehended, *a religious dogma is nothing more or less than a concise statement concerning the nature and processes of the soul and spirit as ascertained by the experience and interpreted by the reason of competent observers, and constitutes for minds qualified to recognise it a necessary and self-evident proposition. And inasmuch as all such truth is spiritual, no religious dogma or interpretation of dogma is true which has a physical application.*

The cause of the revolt against Dogma is neither far to seek nor difficult of statement. It is ignorance, first, of the region of thought to which it refers, and next, of the meaning of the terms in which it is formulated. And as the responsibility for this ignorance lies with the sacerdotaly, so also does the responsibility for the revolt against Dogma. The Nemesis due is not wanting. The Church sees the world slipping from its grasp, but can find no spell wherewith to lure it back again. For, being withheld by its want of the key of knowledge alike from admitting others and from entering in itself, it is unable to offer the one inducement to return that the world will accept, namely, the interpretation of its mysteries. Lacking this, the only result of the profuse and gorgeous ritualism by which it may seek to revive allegiance, will be to demonstrate anew the denseness of its own materiality. For its appeal is to the senses, and in this matter the world now cares only for the understanding. And as the remedy lies neither in the abolition nor in the dramatic presentation of Dogma, but only in its Interpretation, and as this can come only from the Soul, the one hope left for Religion and for Humanity is the new manifestation of the soul now, for all who are not spiritually purblind, actually taking place in our midst. They whose spiritual eyes are open can thank God that for them that hope is a certainty. The Church invisible has come to the rescue; and “the mountain is full of horses and chariots of fire round about.”

MEN over forty are no judges of a book written in a new spirit.—EMERSON.

SCIENCE and religion neither are nor can be two fields of knowledge with no possible communication between them. Such an hypothesis is simply absurd. There is undoubtedly an avenue leading from the one to the other, but this avenue is through the unseen universe, and unfortunately it has been walled up and ticketed with “no road way,” professedly alike in the name of science at the one end and in the name of religion at the other.—*The Unseen Universe*, p. 211.

WISDOM has connected all affinities by similitudes in order that our progress may be gently and almost insensibly made. That is why death would be so consoling if we had previously regarded this world as a similitude preparatory for another similitude higher and more instructive. For these similitudes ought always to grow in importance and interest, seeing that each is a model in relation to that which preceded it, though but an image compared to that which follows it.—D. C. DE ST. MARTIN, *Homme de Désir*, sec. 295.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

By MADAME DE STEIGER.

I see that you have a petition at the office of “LIGHT” to which Spiritualists are permitted and invited to sign their names in protest against capital punishment.

I confess I feel much inclined to add my own on the mere emotional aspect of the matter, for certainly it is difficult on those grounds to do anything but protest against capital punishment.

The reasons set forth by the petitioners do not, however, rest in the emotional plane only. They seem prompted by reason. But are they?

1st. They say, “Capital punishment does not prevent or diminish the crime of murder.”

This is scarcely logical; we agree it does not prevent, but how do we know it does not diminish; it has not been tried. I believe I am right in saying, that for instance in Switzerland where it was abolished, the crime of murder largely increased, and I believe capital punishment has been re-enacted again. Of this I am not quite sure however.

2nd. Because such a form of death (by this I suppose hanging is meant) is entirely out of touch, &c., with the nineteenth century. Certainly it would be, if the crime of murder were also entirely out of touch, but crime and its appropriate punishment necessarily hang together.

3rd. “Because the error of cutting short life of innocent persons (too often occurring) is an irreparable wrong to the nation.” Most certainly it is, but it is *Messieurs les Assassins* who have first to bear this in mind. No question that the legality called justice has sometimes gone astray, and the real culprit has escaped, and an innocent person has suffered; but if innocent they are martyrs, and will reap their reward, for they have expiated.

4th. Because violent death by strangulation, if it satisfies the vengeance of imperfect human law, is a national disgrace and is opposed to the highest instincts of humanity. Certainly it is, no one ever could imagine to the contrary. But is this quite a fair and wise way of approaching a question of important reform? Law is not meant and never was, in the best sense, as vengeance. It was certainly originally meant (as the Jewish law) to act as justice, “an eye for an eye” spirit; but of late the tendency of all judgment is not retaliation but deterrence. I do not suppose anyone would say that a judge and jury are actuated by vengeance when they decide a man has murdered one of his own kind, and therefore they consider him unfit to live among the human race any longer, and in consequence it is decided, under such circumstances, the murderer must be put away from among them. The carrying out of this sentence is hopefully considered to act as a deterrent to others who might be tempted to the same action. This is all; there is neither cruelty nor vengeance in the matter in one sense.

The great question, to my mind, in the case, and, I should think, to most Spiritualists, is, as we know that a man can really not be killed quite so entirely as newspapers generally report a criminal to be when he makes that ghastly drop, whether it is wiser for the sake of the community that a criminal should live among them fettered in the flesh or unfettered in the spirit? There is no doubt* that most of the “returns” made by the astral forms who have appeared in our séance rooms or elsewhere have been those of suicides or persons who have met untimely deaths by punishment or accident. The seven principles making up the man can not be all sundered at once.

The sensuous and manifested form of the material man can certainly be immediately put out of working order in this sphere, but we only push him away, as it were—no more—he is only out of sight.

It does not appear to me so terrible and brutal a deed as it seems to the framers of the petition, that if a man or woman, out of cruelty or under the influence of any other passion, deliberately destroys another, that the community should enact the penalty of death against so monstrous a crime. For it is a monstrous crime, and entirely apart from the “judicial murder” of the culprit as his execution is called sometimes. This is really not murder, it is simply the determination to get such a being away from the community as he is utterly unsuited to remain. People will say yes, this may be justice, but it is not mercy! Quite true, but which is it we are really seeking? Justice or mercy? The two combined do not really act

* Is there evidence sufficient to warrant this assertion?—ED. or “LIGHT.”

harmoniously. This seems strange, but somehow it will be found to be so. The fact of the matter is that true justice is mercy in the end.

If justice allowed a number of semi-animals to live undeterred by the idea of any punishment if their base instincts were carried out, would this be showing either justice to the others of the community of less low natures, or true mercy to the criminals? We must deal with things as they are, before we can hope to make things as we wish; and one can but feel that there is a large amount of undeveloped humanity which cannot be dealt with by the mild law of mercy; they do require the justice of the eye for the eye. There are many forms of crime, but let us consider one of the gravest; a deliberate poisoner. Has such a person not forfeited all right to live among his fellow-men, and may not his death at the hands of justice be but the first step he takes in expiation of his deeds, and also a help to him, suppose he is born with a diseased organism, due to heredity—his Karma, with such an organism crime must co-exist. The "higher self" is utterly dormant in a body in whom the principles are in complete disunion. Is it, therefore, a "national" disgrace that such an unhealthy and vitiated being should be removed from a sphere where his whole life would be but as a cancer amongst whole flesh? Is it such a cruelty or wrong?

I feel, however, that I am somewhat trespassing on your space, and there are so many side issues that touch on the matter I feel I cannot in this short paper say half what I think, but I would like at least to say we must beware how we listen to false emotion and call it mercy. What we have to do is to consider the best ways of teaching people to avoid this miserable consummation of the death penalty. We are faced on the psychical plane with the great facts of heredity, and on the spiritual with the doctrines (some of us think) of Re-incarnation and Karma, and on the phenomenal plane by the undoubted fact of the non-dying of the sentient man when put out of this sphere before the term of his natural life is ended. How to act for the best with these evidences before our eyes and thoughts should be seriously and most quietly thought out; all excited emotion strenuously guarded against. The persons who have been murdered must be considered with the same feelings of pity with which it seems the tendency always to regard the criminal. It would be a good symptom if the pity were only for the individual, and that that pity did not blind their eyes to the hideousness of the crime, but people seem to get confused when once their emotions step in.

