

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

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

"LIGHT, MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

I have now the full text of the address of Professor Oliver Lodge to the Mathematical and Physical Section of the British Association. It is a remarkable pronouncement. There are passages in it which ought to have made the ears of those who heard them tingle:—

It is but a platitude to say that our clear and conscious aim should always be truth, and that no lower or meaner standard should ever be allowed to obtrude itself before us. Our ancestors fought hard and suffered much for the privilege of free and open inquiry, for the right of conducting investigation untrammelled by prejudice and foregone conclusions, and they were ready to examine into any phenomenon which presented itself. This attitude of mind is perhaps necessarily less prominent now, when so much knowledge has been gained, and when the labours of so many individuals may be rightly directed entirely to its systematisation and to the study of its inner ramifications; but it would be a great pity if a too absorbed attention to what has already been acquired, and to the fringe of territory lying immediately adjacent thereto, were to end in our losing the power of raising our eyes and receiving evidence of a totally fresh kind, of perceiving the existence of regions into which the same processes of inquiry as had proved so fruitful might be extended, with results at present incalculable and perhaps wholly unexpected. I myself think that the ordinary processes of observation and experiment are establishing the existence of such a region; that in fact they have already established the truth of some phenomena not at present contemplated by science, and to which the orthodox man shuts his ears. For instance, there is the question whether it has or has not been established by direct experiment that a method of communication exists between mind and mind irrespective of the ordinary channels of consciousness and the known organs of sense, and if so, what is the process? It can hardly be through some unknown sense organ, but it may be by some direct physical influence on the ether, or it may be in some still more subtle manner. Of the process I as yet know nothing. Further investigation is wanted. No one can expect others to accept his word for an entirely new fact, except as establishing a *prima facie* case for investigation. But I am only now taking this as an instance of what I mean; whether it be a truth or a fiction, I doubt if one of the recognised scientific societies would receive a paper on the subject. What I wish is to signalise a danger—which I believe to be actual and serious—that investigation in this and cognate subjects may be checked and hampered by active hostility to these researches on the part of the majority of scientific men, and a determined opposition to the reception or discussion of evidence.

That individuals should decline to consider such matters is natural enough; they may be otherwise occupied and interested. Everybody is by no means bound to investigate everything; though, indeed, it is customary in most fields of knowledge for those who have kept aloof from a particular inquiry to defer in moderation to those who have conducted it, without feeling themselves called upon to express an opinion. But it is not of the action of individuals that I wish to speak, it is of the attitude to be adopted by scientific bodies in their corporated capacity; and for a corporate body of men of science, inheritors of the hard-won tradition of free and fearless inquiry into the facts of nature untrammelled by prejudice, for any such body to decline to receive evidence laboriously attained and discreetly and inoffensively presented by observers of accepted competency in other branches, would be, if ever actually done and persisted in,

a terrible throwing away of their prerogative, and an imitation of the errors of a school of thought against which the struggle was at one time severe.

Again I quote two striking passages:—

Inanimate matter is controlled by the *vis a tergo*; it is operated on solely by the past. Given certain conditions, and the effect in due time follows. Attempts have been made to apply the same principle to living and conscious beings, but without much success. These seem to work for an object, even if it be the mere seeking for food; they are controlled by the idea of something not yet palpable. Given certain conditions, and their action cannot certainly be predicted; they have a sense of option and free will. Either their actions are really arbitrary and indeterminate—which is highly improbable—or they are controlled by the future as well as by the past. Imagine beings thus controlled; automata you may still call them, but they will be living automata, and will exhibit all the characteristics of live creatures. Moreover, if they have a merely experiential knowledge, necessarily limited by memory and bounded by the past, they will be unable to predict each other's actions with any certainty, because the whole of the data are not before them. May not a clearer apprehension of the meaning of life and will and determinism be gradually reached in some such direction as this? By what means is force exerted, and what, definitely, is force or stress? I can hardly put the question here and now so as to be intelligible, except to those who have approached and thought over the same difficulties; but I venture to say that there is here something not provided for in the orthodox scheme of physics; that modern physics is not complete, and that a line of possible advance lies in this direction. I might go further. Given that force can be exerted by act of will, do we understand the mechanism by which this is done? And if there is a gap in our knowledge between the conscious idea of a motion and the liberation of muscular energy needed to accomplish it, how do we know that a body may not be moved without ordinary material contact by an act of will?

It is sometimes objected that, granting thought-transference or telepathy to be a fact, it belongs more especially to lower forms of life, and that as the cerebral hemispheres develop we become independent of it; that what we notice is the relic of a decaying faculty, not the germ of a new and fruitful sense; and that progress is not to be made by studying or attending to it. It may be that it is an immature mode of communication, adapted to lower stages of consciousness than ours, but how much can we not learn by studying immature stage? As well might the objection be urged against a study of embryology. It may, on the other hand, as W. F. Barrett has suggested, be an indication of a higher mode of communication, which shall survive our temporary connection with ordinary matter.

I have spoken of the apparently direct action of mind on mind, and of a possible action of mind on matter. But the whole region is unexplored territory, and it is conceivable that matter may react on mind in a way we can at present only dimly imagine. In fact, the barrier between the two may gradually melt away, as so many other barriers have done, and we may end in a wider perception of the unity of nature, such as philosophers have already dreamt of.

I care not what the end may be. I do care that the inquiry shall be conducted by us, and that we shall be free from the disgrace of jogging along accustomed roads, leaving to isolated labourers the work, the ridicule, and the gratification, of unfolding a new region to unwilling eyes.

Mr. Caleb S. Weeks's "Philosophy of Evil" is a "gospel lesson from the apple trees." It is delightfully written, and is an altogether charming apologue. The writer preaches the doctrine of "universal worship" as against that circumscribed devotion which seems to satisfy most people who do not exercise their minds and regard religion as a matter of respectability and as a possible safeguard. We are broadening every day and the times of dogmatism are doomed. I quote one specimen of the



writer's thought and italicise a phrase or two which is typical:—

The apple trees expounded to me the divine word of life. I listened, learned; saw the principle, the law; saw its universality and its applicability to all development, including man's the individual and man's the collective, or society. And I said, Thank God and Nature! the period of ripening will come to our race! *Human nature bears not permanent fruits of bitterness any more than do these trees.* Selfishness is first in the order of unfolding; fraternal love, self-sacrificing, self-forgetting, will be the fragrance of the ripened soul. Humanity, too, has its spring-time of prophecy, when the unfolding love blossoms out in a transient supremacy of fragrant aspirations, then casts off its flowers that it may pursue the work of developing the selfhood, of maturing the fruit. Great cities, like crowded and neglected orchards, may hinder the naturalness of development, may increase these defects, and postpone, but cannot prevent the final ripening.

My spirit expanded with gratitude to the divine Father and Mother as I thus recited the lesson just expounded to me. The chill to my human sympathies which the thoughts of human conditions had produced had given place to a warmer and freer flow of love and charity. *I could now respect human nature even in its greenest stage of development—could see that the periods of selfishness following those of spiritual-manhood promise are all right, not falsifying the prediction, but truthfulness to the natural law of life unfolding.* Fraternal love was freed from prejudice. I no longer saw anyone as unworthy of respect. Creeds could not now shake this well-grounded religious faith. I could see Heaven's gate wide open to all—that there are no devils, but what are angels developing, who, as soon as their natures are enough unfolded to see its beauties, and desire to, can enter. Joy and confidence now took the place of sadness and misgivings. Earth seemed spanned with a rainbow-tinted arch of glory. Jacob's ladder lay prostrate on the ground, no longer needed. The angels had all descended to dwell with us, to remain above us no more.