We have to consider really on which plane the murderer is most dangerous, when we actually have a full-blown murderer really among us. I admit there is, and it is right that there should be, a horror and a dread of taking such a stern decree into our hands, and there is something piteous beyond words, in the ghastly scene of the unhappy man's last moments here, but these natural and right feelings should not blind or bewilder us.

What we have, however, really to do is to try and prevent the birth and life of the future murderers. At present, by our total inattention to all the primary laws of nature, though the law of heredity has been pronounced rightly by scientific men to be a sure one, and we know that a law fulfils itself inexorably like the great axis of the huge engine wheel with steady rotation as effect follows cause, and cause effect, unless the man places himself under the action of another law (and this is man's true free will), but not to digress, with this knowledge of the law of heredity and others, we all have it in our power to shape the future humanity into something more resembling his true image, that of God, than that which he now wears.

It appears to me truer and wiser philanthropy to turn all our energies towards the dissemination of thoughts and ideas, and a newer view of life and a higher and better one, the one that we students of spiritual philosophy have the privilege of knowing more of than in wasting our strength by attacks against institutions and laws, which at present cannot in justice be said to be so all round wrong as their opponents would say. Do not let us bother about laws, they would really not matter in the least, provided we never came within their reach. If no man committed a murder, would it matter if there were a law condemning him to be hanged if he did?

It is to my mind always a sign of great weakness when persons who want to get rid of something they don't like attack the thing itself, not the causes lying behind; it will always hydra-like rise again.

What does all the great wisdom religion we are all learning teach us but the gospel of joy, that man is really free, that he need not have in the future half or a quarter or any of the troubles of life if he liked? There is a wealth of information lying to hand, teaching us the true science of living and of dying; we make ourselves demons, and we might be angels; and we dare to say it is God's will, or the devices of the devil when everything is nobody else's but our own fault. I maintain this world might be a Paradise, and we might enjoy our lives from beginning to end if we liked, but we won't, or others won't let us. With an advanced knowledge of all the lovely and unendingly interesting arts and sciences, natural philosophy and nature in a thousand forms, fascinating and delightful studies, we might all have perfectly healthy bodies, and in consequence healthy and powerful minds; we might have love, peace, and happiness, and vast knowledge and capacity for and hope of further;—and with all this certain possibility, here we are fighting wildly against secondary causes, thinking the repeal of a human law, whether just or unjust, will alter things ruled altogether by other sources—vexing and tormenting ourselves and wasting our energies and in consequence doing nothing really for good. Good to the community can only really be done in one way; not by reformation, which means violence and consequent reaction, but transformation; this speaks for itself; and the means to attain this transformation is by the slow but steady promulgation of good thoughts as against evil. By good I am not, of course, thinking of any form or doctrine, but primeval good (*vide* Esoteric literature, *Perfect Way*). Think of our own knowledge as Spiritualists compared to the narrow prison walls of thought in which so many people sigh and mope all their lives! As Spiritualists, I believe that we would do far better and more helpful work to humanity by leaving secondary matters such as these to people whose actual business it is to consider them, and on whose shoulders the guilt will fall if guilt there is, and reserve our forces by teaching wherever it lies in our duty and power, by word and by pen, the great doctrine of the emancipation of mankind from sorrow into joy; and these doctrines, taught in the East and the West, once the great privilege of the learned and noble, we know now is the birthright of all. It is the duty of the spiritual philosopher, therefore, to train the children for their inheritance. In the article "Religious Dilettantism" of April 30th, one is struck with the error the writer in *Figaro* makes in common with so many thinkers, that there can be nothing really solid in religion unless it is an immediate reform and an immediate alteration. This shows a want of knowledge of natural laws; sudden reformation is only the swing of the pendulum, and back will come the same abuses in another form. If we all of us under some excitement were to violently alter our lives and way of living, most certainly before long the very same errors and evils would all quietly come back in different guise; if we all gave up our goods to the poor under the emotional desire of having no poor, most certainly they would crop up pretty much the same in another phase ere long; but if with the added light we now have from occultism into the mysteries of the birth and life of man, we sink into deeper matters of which the laws of heredity and hygiene and others of similar import are only the manifestation on the outer plane—this is right, for it is by the promulgation and reception of such knowledge that man will be raised above the possibility of infringing human law, and still more important of violating, as the whole civilised community does now, the real laws that govern man's own being.

This is not only the hope but the certainty for the human race.

THE CHRISTO-THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, having now brought its first session to a close, has arranged for a new one to commence on May 15th. The meetings during the summer session will be of a somewhat less formal nature than hitherto, and will be alternately evening and afternoon. On May 15th and 29th, and June 12th and 26th they will commence at 7 p.m.; on May 22nd, June 5th and 19th they will be at 4.15 p.m.; in both cases in the same room at 81A, Queen Victoria-street. The prospectus sets forth that the founders will continue to carry the Society on upon the lines on which it was originally started; recognising the universal Fatherhood of God and the common brotherhood of all men, and the possibility of here and now attaining to a fuller power of living in the Divine Light, and being centres of Divine Force tending to universal peace and goodwill. Any further information can be obtained from Rev. G. W. Allen, 3, Featherstone Buildings, London, W.C.

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

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MANY letters and articles are crowded out owing to pressure on our space.

Light:

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

SATURDAY, MAY 10th, 1890.

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

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

MR. T. ADOLPHUS TROLLOPE ON HIS "LARGE EXPERIENCE."

Mr. Hamilton Aidé has contributed an article to the *Nineteenth Century* on some experiences of his with D. D. Home which has had the disastrous result of calling forth the most crude and jejune article we ever met with on the same subject. Mr. T. A. Trollope occupies a dozen pages in the current number of the *National Review* with a record of "my large experience," of which the matter is meagre and the manner is calculated to make one wonder what the editors have been about in allowing it to appear. Probably one editor left it to his colleague, and his colleague left it to him, and between the two of them this farrago of nonsense saw the light. The result is entertaining, but not instructive.

Mr. Trollope writes with an air of ostentatious ignorance elaborately paraded. He occupies the seat of the scorner on a platform of nescience. He cannot say that he has "anything approaching what deserves to be called belief upon the subject" on which he rushes into print. The medium of whom he writes is D. D. Home "and my faith in him was and is very small." It would have been seemly if Mr. T. Adolphus Trollope had made opportunity to say so much while Mr. Home was alive and could have dealt with him and his innuendos. As it is, Home is dead, and it occurs to Mr. Trollope now, and not before, that his statements, or rather his secret stabs, for he gives no facts to support his insinuations, are (to borrow his own chaste language) to "be considered ripe for consideration." But this may pass. It is only a medium's reputation that is being sneered away, only a dead man that is being traduced, and only Mr. Trollope that is doing it.

"My large experience" in mesmerism, animal magnetism, Spiritualism, &c., does not come to much. And, as Mr. Trollope puts it with much simplicity, "*Sive tu mavis*," &c. We have a case of "double existence"—the Okey girls of Dr. Elliotson—which Mr. Trollope wrongly thinks is "the most remarkable case which has ever probably been recorded." He has evidently not made himself acquainted with the cases which recent French research has made known to us. The case, if adequately put on record is, however,

interesting, especially in the light of our present knowledge, but the writer so mixes up mesmerism with animal magnetism and with magnetism simple; he writes so discursively of such things as a "sudden supervenience of magnetic sleep," of "transitory magnetic crises," and of "transient supervenient conditions of trance, sleep, or partial cataleptic rigidity" and in such a muddled manner as to keep his reader guessing whether there be any meaning beneath the jumble of his words.