On another page will be found the record of Mrs. Besant's farewell to her old friends and statement of her attitude to her new ones. There have been many paragraphs in the Press as to Madame Blavatsky's successor. I Lady Caithness was the favourite, but the mantle has fallen on the shoulders of Mrs. Besant. It cannot be pretended that she has the encyclopædic knowledge of her late friend, but she has all the qualities that go to make a good leader, and no one can expound from the platform what it is necessary to impress on her hearers with more power than Mrs. Besant. In her farewell address—one of singular pathos and force—she told the Secularists what, if they believed her, must set them thinking. She said that since Madame Blavatsky died she has had letters—I presume from the Mahatmas—in the same handwriting as those which she received. She went on to say that “unless every sense can at the same time deceive me, unless a person can be at the same time sane and insane, I have exactly the same certainty for the truth of the statements I have made as I know that you are here.” That is a statement which, coming from a person of the integrity and acumen of Mrs. Besant, deserves careful attention. Colonel Olcott, a man of transparent sincerity and of long devotion to his cause, has satisfied himself of what Mrs. Besant now publicly avows. What is the explanation? The Society for Psychical Research decided through Mr Richard Hodgson that Madame Blavatsky was an impostor and that Colonel Olcott's honesty was saved at the expense of his common-sense. Mrs. Besant is as shrewd, intelligent, capable, and sane a woman as ever tackled a serious subject. Her evolution has been steady, and she has touched nothing that she has not adorned. What will the S.P.R. make of her?

THE Rev. G. W. Allen, curate of St. Nicholas Cole Abbey, who has been at death's door with influenza, is convalescent. His many friends will be glad of this intimation.

EVERYTHING which pertains to the human species, considered as a whole, belongs to the order of physical facts. The greater the number of individuals, the more does the influence of the individual will disappear, leaving predominance to a series of general facts dependent on causes by which society exists, and is preserved.—QUETELET. (Foot-note, “Conduct of Life; Fate.”)

## THE SECRET OF IMMORTALITY DISCOVERED AT LAST.

Mr. Harris must certainly be a man of most unusual courage or he would hardly have ventured, after all that has lately been said about him by Mrs. Oliphant and others, to publish “The Brotherhood of the New Life.” For years he has claimed to rank with the seers of old as an inspired teacher; in this latest pamphlet, however, he goes further; he announces calmly, quietly, as if it were the most natural thing in the world, that he possesses a power more wonderful than ever human being possessed before. Other men may have preached more convincingly; other men may have wrought more startling miracles; but he is greater than they all (at least, he says so)—for they have all died, whilst he is as a god, he will never die. In all earnestness, in all sobriety, Mr. Harris claims to have discovered a something by means of which he secures for himself, and for those who choose to submit to his guidance, corporeal immortality—nay, more, perennial youth.

For nearly fifty years Mr. Harris maintains that he has been in close relation with the spiritual world. Voices have echoed round him, guiding, directing, and inspiring him, and bringing home to him in some mysterious fashion the fact that he is the chosen instrument of invisible powers. Once convinced of the reality of his mission, his only anxiety was to fit himself for the right discharge of its duties. To what special form of discipline he subjected himself we are not informed; but we are given to understand that it was one involving strenuous exertion, mental as well as physical, abstinence, and self-sacrifice. “In grim earnest I have grappled with the fierce Problem of Human Life.” But even at this time the Voices did not leave him without solace. “For nearly half a century,” he says, “I have been dreaming a lovely dream of the New Harmonic Civilisation; of the ending of all feuds, the vanishment of all diseases, the abolishment of all antagonisms, the removal of all squalors and poverties, in a fulfilled Christian era.” It was being slowly borne in upon his mind that the golden age—the real golden this time—was at hand; for “the solidest and most enduring of organisations first float before the world's thought as pictured imaginations.” It was this vision that excited Mr. Harris to begin his struggle, as it were, with death. The thought that he too must die “just when he was beginning to live,” and thus miss the good time that is coming, seems to have sorely afflicted Mr. Harris; and he straightway began to ask whether death were indeed inevitable—whether he himself might not find a solution for that problem which in all ages has puzzled the brains of philosophers. It was of no vulgar Elixir of Life he dreamed, but rather of some spiritual agency by which men might free themselves from the degradation their own wickedness had brought upon them and from “the odious obsequiousness to nature” it involved. Death is the result of evil; with perfect purity, therefore, there must be life.

To supplement, as it were, the teaching of the Voices, Mr. Harris turned his attention to the study of science and of the writing of the early philosophers. Surrounded by a band of devoted disciples—Laurence Oliphant was one of them—who followed his work with intense interest, he devoted himself for years heart and soul to the task of investigating the source of life. He arrived at the conclusion that:

There are two chief currents of vital force that operate through the human mind and its organism for the evolutionary advance. The first and minor stream flows through scientific invention for the conquest and reclamation of Nature, and for the adaptation of its immense productive forces to the human service. . . . But there is in evolution a correlative current, which is dominant and supreme. Pythagoras apprehended its existence and defined it as operating by laws of rhythmic harmony in the universe and in the constitution of man. It is implied, though but hinted at, in the remains of literature surviving from the great and creative epochs of Asian, Hebrew, and Grecian history.

Pythagoras, it will be noted, is the only man mentioned by name as having really grasped the meaning of this second current, until it was revealed to Mr. Harris. He says:—

“I discovered in early manhood the key to the harmonic law of Pythagoras.” Needless to say, he does not take the world into his confidence with regard to the precise nature of this key. He declares, “It reinstates the law of miracle in the law of nature. It leads on by its effect to the redemption of the flesh of man from the gross passions and cupidities that are incidental to his lowly natural origin. It quickens and re-edifies the mind of man to become the chaste temple of the



breathing Infinite. In a word, it opens for the race a new life."

All this is confusing, to say the least of it; nor does the Prophet's definition of his discovery as "a new respiration" tend to clear our minds.

"The estranged and carnally subjected mankind breathe bodily away from God, the source and centre of existence . . . till each nerve-tissue of man's frame is infested and led captive in the coilage of the universal evil. Men who wish to live must learn to breathe towards the centre of life." This is what Mr. Harris has done. "With me," he says, "the breath is twofold; besides the usual breathing from and into Nature is an organic action of breathing from and into the Adorable Fount and Spirit of existence. First realised as by a new birth of the breathing system; a breath of new intellectual and moral infancy, this carefully held, reverently and sacredly cherished as a gift of God, has advanced, till at present each organ of the frame respire in breathing rhythms, making of the body one conscious form of unified intellectual and physical harmony; the spirit, the real or higher self, is absorbing the lowly naturehood, yet meanwhile nourishing it with the rich and vital elements of a loftier realm of being."

Having obtained this twofold breathing power, the next thing to be done was to preserve it—for the benefit of humanity, of course.

For the last thirty years my efforts have been concentrated to survive. Whilst cultivating an intense interest, both in the individual and public welfare, the maintenance of the breath is our first duty. . . . We were often obliged, if we would preserve life, to maintain among ourselves a strict seclusion. . . . Thus the alleged mystery of my life, when understood, is as simple as that of George Fox or of Thomas Edison.

Three years ago Mr. Harris retired to a mountain retreat, bent upon turning his discovery—i.e., the new respiration—to account; or, as he puts it, of solving the problem:—