When we come to Spiritualistic phenomena observed in the presence of D. D. Home, leaving the evidence which we have described above in terms more suitable than Mr. T. A. Trollope's own appraisal of its value as "entirely accurate, trustworthy, and unimpeachable," we are introduced to him and his friends sitting "round a long, large, heavy dining-room table, elongated after the fashion of such tables by the insertion of additional portions of table." No wonder that table went wrong. "It soon began to emit little cracking noises," and to "move uneasily," and finally "the entire table was undeniably raised from the ground"—the floor, we should have said. "Sir David Brewster and I myself instantly precipitated ourselves under the table, so that we were both together on all fours under it." This remarkable case of precipitation, not to be confounded with the precipitation of writing on a slate in the presence of Madame Blavatsky or a psychographic medium, resulted in Sir D. Brewster's being challenged. "Does it not seem that the table has been raised by some means altogether inexplicable?" "Indeed it would seem so," the great man replied, but next day he wrote to the *Times* and "denied that he had seen anything remarkable." Oh fie! Sir David! What not even a "precipitation of I myself!" "After the table exhibition" Mr. Home fell into a "sort of trance or swoon," and ordered himself bottled porter. On which Mr. Trollope appositely remarks, with a lovely "however," "It may be observed, however, that he *did* appear to be exhausted."

Then we pass to a period when Mr. Home was the guest of Mr. Trollope, who takes occasion to record as the result of "our then somewhat intimate acquaintance" that the "general impression left on me, and, I think I may add, on my wife and mother, was not a favourable one." Mr. Aidé had said that his "confidence in him was *nil*." This gives opportunity for this master of style to read Mr. Aidé an elementary lesson in the choice of language. "Confidence in him" seems, in ordinary language, to mean such trust as *one* may feel *one* can repose in another man from *our* general knowledge of his character." That is so obviously an improvement on Mr. Aidé's bald expression that he will readily acknowledge his obligation to his teacher. This by the way. "As many as thirty séances" were held in Mr. Trollope's house, "and it is, of course, out of the question to attempt to give any detailed account of what happened at each of these." Why? We permit ourselves to tell Mr. Trollope that one accurate record, such as Mr. Crookes has recently given us of his experience with Mr. Home, would outweigh in value all the crude and wordy stuff that he vaunts as "entirely accurate, trustworthy, and unimpeachable." But a man must observe with care and be able to put his observations into readable English to do so much as that, and neither of these gifts belongs to Mr. Trollope.

As the outcome of all Mr. Home and his most striking phenomena, of which Mr. Trollope says that "I and others were not able to suggest the slightest suspicion as to the means by which the *phenomena was* (*sic*) accomplished (the italics are ours)"—Mr. Home is brushed aside in favour of a personal experience—"the most seriously demanding consideration of all the physical phenomena in connection with this subject which I have witnessed." That was, as is naïvely explained, because I did it myself—"I myself." He turned a table—a little table, small but heavy. It

gyrated "after the fashion of such tables" even when not supplemented "by the insertion of additional portions of table," and finally it "threw itself down on the floor." Hear, oh heavens, and give ear, oh earth; for we now have the crown and sum of the whole matter! Mediums have come and mediums have gone, but it was reserved for Mr. Trollope to present what he would seem disposed to call "a phenomena" that surpassed their most astounding efforts—even "the performances in this line of Mrs. Guppy, whose name was at one time much heard of in connection with this subject."

Digressing for a moment, we have, in respect of this medium, one more instance of Mr. Trollope's powers of exact observation and description. "At more than one sitting in her own room and in the dark, she caused the table to be suddenly spread by (*sic*) a quantity of jonquil blossoms, which were very fresh, and, as I remember, to a great degree wet, which filled the room with their powerful scent." Remarkable jonquils and remarkable English!

But we have had enough of Mr. T. Adolphus Trollope. His article may be fitly described in his own words as "a mere uncomprehended puzzlement," and his readers will read his confession that he is "remarkably obtuse to magnetism" with a wider application than that which confines the confession to what we prefer to call mesmerism or hypnotism. The amusement that his naïve vanity causes in our minds may atone for the impatience with which we should otherwise read such bewildering nonsense in a Review that professes to treat seriously a subject at least important enough to be understood by those who offer and who accept an article upon it.

ASSEMBLY OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

The following members and friends were present at 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, on Tuesday evening last:—

Mr. Batty, Miss E. Bainbridge, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Collingwood, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Carden, Mrs. Damer Cape, Hon. Mrs. Forbes, Mr. G. Gunn, Mr. A. Gunn, Miss L. Godfrey, Mr. T. Grant, Miss Hampton, Mr. G. A. Kelly, Mr. Lacey, Rev. J. Manners, Mr. W. Stainton Moses, Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Mitchiner, Mr. W. Paice, Mr. Paul Preyss, Mr. W. B. Picken, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Mrs. Stapley, Miss Spencer, Mrs. Townsend, &c.

Mr. Mitchiner read a paper, which we give below, on "The Veil of Isis: Some Thoughts on Spiritualism and its Probable Place in History."

THE VEIL OF ISIS: SOME THOUGHTS ON SPIRITUALISM, AND ITS PROBABLE PLACE IN HISTORY.

I think some apology due from me in occupying this position. Among the list of members of the London Spiritualist Alliance are to be found advanced students in metaphysics, deep thinkers, and accurate reasoners, far better qualified than myself to address you. Silence, however, can hardly be esteemed a virtue where the subject is unpopular, and I recognise the duty of the humblest member of our organisation to contribute whatever he is able of thought or fact. Most, if not all, of us regard our introduction to Spiritualism as the supreme factor of our lives, and not without adequate reason. Although it can never blot the word death from our dictionaries, it is no little gain to have a hereditary enemy transformed into a harmless and no longer dreaded acquaintance.

It is, therefore, little wonder our subject possesses special attractions for the advanced in life. In harmony with a law of being, spiritual perceptions unfold as material avenues close. When the senses become dulled by reason of age, and shattered nerves refuse longer to respond to the excitations of physical life, our thoughts and feelings centre on interests pertaining to the larger span of existence:—

The sunset of life gives us mystical lore,
As coming events cast their shadows before.

And the proverbial tide in the affairs of men is not alone of individual, but has a collective application. There is a tide, a

sunrise and a sunset, in the affairs of nations and races. We have reached the sunset of this century—a century of remarkable record, and the literature of its last decade affords ample evidence of the activity of metaphysical thought marking the closing years.

That the nineteenth century should possess for us special interest and importance is readily explainable. If for no other reason, as the theatre of our own conscious existence. We have belonged to the company of its actors, witnessed its developments, partaken of its benefits, and shared its triumphs. Nor can it be altogether surprising if, in common with a materialistic, and not too modest age, we incline to exaggerate the importance of a period in which we ourselves have played a part. Current criticism, be it the most honest, usually fails in attempting to appraise the proportionate value of events. Living amid the turmoil, our estimates, from lack of distance, are restricted and circumscribed. We cannot see the forest for the trees. The influence of one predominating force throws all others out of focus. Art, literature, philosophy, and religion are cast into shadow by mechanical genius, which, like a huge mountain, dwarfs every other feature of the century. It has been our lot to witness developments in mechanism that have revolutionised the habits of life, and altered the character of civilisation. Life at the commencement, and at the close of the century, presents in consequence many striking contrasts.

In this impatient age, it may be voted ancient history to refer to some of these changes. During the past seventy years greater progress has been made in locomotion and communication alone than in the previous five thousand. When George III. was king, the quickest method of compassing a distance of ten miles was by riding a fleet horse. Old Cheops could do the same. The Englishman of A.D. 1820, possessed, in this respect, no advantage over the Egyptian of B.C. 4000. The locomotive of to-day covers the distance in as many minutes.

Modes of communication present yet greater contrasts. London and New York, by the electric wire, are brought into closer and more rapid connection than were London and Westminster in the reign of Henry VIII. And by means of the telephone conversation between two persons, the one located at Brighton and the other in London, is conducted with the same facility and ease as a merchant in the time of the Georges could converse over his dinner table, or Jacob and Esau of old over their pottage. On all sides is evidence of nineteenth century thought, embodied in iron and steel, and a locomotive engine might not inaptly be adopted as the symbol of the century.

For modern thought to run in a materialistic groove, and men of science to propound Sadducean ideas, would appear a natural sequence from the prevailing dominant influence. Carlyle says:—"Not our mensurative faculty, but our imaginative one is King over us." In which case, must there have been in our time a temporary dethronement. The mensurative, logical faculty has been the supreme monarch in our day, whereby have the intuitive and perceptive become so dulled from neglect that the very fact of a soul in man has become a question of doubt. We have recently witnessed the spectacle of a dignitary of the Church of England publicly hedging on the subject of immortality. Writing of modern "Machine worship," Carlyle, with prophetic insight, says: "The genius of mechanism smothered him worse than any nightmare, till the soul is nigh choked out of him, and only a kind of digestive machine life remains." Physical facts, appealing to physical senses, supplying physical wants, amid the buzz of revolving wheels, have alone succeeded in making themselves heard. The noise of the machinery has drowned the voice of the soul.

Forces that attract the most attention are not always those which exercise the greatest influence, and material forces acting only on the physical plane, affect, not man, but the conditions of his natural life, and are of little importance when compared with influences that modify the man himself. And this suggests a question, concerning which as psychical students we may not unprofitably speculate. When the chronicles of the century become matters of history, and, removed from an atmosphere of prejudice, the historian comes to appraise the relative value of its operating forces, what place will Spiritualism occupy in the record?

By the term Spiritualism, we imply the revelation to the Western world, during the last half of the century, of the fact of an occult side to Nature, and the knowledge it has revealed of powers within ourselves, hitherto unknown and unsuspected; the demonstration of the existence of immaterial beings around us, for the most part claiming to be disembodied human spirits;

and further, the possibility, under observed, but at present not understood, conditions, of holding direct converse with them.

With the records of our phenomena before them, one of the first perplexities likely to trouble posterity will be satisfactorily to account for the apathy and indifference, alternated by bigoted opposition, assumed towards the subject by the educated society of to-day. Released from prejudices surrounding us, and realising the enormous potentialities of psychological facts, they will be unable to conceive any adequate explanation for the mistrust manifested towards Spiritualism by the religious world, or understand the contemptuous indifference of the literary and scientific. Possibly literature, in the verdict, may fare better than science; Browning escape more easily than Huxley. Sludge, the medium, may pass without censure by passing without observation, but so surely as human nature retains its sense of the ridiculous, will the Huxley-big-toe theory prove immortal.

Our comparatively limited number of adherents may form another perplexity. Posterity will make allowance for the fact that Occultism formed no part of European education, and was an unknown subject to Western people, but that after a lapse of fifty years the knowledge should still be confined to so few must prove difficult of explanation. "The most stubborn of bigotries," says Lord Lytton, "is the fanaticism of unbelief"; a fanaticism finding expression in the persistency with which the facts of Spiritualism are ignored and tabooed by the journals of the day, and its literature systematically boycotted by a boasted free Press. Newspapers of light and leading, able to devote half a column to a sickening account of a brutal glove fight at the Pelican, or a column and a-half to the description of a new frog at the Zoo, are unable to afford space for the briefest record of anything so unpopular as psychical phenomena.

The attitude of scientific men towards our mass of well-attested phenomena is the more astonishing and inexplicable when we consider the deadlock to which they have arrived in their investigations of the nature of matter and origin of life. For half a century scientists have attempted the solution of a question of their own propounding: What is the physical basis of life? The evolution of the mite from the cheese suggested a line of thought whereby a solution was hoped to be obtained. Science postulated an assumption. Inert matter possessed inherent potentialities, capable under certain conditions of becoming active, and evolving life; the unknown x , the principle of life; the motive energy by which the living machine was made to go, constituted an integral portion of the machine itself. In their efforts to fix and determine this unknown equation, to trace to its source the unit of physical existence, they have been driven from pillar to post; from the capsule or cell membrane to the protoplasmic medium, thence to the nucleus, and from the nucleus to the nucleolus; in every direction blocked by "No thoroughfare." Each turning promising an exit proving another blind road, and compelling the materialistic investigator to retrace his steps. Science cannot find the *physical basis* of life, for the simple reason that it does not exist. The problem attempted to be solved is unsolvable, because inaccurately formulated. As demonstrated by the philosophy of Spiritualism, the *basis of life* is not physical, and can never be discovered on that plane. We can join hands with the scientist in the study of the basis of physical life, but not of the physical basis of life. For us the *basis* is psychical, not physical, and matter in all its forms but the antithetical ultimate of something behind, for which it supplies the mould, the visible outward expression. The potentialities it manifests are not its own, not inherent to the substance, but a force emanating from another plane and temporarily utilising it as the vehicle for material activity. The savant of the twentieth century will not be slow to recognise the light thrown by psychology on the nature of matter, and may possibly esteem the despised Spiritualists of to-day as pioneers in those higher metaphysics whereby he may perhaps succeed in bridging the chasm now dividing the domain of molecular mechanics from the domain of feeling.

Our imperfect and often misleading terms, incidental to the use of old etymological bottles to contain new truths, may be expected to evoke a certain amount of adverse criticism. From confusion of language, posterity may infer confusion of thought on our part. Expressions such as "matter through matter" are obviously inconsistent with our knowledge, seeing that we recognise how readily our bodies, which are matter, pass through the air, which is equally matter, and that fish find water no obstacle to locomotion. We can only plead that our phenomena multiplied faster than our philosophy advanced, and if, as some maintain,

occult power be temporarily withdrawn, should it serve no other purpose, it will allow time for the formulation of more accurate expressions with which to clothe our ideas. It is questionable if the facts already received be not more in number and greater in potentiality than the century is able to assimilate, and in lieu of seeking further phenomena, whether we are not better employed in mastering the meaning of those we possess. Whatever may be the degree of social ostracism falling to our share, we are but suffering the common lot, in all ages of the world, of advocates of a new and misunderstood truth. "Incredulity," says Goethe, "like an inverted superstition, has become the delusion of our time." And while scientific men continue to assume towards Spiritualism an attitude of antagonism or lofty indifference, we may console ourselves with the reflection of Paracelsus, "That which is looked upon as superstition in one century will be the basis of the approved science of the next."

It cannot be denied the partial lifting of the Veil of Isis has thrown Western materialistic thought into most admired confusion. Under the form of hypnotism, science has at last been compelled to reckon with the mysterious power underlying mesmeric phenomena. The investigation once started, who can say, in the result, how many old verdicts will have to be reversed? For a century past we have ridiculed the quaternary elements of ancient philosophy. We have never ceased to laugh at the divisions of earth, air, fire, and water without considering if we correctly understood the meaning the old writers intended by the terms. But our modern sixty-eight are now abandoned as elements and prove to be simply so many unresolvable barriers beyond which science is unable to pass. As a matter of fact, psychological phenomena have knocked the bottom out of materialism, and a reaction of thought has set in. We are not quite so sure the ancient philosophers, the alchemists and the astrologers, were altogether such fools as we took them to be. We doubt if we have grasped their meaning, or rightly interpreted the language of mediæval literature. Philosopher's stone! Elixir of life! Universal solvent! Are these, after all, but the shibboleth of mystic hyperbole? Is it possible there exists in nature a force or substance, known to ancient but unknown to modern science, whereby the hidden forces of nature are controlled; which they revealed to the initiated, and, by the use of allegory, concealed from the vulgar? We read of Akasa, yet the word is but Sanscrit for sky, or perhaps ether—and science knows nothing of ether, except by name. We can speculate on the nature of the pabulum by which supersensuous phenomena are produced, but fear the solution must be left to our successors.