By what process shall the man who, by consequence of respiration opened into God and the resultant life of service rendered to mankind, has fitted himself mentally and socially for a continuation of that service . . . overcome the universal racial tendency to physical deterioration and decay, and renew the outer structures of his person, and lead on a renaissance of the vitalities and vigour of the prime? How, in a word, without passing through physical decay, shall man practically embody and realise the resurrection? . . . I had elaborated the science of the process; I now applied that process to a final test in my own organs. . . . The alternative was success or dissolution. Success came as suddenly, as pleasantly, as when a deep-laden storm-tossed ship glides over the harbour-bar from the raging outside sea and swings at ease in a land-locked haven. . . . The final chord of the rhythmic law, that operates for the renaissance of the human system and its senses from age to youth, was not touched till the early days of the last autumn, and not until my own bodily structures were reduced to an appearance of frail, emaciated, and perishing age. Within a week after finding the touch of the last rhythmic chord . . . the bent form stood upright; flesh grew upon the bones; the dim eyes found their sparkle; every bodily sense awoke reinvigorated; the fountains of the blood seemed to flow as by a vortical motion, rounding in each recuperative organ to one grand consciousness of bodily grandeur, freedom, and, in a sense, of corporate immortality. . . . I have passed through December. I am in Maytime. . . . No more an old man of nigh seventy, but now renewed in more than the physical and mental prowess of the early prime, my retirement is at an end.

It must not be thought that Mr. Harris intends selfishly to conceal his discovery and allow all around him to die whilst he lives on for ever. "The gift that I hold," he says, "is the coming inheritance of all." "In these discoveries I proffer to mankind its own re-formed, renewed, and ever-renewing structure, the body of its infirm and prostrate naturehood uplifted to the promise and fruition of the creative idea . . . the fulfilment in material substance of the old, now almost forgotten, Christian hope. Yet I proffer this purely as in the lines of an orderly and supreme evolution," and upon the condition "of the acceptance and adoption by each individual of the whole corporate interest of mankind as his interest; to be embraced and served in the full denial of a superior self-interest, or family or churchly or class interest. . . . Man to receive the gift must first accept the common burden and sorrow and service of mankind." He must accept, too, if there is any meaning to be attached to a certain grim allusion to Mr. Laurence Oliphant's fate, blindly, unquestioningly, Mr. Harris's autocratic rule. Already under his guidance "men and women of heart, of thought, of humane principle, realise this new breath and draw by vital and

organic sympathies into the relations of Communion in the New Life. . . . We shall soon begin to see our noblest, most heroic, most humane men and women, without respect to the previous religious or social culture, lifting up, breathing forth corporeally in a firstness of the resurrection. Even to-day Mr. Harris counts amongst his followers, he tells us, "eminent divines of the Church of England and of the orthodox and liberal denominations, authors and professional men of well-known distinction, learned Oriental scholars"—a "heroic nucleus," in fact, who are paving the way for the Golden Age.

As Mr. Harris's time of retirement is now at an end, we may perhaps soon see him amongst us, and thus be able to put to the test his account of the marvellous transformation he has undergone. What a flutter there will be amongst septuagenarians when the news arrives that the aged Prophet has reappeared in all the bloom, let us hope, of early prime! Mr. Harris will have all Faust's advantages without the drawback of having made a compact with the Devil.—"St. James's Gazette."

### THOMAS LAKE HARRIS.

TOLD OF BY ONE WHO KNEW HIM.

We have had much to say of Mr. Harris lately. This notice, which we take from the "New York Sun," seems to us to give an account of him that is worth consideration. He must be a remarkable man:—

The interest in Thomas Lake Harris and his peculiar doctrines, which has been awakened by Mrs. Oliphant's memoir of Laurence Oliphant, leads the writer, who was greatly attracted by his teachings for some years prior to the establishment of the community at Brocton, to publish some reminiscences of this remarkable man.

Harris is an Englishman, and is now nearly seventy years of age. In his early manhood he was a Universalist minister. He afterwards became a Spiritualist, and developed unusual powers as a trance medium. Like his distinguished disciple, Oliphant, he believed he was chiefly inspired by the spirit of his departed wife. At this time he preached frequently, expounding his belief in spiritual manifestation. Although Harris was never a Swedenborgian preacher, as Mrs. Oliphant has stated, he regarded Swedenborg as a seer in the spiritual degree, while he, Harris, was a seer in the celestial degree, and had been called to "penetrate a diviner sphere." At this period he was in the trance state three-fourths of the time, and dictated an amount of matter absolutely astounding, his devoted wife acting as amanuensis.

Between the years 1855 and 1858 he had dictated and published "The Lyric of the Golden Age," a remarkable poem of prophecy, some three hundred pages long; "The Epic of the Starry Heavens," a poem shorter than the preceding; "Charity Green," a novel of six hundred pages, lashing the social follies of the day, exposing spiritual wickedness in high places, and in some instances quite exceeding what would be called decorum by ordinary mortals, and this book appeared under the pseudonym of Theodore Hartman; the first volume of the "Arcana of Christianity," an unfolding of the celestial sense of the Divine Word, a large octavo of five hundred pages; "The First Book of the Christian Religion," and a volume of some two hundred hymns, besides writing for and editing "The Herald of Light," a monthly magazine.

In 1859 Mr. Harris, with his wife, went to England in response to "an internal command." It was at this time Laurence and Lady Oliphant, Miss Ina Fawcett, afterwards Mrs. Cuthbert, and Mr. Cuthbert first heard Harris. Mr. Harris returned to America at the beginning of the war and resumed his ministrations in the University Chapel. He electrified his hearers by his stirring patriotic sermons. Each week he added a hymn of freedom to the collection he had already written. He was also a strong advocate of the "Christian Men-at-Arms," an organisation formed for service in the rebellion, which never advanced beyond learning military tactics, although many of its members afterwards distinguished themselves in the field. About this time he published "Regina," a mystical poem, which also contained a collection of poems written at Bolton Abbey and Whitby, in England.

In 1862 he bought property at Wassaic (which he said was Indian for hard labour), in Amenia, Dutchess county,



New York, and began to promulgate his theory of "internal respiration," whereby those who gave up self and the world to serve God would breathe a divine aura and return to the state of the golden age. Harris claimed to have received this breath directly from Christ, and being thus enabled to understand the hidden things of God, he was His instrument for opening the "internal respiration" of the faithful. This respiration Harris defined as "an influx from the heavens." He taught that in the pre-Noachic times all the good breathed this breath, and were supremely blessed in their love of God and their neighbour. Gradually, however, evil grew, and many fell into error, and thus a new type of man was evolved. Evil finally became rampant and the physical organism underwent a change, so that the lungs only inhaled natural air instead of breathing the heavenly aura. The external air, moreover, could not compensate for the loss of the internal breath, and death became universal. There were, however, those who were saved from this deluge, and these were called "Noah." Their descendants were Shem, Ham, and Japhet, and they were able to breathe the natural air and thus became "external instead of internal men." Harris further said that Swedenborg was the first person in modern times who was able to breathe this "internal breath." He also taught that "disease is the embodiment of sin, and health the embodiment of virtue"; and that through internal respiration the body would conform to the spiritual conditions and be purged from all its evils. The bodies inherited from parents would be free from hereditary blemishes and become radiant with health and beauty. On this account it was necessary for those seeking to "live the life" to give up all earthly ties, to live apart from those related to them, in order that the demons of heredity might be cast out.

The new doctrine caused many of his followers to leave his ministry. A score or more of the congregation remained true to him, and from these he selected several as the nucleus of the community at Wassaic, whither he had gone to live in seclusion. The first requirement after the seeker for the higher life had made the request to be taken into "the Use" was that all family ties must be sundered, as well for the sake of the one desiring to join "the Use" as for those left behind, whether they were friendly or inimical to Harris's teachings. As in the case of Laurence Oliphant, husbands were commanded to leave their wives until they had reached the higher states of the new life.

In many cases where the internal respiratory organs were to be opened it was necessary for Mr. Harris to be present. At this ceremony or rite he was assisted by his wife and by one of the sisters, a woman of rare culture and well known in New York society, who had given up home, friends, and wealth to belong to the community. Earnest prayer by all and fierce conflict on the part of Mr. Harris with the invisible foes of the novice, often requiring hours before they were brought into subjection in God's name, were the means employed. Intense physical exhaustion would often follow these struggles, and life would at times seem to have fled from the exorciser. Those in whom the internal respiration was opened would become the spiritual children of Harris, calling him by his spiritual name of "Faithful," by which alone he was known in the community. The novice was then set to tasks of manual labour.