When the alphabet of psychology is determined, and future scientists come to understand the delicate nature of the frail, sensitive, abnormal organisation that constitutes the medium, what may we expect them to think of our Ray Lankesters, our Slade prosecution, our so-called exposures, and the general ignorant, brutal handling by this iconoclastic age of some of Nature's most delicate secrets? Time is an honest fellow, and squares all accounts. When the world, so ready to crown the dead and curse the living prophet, comes to apprehend the fact of our phenomenon and the truth of our philosophy, posterity may witness the apotheosis of our Homes and Eglington.

Passing from the scientific and philosophic to the probable moral future influence of the Spiritualistic movement, we enter on more debateable ground. A century ago, Kant wrote, "It will be proved in the future, I do not know where and when, that also in this life the human soul stands in an indissoluble communion with all the immaterial beings of the spiritual world; that it produces effects in them, and in exchange receives impressions from them, without, however, becoming humanly conscious of them, so long as all stands well." Jacolliot remarks: "How can we know the secrets of the world to come except by communicating with those who live there already?" "Whoever," says the Talmud, "has learnt, this secret (the fact of spirit communion), and keeps it vigilantly, in a pure heart, may reckon on the love of God and the favour of men; his name inspires respect, his science is in no danger of being forgotten, and he is the heir of two worlds—that we live in and the world to come." Human nature will do anything rather than think for itself, or trust for guidance to inward discernment. It ever seeks a proxy to lean upon, and has striven to turn the voice from beyond into an oracle of direction. Much of the discrepant teaching laid at the door of spirit communications appear to me partly to arise from what Kant terms "exchange of impression" (teaching qualification not being exclusively confined to the other side), but more so to disturbing

mental surroundings of sitters. With some little impatience I have waded through the mass of séances held by Dr. Dee, extending from 1583 to 1587; and if they teach no other lesson they show clearly how largely communications become distorted in their passage through dense mental surroundings. The religious, political, and scientific teachings therein recorded, as a consequence, are principally (though not exclusively) reflections of Dr. Dee's ideas and his dogmatic atmosphere of thought. When occasionally otherwise, independent in tone, and in opposition to accepted popular views, they are taken to be of the devil. The question arises, to what extent our communications are open to the same objection. No one can deny the variety of sentiment frequently published to the world as spiritual teaching. Its discrepant nature may be cause for regret, but is not difficult of explanation. Considering the chaos of dogmatic ideas, inherited and acquired, characterising the ordinary circle, it is little wonder communications become refracted in their passage, and are found to reflect the opinions of the sitters. It would be strange were it otherwise. Nine times out of ten so-called contradictory communications result from our own miasmatic conditions. Spirit teachings, when undistorted, are, in my experience, uniformly consistent, and exhibit throughout a sustained, definite aim and purpose. Of no writings is this so true as of *Spirit Teachings*, by "M. A. (Oxon.)" Imperator thus describes his aim:—"First to point out the errors in your creed, the human figments that have passed current for Divine truth, and the legendary fancies that have become crystallised into history, accepted by faith, but rejected by right reason." Our little theological systems have their day. But we are not all children, neither do all of us require crutches and theological go-carts. We must, however, not forget those who are, and to deprive them prematurely of their time-honoured props would reduce them to a state of moral helplessness.

No individual has the right to pose as an expounder of our faith, or speak for any but himself. My record pledges no one but myself. For me, spirit teachings uniformly agree in certain fundamental principles. In one important particular I find them at variance with current orthodox ideas. They know nothing of blood washing, or of any theory of substitution, such as the popular conception of the atonement, whereby one may escape through the vicarious suffering of another. Positively, they teach that death is but a change in the form of perception, and no more fixes the character and destiny than the sleep of a night's rest. As the tree falls it lies; at any rate, at first, and man commences his career there with such spiritual affinities as he accumulated here. He is the architect of his own future, and by a law of attraction creates for himself his future surroundings. The Kingdom of God is within; the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, the only light for guidance; and if we fail in discovering God in the still small voice within, we can never find Him elsewhere. Not an exterior, but an inward Christos must save and deliver. To this the natural man is blind; spiritual sight, or second birth, or the unfolding of the soul must be experienced by all, for unless a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God. Paradoxically all men are equal and unequal. They are unequal on the material plane. Neither physically, intellectually, nor morally are men equal here. On the psychic plane it is otherwise; the light that lighteth every man is the same Divine spark in all; and as the final practical outcome of the whole—if we love not our brother, whom we have seen, we may spare ourselves vapouring of love to God, whom we have not seen.

Such, in brief, is the general character of the spirit teachings I have received. It may be urged, they are neither very new nor very startling. One of their charms to me lies in the fact of their being so old. Yet, assuming them to represent the kind of teaching imparted by the spirit world, it would be difficult to over-estimate the influence they must exercise when generally diffused. The decay of ecclesiasticism that must inevitably follow involves the decline of authority in matters of faith, and the destruction of sacerdotalism means the departure of the priest. Hence, of all the forces, moral and intellectual, appertaining to the century now rapidly expiring, that of Spiritualism, I believe, will be found to possess the most potent influence on the future, and in every history of the period will be a feature to be reckoned with.

On one point, may we not, with some amount of confidence, anticipate for the Spiritualist Alliance the approval of posterity? A witty Frenchman once observed, "English people possessed thirty-six religions, and but once fish sauce." From Roman

Catholicism, at the one extremity, to Plymouth Brethrenism, at the other, are some three dozen varieties of Christianity in these islands. The London Spiritualist Alliance has no wish to see another sect added to this number. In their opinion, spiritual facts, like leaven hid in measures of meal, will in time leaven the whole. With churches innumerable, having services of all descriptions, it is surely undesirable to create another *ism*, only in turn to become fossilised as others. Is not concrete Christianity itself, at the present day, little more than a shell, from which the living spirit has long since departed? Spiritualistic services, with Spiritualistic addresses, Spiritualistic hymn books, and other special machinery, if successfully established, would prove a reality only to those who founded them, destined, like every former effort, to degenerate into a sepulchre of faith to future generations.

The discussion was conducted by the President, the Rev. J. Manners, Mr. Preyss, and after some remarks from Mr. Mitchiner, a cordial vote of thanks closed the proceedings.

CURIOUS DREAMS.

He will tell you his dreams, talk of eating and drinking;
He scarce reads his Bible, and never loves thinking.

"Dr. Watts, I presume," though I do not feel quite so certain of my man as Mr. Stanley must have felt when, meeting in mid Africa the arch explorer, Livingstone, he apostrophised him with a similar short observation. Still there are dreams and dreams, and a dream which at first may appear absurd may have an interpretation of more weight than the dream itself appears to imply.

A few nights ago I had a dream which, in itself, looks both curious and absurd. I dreamed that I saw a short woman cooking; her dress reached near to the ground, so that I could not see her feet, but on her turning her face, or by some other demonstration, I found it was not a woman but an anthropoid ape. I was then awake by the following words: "How could you write such stuff as that?"

I had not far to look for the motive of my dream. In a letter which I wrote and which was published in your number for March 2nd, under the title of "Evolution of Soul and Body," occur the following words: "Why should not the soul of an anthropoid ape re-incarnate in the body of a low savage?" If the words which woke me were the words of my sub-conscious self, this betokens a decided contrast to the opinion of my conscious self; while, if the words proceeded from an external spiritual source, they sound more like the familiar negation of a departed human being than anything angelic either way; while if my critic were a spook or a shell, my conscious self believes it to have been an ignorant spook or shell, or a deceptive one. Cooking, be it observed, is an attribute of man only, to which no beast has ever attained. A bold Englishman who went out hunting alone with a party of Australian natives, feeling that he might be knocked on the head at any moment, found that they ate nothing that was not cooked; and that when they failed in the chase, they made savoury meals of fried grasshoppers and other small deer with a culinary acumen which, if understood among civilised folk, we should hear less about starvation in the wilderness than we do at present.