A Wall-street banker, for example, was told that he must leave his stocks and bonds and become a tailor. He did as he was commanded, and in a short time his cutting, sewing, and buttonholes were those of an expert. A literary woman whose pet aversion was cooking, who had no idea of what was needed in the preparation of food, was told that her province was to bake. After a short time of instruction no professional pastry-cook could surpass her tarts, her bread, and other delicacies of her art. Lady Oliphant, on entering the community at Wassaic, was appointed nurse to the children. After the banker had served as tailor to the community for more than a year he was commanded to establish a bank. This he did, and the First National Bank of Wassaic had for its president T. L. Harris; its cashier was the tailor-banker. Thus began the business enterprises of Harris.

Whatever the subsequent life of Harris may have been, his teachings heretofore had been of the purest and truest. Upon the lives of those who listened to him in the university chapel he left a noble impress. They learned a spirituality and a rule of life that, if followed, would be sure to keep

their natures pure amid the strongest temptations to which humanity is liable.

There never appeared to be any sympathy felt by Harris for those in sorrow. A prominent man, who had been as kind to Harris as if he had been his brother, died, and although the family had been devoted to him in every way, save in the matter of joining the community, no word of consolation to the stricken widow and children was ever sent. The comment made on the death was: "He was unfaithful, and his family deserve to suffer."

The account of Lady Oliphant's death also shows that no tender sympathy was shown to those who in any way differed from Harris's way of thinking. It would seem in spite of all the indignities cast upon the Oliphants, that the good they had received from this man could never be forgotten, and no word of censure was ever breathed by them. In a letter from Laurence Oliphant to the writer just before his return to Europe in July, 1888, in reply to an inquiry as to his reasons for having left the community, he says: "It is now fourteen years since I have seen Mr. Harris, excepting on one occasion in 1881, when I went to California to make a final settlement prior to my entire disassociation with him. It would be useless to enter here upon the reasons which induced me to take this course. Suffice it to say that it met with the approval of about half of those who were formerly connected with him, and who dis severed themselves from him when I did. The property at Brocton belongs to me, and Mr. Harris remains in California; but as I have had no communication with those who are with him there, I do not know the position of matters beyond the fact that they are said to be materially prosperous, and that some of his people have established an agency in this city to sell his wines.

"I have for the past six years been established on Mount Carmel, in Palestine, and came to Europe to put a book through the press, which is now published, called 'Scientific Religion,' which is the result of my efforts for the last twenty-five years."

Although having an opportunity to say what he would concerning Harris, not a word of reproach was uttered. What the life of the community may now be, and whether Mr. Harris has remained true to his lofty ideals of twenty-five years ago, it is impossible to say. The fact, however, remains that in his early writings he has inculcated only precepts of pure religion, which, in spite of the mysticism that surrounds many of them, could only elevate the minds of those who read them.

E. C. W.

#### DANGERS OF HYPNOTISM.

Many a medical man (says the "Hospital") could tell of alarming conditions resulting from improper attempts at hypnotising by the unskilled amateur. One such case has quite recently been reported by Dr. Solon. An amateur at a friend's house volunteered to hypnotise another visitor, and after two trials succeeded so well that the subject became extremely excited, lost the power of speech, and then passed into the condition of catalepsy; subsequently he had severe convulsions. He had simply been hypnotised by being made to look at a diamond ring, and afterwards the sight of anything glistening threw him into a state of violent excitement. The floor of the room in which the physician discovered him was covered with cushions, as he frequently threw himself from the sofa on to the floor, and was in a condition of grave hysteria with maniacal excitement. He was treated with full doses of sedatives, chloral, sulphonal, bromides, and morphine, but at first showed no improvement. After ten days the convulsive attacks were replaced by periods during which he sang persistently; he would sing every song he knew without stopping. After a fortnight of this he had a high temperature for several days, and altogether was very ill for three weeks. Such cases are not so uncommon as is generally supposed.—"St. James's Gazette."