And this reminds me of another curious dream that I had a good many years ago, but which I cannot forget; though it happened more than twenty years ago. At that time Spiritualists and others were much taken by the public séances of a young medium named Herne who, at his séances, was under the kind supervision of a respected lady, herself of great mesmerism powers, and who, I rejoice to believe, is still among us, and to whom Spiritualism owes much in many ways. The young medium—he was but a lad—had just begun his public career, and the chief spirit that controlled him called himself "Henry VIII.," and spoke in the direct voice; then a novelty almost. At that time materialisations were unknown, at any rate to the multitude, and cabinets had not been thought of to bring a slur on what men call the preternatural, though materialisation was, in reality, when genuine, the crowning phenomenon of all; for, as the direct voice was the carnal correspondence to its predecessor, spiritual clairaudience, so was materialisation the carnal correspondence to its predecessor, clairvoyance. Both these phenomena were indications of ancient Spiritualism; so, in our new dispensation, both were bound to be looked for, and

they came. And if there were no reality there could be no counterfeit.

The newspapers, at that time, finding that the voices were no shams, were disappointed, but could only express their astonishment, and this they did. There was no plea or pretext then, such as cabinets and sham materialisations gave them afterwards, to cry out in triumph, "All Spiritualism is a swindle!"

At the time mentioned above, I had been to hear "Henry VIII." speak. He came to the humble upper room as a contrite sinner; but was withal witty and sententious, and with the manners and language of one used to rule. I had been very much impressed. For in those days we were more easily contented as regards identity than we are now; and I had written an article in one of the periodicals of the day, saying that if it were not a case of proven identity, how cleverly, at any rate, the spirit played his part.

Well, it was about four months after this article came out that I had my dream. In that dream my arm was over a coffin, and I dreamed it was the coffin of "Henry VIII." Suddenly, I felt the lid of the coffin move; the lid then arose, and out of the coffin came a spirit, which woke me by saying to me: "You have killed me, and now you have raised me up again." What I had had to do with the former of these imputations I cannot tell; unless, indeed, in a previous life, I may have been his physician or an attendant. Truly a most improbable hypothesis. Yet I did not doubt but that it was the spirit I had met at Mr. Herne's séances who appeared to me, although he was quite unlike the portrait of Henry by Holbein in his later days. The face was long and pale; the well-known fat, florid countenance and cruel eyes of his later days were absent, the high arched eyebrows were evident. The spirit, however, looked angrily at me. I answered: "There was not a word in my article that was not from the heart. You know I wish you well." The spirit soon returned and looked then graciously.

The impression of this vision, which occurred when quite awake, was lasting. Some time afterwards there was published, in the *Graphic* or *Illustrated London News*, a portrait of Henry VIII., in his earlier days. I have it now, I believe, somewhere. It was the image of the vision I had seen. I told this tale to one who is now a member of the Society for Psychical Research, about ten years ago. He quickly implied that he did not believe me. To such an one I would give the advice, "Never believe that which does not please you," and to no one else could I honestly or willingly give such advice.

There was a phase in one of the two or three séances at which I was present with "Henry VIII.," which seemed to be not favourable to the medium. At the end of a séance I heard Mr. Herne say, while rejoicing that it was over, "Oh, what pain I have in my heart! But I shall be mesmerised directly, and I shall soon get rid of it." It was on a night when some foreigners, said to be Roman Catholics, at the séance, had been abusing the spirit right and left, and it reminds me of a late case of hypnotism in France, where Marie's paralysis of a limb, was transferred to Leontine; and then the paralysis transferred to Leontine was hypnotised away from Leontine, and Marie returned to her friends cured. In one case the pain of the spirit was transferred to the medium and the borrowed pain of the medium was removed by mesmeric suggestion. Never let us say that spirits cannot feel. Never let us say that spirits cannot weep, for I have heard it. Let us sympathise with all honest mediums. The above frequent trial to the medium could hardly have been permitted to have gone on long, for the medium's sake. And it so happened that soon afterwards the alleged spirit "Henry VIII." gave up his place to a better, a higher, and a more powerful spirit, with different antecedents, and who does not necessarily bring heart pains to his mediums. Let me now affirm what I believe to be an undoubted fact. Not long after what I have here detailed John King drove the control "Henry VIII." away and took his place, for the great advantage of Spiritualism, I fully believe, if only because the strongest and best wins. Why do I believe this? I am going now to explain why. Some long time ago, but probably years after "Henry VIII." had left as chief control, I went to a séance held by Messrs. Herne and Williams. Mr. Williams sat at one end of the table, near the door; Mr. Herne sat at the other end of the table; the editor of the *Spiritualist* sat next to Mr. Williams on his right; I sat next to the editor. John King had been in high spirits, and after saying,

"Good-night" and leaving the room, he called to us from outside the house. The medium said, "Why, he must be in the cistern."

When John King was clean gone, Mr. Williams said, "Henry is here." Someone asked, "What Henry?" Mr. Williams replied: "Henry VIII." I do not remember that the spirit spoke, I think not, but he made himself manifest to me in other ways. As I suppose the want of conversation was irksome to the rest of the sitters, most of them departed. Meanwhile, the chairs that the sitters had left, were taken from the ground and piled up on the table, quietly, close in front of me; when suddenly, who should return, precipitately, to the séance room, but John King, who, in a voice of thunder, ordered us to depart. This edict the small remnant left unhesitatingly obeyed; and when we got into the adjoining room that was lighted, most of the other sitters had left. T.W.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

To What Does This Point?

SIR,—As an outsider, who has never even been at a séance, I read your paper with interest, because I believe "LIGHT" has come into our world with the New Age, reaching us through many channels.

Mediums are interesting facts. I have never known but one, the late Miss Godfrey, for whom I had some respect, as I believed her to be sincere according to her light. Knowing that I was sympathetic to her, she once told me that in one of her flights into the spiritual world she had come upon a temple over the porch of which was written: "Know Thyself," with these lines underneath:—

Who knows himself will weep till self is slain;
Till then, Love's mightiest efforts are in vain.
Who conquers self, o'er death and hell has trod;
Around him is Paradise; within him—God."

I was so struck with the truth and beauty of these lines that I begged her to give them to me. I wrote them down in my Bible with this entry, "Given me by Miss Godfrey, June 28th, 1881."

It was not until the year 1885 that I first met with the writings of T. L. Harris, whose name, prior to that date, I had never even heard of. What was my surprise some two years later, when reading his inspired poem, "The New Republic," to come upon the very lines Miss Godfrey had given me; not in the order she had seen them, but as final couplets to these two separate stanzas:—

I.—Page 97:—

That phrase, "the swinish multitude," declares
In terms most fit, what men are by their greeds.
Are these Love's progeny and Nature's heirs?
Is this a son, on vilest dross who feeds?
Who knows himself will weep till self is slain;
Till then, Love's mightiest labours are but vain.

II.—Page 186:—

Self-love, thy hell must conquered be, or never
Shall man inherit Nature, and repose
By those cool streams that quench the maddening fever,
Which makes our life a dream of many woes.
Who conquers self, on death and hell has trod;
Round him is Paradise; within him—God.

This coincidence raises one of two questions. Either Miss Godfrey was under a delusion, quoting from memory what she had never seen—in which case what are we to think of the clever adaptation, pages apart, of the two closing couplets to each other—did she unite them, or who?—Or, was she made, unconsciously, a strong witness to the divine origin of T. L. Harris's writings?

It is possible she may have given the verse in question to some of your readers who were her friends: but that she should have given it to me, a casual acquaintance, who, later on, without ever having seen or known T. L. Harris, should hold him, as do many others, to be the most inspired man of the century and a prophet of the New Age, is a coincidence not without significance to myself. BERYL.

[Parallel cases to that noticed by our correspondent are on record. Can any of our readers supply instances?—ED. OF "LIGHT."]

Dangers of Hypnotism.

SIR,—In consequence of having received several letters relating to the communication you published in your issue of the 3rd inst., pp. 218 and 219, signed "F. O.," may I ask you to kindly state in your valuable journal that I am not the writer of that communication? F. OMERIN.

Mr. Bellamy's "Looking Backward."

SIR,—As your correspondent "T." still thinks he has read *Looking Backward*, I must ask your permission to make a few short quotations from the book :—

I panted, I sobbed, I groaned, and immediately afterwards found myself sitting upright in bed in my room in Dr. Leete's house, and the morning sun shining through the open window into my eyes. . . . As with an escaped convict who dreams that he has been recaptured and brought back to his dark and reeking dungeon, and opens his eyes to see heaven's vault spread above him, so it was with me, as I realised that my return to the nineteenth century had been the dream and my presence in the twentieth the reality.

The cruel sights which I had witnessed in my vision, and could so well confirm from the experience of my former life . . . were, God be thanked, for ever passed by (p. 248.).

The book concludes with the interview of the supposed writer with his affianced bride, Edith Leete, the great-grand-daughter of the Edith Bartlett, to whom he had been engaged more than a century before.

This dream of the nineteenth century, which deceived your correspondent as it has done others, and, I presume, so disgusted them that they did not care to read to the end, is really the most artistic and lifelike portion of the book, since it brings before the reader in a most forcible manner the overwhelming differences between the two states of society portrayed.

ALFRED R. WALLACE.

Clairvoyance.

SIR,—I have read with much interest the case of clairvoyance reported in "LIGHT," for May 3rd, "as recently narrated by Miss Jennie Hagan." It may, I think, interest your readers to know that the Literary Committee of the Society for Psychical Research has for some years been collecting similar cases, in the hope of printing a collection of them before long. As regards the distinctness of clairvoyance from thought-transference, I do not think that any writer in our *Proceedings* has argued that thought-transference can explain all the recorded cases of clairvoyance; and some, especially Professor Richet, have been disposed to regard clairvoyance or *lucidité* as the wider manifestation of supernormal knowledge, of which thought-transference would form only a subordinate class.

But our great difficulty has been to find recent cases of clairvoyance possessing anything like the definiteness of Miss Hagan's story. I am, therefore, most anxious to know more of this striking case. No one, I hope, will consider it unreasonable to wish for a *first-hand* account of an incident so remarkable as this. Perhaps Miss Hagan will gratify the readers of "LIGHT" by procuring for them the gentleman's own narrative of his experience; or if there is any objection to the printing of names, I should be very grateful for a private communication, which should be treated with whatever reserve my informant might impose.

The incidents as reported are surely too rare and too important for any of us to be content to leave them as mere "matter of hearsay." We shall best show our appreciation of a striking narrative by endeavouring to set its truth and its significance in the clearest attainable light.

FREDERIC W. H. MYERS.

Leckhampton House, Cambridge.

May 3rd, 1890.

Mr. Gladstone and Genesis.

SIR,—Mr. J. Baynes Thompson is quite out in representing Mr. Gladstone as "knowing better" and saying that the first chapter of Genesis is "not science, not history, not poetry, but simply a tale." For in his recent article in *Good Words* he claims that it is so exact a description of the process of creation, according to the scientific order of evolution, as to be explicable only on the supposition of its being due to a revelation from the Author Himself of Nature.

In this Mr. Gladstone confines himself to the merely physical application of the narrative. That it represents also, and with no less exactitude, the process of creation by evolution on yet other and superior planes of being, and, besides the generation or manifestation of the physical world, describes that also of the Gods or Elohim, of the "Kingdom of Heaven" and of the "Church of Christ," or perfected human Ego, Mr. Gladstone seems to have no suspicion, the whole range of thought represented by the terms Hermetic and Kabalistic, which is the only key to the Bible, having quite escaped him.

As my concern is only with the misrepresentation of Mr. Gladstone, I will remark further only, in reference to Mr.

Thompson's letter, that both it and Mr. Tindall's are so strangely out of place in your columns that I cannot but think they were intended for some agnostic organ and have been misdirected to you.

E. M.

The Resurrection of the Body.

SIR,—On Sunday morning I heard a clergyman say these words: "That the devil has more mastery over that person who does not believe in the resurrection of the body, and leads him into all sin."

This, I thought, was very strong language, and I was thinking much about it, when the following writing came to me in the afternoon when I was sitting for spiritual communion. I venture to send it to you. It was my father who wrote.

R. S.

It is not true what the clergyman said this morning. Our earthly bodies do not rise; they are only the earthly case in which our souls and spirits are encased on the earth, like the chrysalis case, that does not live. Every particle of the body returns to Christ and is scattered probably over the face of the earth; rising perhaps in some other form of earth life, but not again joining the spirit. That returns to God Who gave it, and takes the form of what we were in earth life, so that we are recognised. St. Paul speaks of it as a "glorified body," but it really is spirit, not body. He speaks of angels as "spiritual" and "celestial bodies," we call them spirits.

Our bodies would be out of place here, we could not do with them; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God," "neither can corruption inherit incorruption."

Our bodies were given us for a purpose on the earth, and when that purpose is served there is no more need of them. It is not always the most beautiful bodies, in earth life, that have the purest spirits; generally the contrary, and it is not "The want of belief in the resurrection of the body," as the clergyman said this morning, "that will give the devil" (I suppose he meant evil) "mastery over that person, and lead him into all sin." It is *only* and truly the power of the Spirit that can keep you pure and free from sin.

Deny the power of evil, affirm the power of Spirit. Think of yourself as spirit, and when temptation comes, however, powerful it may be, pray to God in the spirit; not necessarily with the lips, God hears the thoughts, and His Spirit works through your spirit, and if you have a pure spirit, the body will be pure.

It is not a belief in any *theory* which can make you pure. It is a *living* spirit within you; a spirit which can never die, but lives for ever. As the spirit is strengthened and purified in earth life, so it is fitted for a higher place here. If you quench the spirit whilst on earth, and let the body get the upper hand, there will be much to suffer and endure here. The probation will be severe.

Learn whilst you are on earth to live a life of holiness and purity, to fit you for a higher place here. Jesus has made it easy for you, for He paid the penalty of sin, and conquered all evil. You can plead His merits, and He will help you through the Spirit; and God, the loving Father, allows us to help you, too.

You need not be downcast, you have many privileges; mind you do not despise them.

Mr. Tindall and the Bible.

SIR,—Mr. Tindall's letter certainly makes one thing very clear, and this is that there is at least one person, and this in the ranks of the Spiritualists, for whom the "world's childhood" still survives in full verdancy. President of the "London Occult Society," and not to know that the Bible is the very prince of occult books! and to be so ignorant of its very letter as to be unaware that so far from claiming to be a "plain historical book," it repeatedly asserts the contrary, and insists on the spirit as against the letter! Clearly the time has arrived in Mr. Tindall's "childhood" when he ought to commence his education in this subject, and by way of beginning he cannot do better than read Mr. Maitland's paper in this month's *Psyche*, "On the Method of the Old Testament," and to follow it up by a careful study of the same writer's paper on "Spiritual Definitions," now appearing in "LIGHT." I would also recommend Mr. Tindall to be more accurate in reporting public meetings. Questions were freely invited, and all tendered answered, to the satisfaction of the audience, as evinced in their return to a second lecture on Friday night, and the very hearty applause at both meetings.

17, Charleville-road,
West Kensington.

GEORGE CHAINBY.

SOCIETY WORK.

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

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S.E.—On Sunday last, Mr. Clack gave an interesting address on "Spiritualism a Reality," and entertained his hearers with some of his varied experiences, which extend over a period of sixty years in several parts of the world. Séances are held at the above address every Thursday evening at eight o'clock, and all earnest inquirers are cordially invited.—GEO. E. GUNN, Secretary.

MARYLEBONE, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, W.—Mrs. Yeeles' lecture on Sunday was listened to with marked attention, and was followed by clairvoyant descriptions. There was a very good attendance. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Hopcroft will occupy the platform. Friends are reminded of the Lyceum at three o'clock. Thursday, séances at eight prompt, Mr. Hawkins; Saturday, séances at eight prompt, Mr. Hopcroft.—C. WHITE, Hon. Sec.

ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BEAUMONT-STREET, MILE END.—Mr. Campbell lectured on Sunday last upon "Theosophy and its Detractors." On Sunday next Mr. Cohen will occupy the platform, the subject to be selected by the audience. On Monday, May 12th, at 8 p.m., Mr. Veitch will lecture upon "Theosophy v. Spiritualism—which is True?" Admission by ticket 3d., 6d., and 1s. each, to be obtained at the door, or at any of the London Spiritualist Societies.—W. MARSH, Sec.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, CHEPSTOW HALL, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—The annual summer outing for the Lyceum children will be held on Monday, June 16th, to Cheam Park, Surrey. On Sunday last local speakers occupied our platform. The attendance was small at both meetings. On Sunday next Spirit Circle at 11.15 a.m., Lyceum at 3 p.m. At 6.30 p.m. Mr. T. Everitt will address us. After the evening service a statement of accounts and work will be given. We hope for a large attendance of members.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

KING'S CROSS SOCIETY, CLAREMONT HALL.—Last Sunday this Society moved into the above hall, where morning meetings will be held in future at 10.45 a.m. The president (Mr. Rodger) gave the address on "Spiritualism in a Three-fold Aspect." The usual questions and discussion followed. Afterwards the following were elected to carry on the work of the Society for the next six months:—Mr. McKenzie, president; Mr. Cannon, vice-president; Mr. Selly, treasurer; and Mr. A. M. Rodger, secretary; the old committee remaining. Next Sunday Mr. T. D. Summers will be the speaker. Friends and strangers cordially invited.—A. M. R.

WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Humphries gave us an able address upon "What Spiritualism has taught." A lady medium spoke in the evening, giving great satisfaction to all present. Next Sunday, at 11 a.m., testimony meeting; 7 p.m., Mr. R. Wortley. We have started the nucleus of a library, and would be glad to receive additions of any works on subjects of religious interest, Spiritualistic or otherwise, so as to meet the many demands upon our small resources. Any sent to me will be gladly welcomed.—J. VEITCH, 19, Crescent, Southampton-street, Camberwell.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION, CLAREMONT HALL, PENTONVILLE HILL.—On Sunday last the third annual meeting took place in the above hall. The afternoon meeting was presided over by the Rev. Dr. Young, who avowed himself a Spiritualist of 20 years' standing; manifestations within his own family had given him such assurance of the existence of another world that he could no more doubt it than he could doubt his own existence. Mr. H. J. Browne, fresh from the Antipodes, gave some account of Spiritualism on the other side of the globe, reminding his hearers of the universality of Spiritual phenomena. Mr. J. Veitch, of Peckham, in a brief speech urged that if Spiritualists desired to hold public religious services the devotional element should be carefully cultivated and cherished. Short addresses were delivered by Mrs. Yeeles, Messrs. Audy, Everitt, and Rodger, and the hon. sec. read a statement of the Federation's present position, and made a number of suggestions for future work which are to be submitted to the new council. It is proposed to institute regular Sunday evening services in some central hall, and also to establish a halfpenny journal, chiefly devoted to London society work, and intended for circulation mainly amongst the poorer classes. Mr. E. Dawson Rogers occupied the chair in the evening, and urged Spiritualistic societies to hold to Spiritualism pure and simple and leave metaphysics alone. Mr. G. Chainey delivered an eloquent address upon "Spiritualism in the Bible." The inspired writings had been given to us to enable us to find that satisfaction for which we are all seeking. These writings always presented the psychic plane as a legitimate part of life, and it was right for us to have a knowledge concerning these things, and to study them in every possible way. It was a great advantage to receive phenomenal proof of an invisible world, but we might hold communion with the spiritual world through

phenomena and still live on the purely material plane, and these writings were given to us, not to teach chemistry, history, &c., but for the cultivation of the inner life, to lift us into the consciousness of the soul. Mrs. Spring, Messrs. Watmore, Emms, Wallace, and Rodger contributed short addresses, which concluded the proceedings. The hon. sec., Mr. U. W. Goddard, regrets that owing to indisposition he had to leave before the termination of the proceedings. He will be pleased to answer any inquiries concerning the Federation, which may be addressed to 295, Lavender Hill, S.W.—S. T. R., pro Hon. Sec.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

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

Psyche.

The Spiritualist's Lyceum Magazine.

Welfare. No. 3. Price 1d. (24, Ludgate Hill, E.C.)

The Christian Doctrine of Hell. By J. M. WHEELER. (Price 2d. R. Forder, 28, Stonecutter-street, E.C.)

Earth to Earth Burial and Cremation by Fire. By a Hygienic Physician. (Nichols and Co., 23, Oxford-street.) Reprinted from *England Regenerated*.

Theosophical Siftings. Vol. III., No. 4. (Theosophical Publishing Company, 7, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C. Price 3d.) [Contains an article by G. R. S. Mead, B.A., on "Theosophical Symbolism," and a reprint from *Lucifer* of a paper of Laurence Oliphant's on "Dynaspheric Force."]

The Perfect Way: or, The Finding of Christ. (Cheaper edition. Price 7s. 6d. Field and Tuer.) [This edition contains the changes suggested by the late Dr. Anna Kingsford to Mr. Edward Maitland, which were made the pretext for the allegation that she had recanted her belief and withdrawn what she had written. As a matter of fact the passages, which are duly specified in the advertisement that precedes the volume, serve only to amplify and extend, and in no way to withdraw any of its teaching. We shall hope to point this out more fully in noticing the new edition hereafter.]

The New Review. (Longmans. Price 6d.) [Has also an article on "Fasting and its Physiology," by Dr. Robson Roose, *apropos* of Succi, and from a very different point of view to that of Archdeacon Farrar. It seems that fat people have most chance in a long fast. Perhaps we may add that sane people will avoid such senseless exhibitions altogether. The character study is the inevitable Henry M. Stanley. Olive Schreiner completes her daring allegory, "The Sunlight Lay Across My Bed." Mrs. Jeune discourses of one of her pet philanthropic projects, "Holidays for Poor Children," and Professor H. Sidgwick lectures against Lecturing at the Universities.]

The English Illustrated Magazine. (Macmillans. Price 6d.) [Contains the conclusion of Lord Lytton's "Ring of Amasis." Archdeacon Farrar on "Fasting," a very readable article with much sound sense in it. He tells how a man may *fast* and yet *feast*: how St. Gregory of Nazianzus, finding his tongue unruly, kept a Lenten fast of forty days of silence: how one of old time was told by his Master that the true fast that God desires is to "do no evil in your life but to serve God with a pure heart; to keep the Commandments, walk in His precepts, and let no evil desire arise in your heart." Further, the Archdeacon thinks "three very hearty and plethoric meals" are too much for one day. He advises more fish and less meat, wholemeal bread, vegetables, and fruit, and he discountenances that literal fasting from necessary food which some fanatical ascetics practise in Lent to the great detriment of their temper and deterioration of their physique. "Habitual moderation, habitual abstinence, constant self-denial, and from some things total abstinence" is his counsel of perfection.]

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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

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

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

PRESSURE on our space compels us to hold over several letters and communications.

"INQUIRER."—The address of Sir George Stokes has been acknowledged in "LIGHT" among pamphlets received. It is published at 2d., at the office of the *Family Churchman*, 8, Salisbury-court, Fleet-street.

J. H. S.—Thanks for your interesting letter. The theory that the next state is one of unconsciousness till some sort of resurrection takes place is in the teeth of all facts known to us. There is occasionally a period of repose after a strenuous life in the body, but not such general unconsciousness as Sir George Stokes imagines.