THE population of the world is a conditional population; not the best, but the best that could live now; and the scale of tribes and the steadiness with which victory adheres to one tribe, and defeat to another, is as uniform as the superposition of strata.—EMERSON. ("Conduct of Life: Fate.")

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## SPIRIT IDENTITY.

BY EDINA.

This afternoon and evening (August 24th) we were the recipients of five messages automatically written, in as many different kinds of handwriting. One of these was from Surgeon W., formerly in the army, whose case was, I think, one of the most convincing among those sent to the S.P.R. for consideration, because (1) he was only once or twice a visitor at my house, while the medium was an infant; (2) because he died when she was two years old, and she knew little or nothing about him, owing to certain circumstances which were privately communicated to the S.P.R., but which I cannot give here.

This communicator has again returned and, as it were, taken up the thread of his former letter; alludes to his widow, now resident in New York, and to her second marriage to a wealthy husband, &c. The internal evidence is, to us, clear and convincing; but that is the sort of thing that you cannot drive into the minds of the officials of the S.P.R., just because they cannot see facts from our standpoint, be we ever so precise in giving details. The handwriting of this message bears a close resemblance to that of the former one. I mean by this, that the "kind of hand" is the same, although fully a year has elapsed since the first message was written.

Another of the five communications got this afternoon is from a deceased Scottish peer, and I wish your readers could see the neat and precise handwriting of the communicator. The message from this peer is short, but precise. My daughter never heard of him; because on my coming home for the night she asked me if there was ever such a person as Baron —. The message gives (1) his name, (2) his club in Edinburgh, (3) the name of his mansion-house, (4) the parish in which it is situated; and (5) goes on to say that he is impelled to write to me because I belong to the same county as himself. Singularly enough, this is the fact, though I could not myself verify it, till I read the name of the parish in the message; when I remembered that it is situated in this particular county, although extremely close to the boundary line between this shire and another in the East of Scotland. Baron — promised to come to us on Sunday, August 30th, and states he will answer any questions I may put to him through the medium. Should he do so you will have results. As regards my daughter's knowledge of Baron — when in life, I am satisfied she has never heard of his existence, because he died many years ago. But as to the name of his residence I am perfectly satisfied none of us knew the name of the mansion-house but myself; and my knowledge was acquired in the course of business some years since. As to the parish in which the mansion is situated, I did not know it until, on reading the message, my recollection enabled me to verify it. I may further state that the deceased peer lived at least thirty miles from the place where I was born, and my daughter was never within twenty miles of his place of residence.

I regret that in this particular case we cannot verify handwriting and signature by comparison, but may yet be able to do so. Rightly or wrongly, I connect his visit to us with the communications I formerly received from a landed proprietor in the same shire, and whose portrait my daughter identified in the Scottish National Gallery; as his estates were in the same county and he knew the deceased peer very well "here."

As to the three remaining messages got to-day, I cannot lift the "family curtain" as regards one of them; the second one is from a lamented young lady friend of the medium's, who has frequently written us before; and the remaining one is a most touching message from a mother left in a moment from her infant and sorrowing husband under very sad circumstances. Greatly as I would wish to communicate this message, I cannot do so, because, though I meet the gentleman almost daily, he would look upon me as a fitting occupant for a lunatic asylum if I ever broached the subject of Spiritualism.

P.S.—Baron — came upon the 30th August as promised, and I will deal with it later.

"MAKE thy life a rosary fair;  
Let each thought and deed  
Be a golden bead  
Marking a living prayer."

## CREDULITY.

We take the following from a provincial paper. It is a good instance of the extent to which what Spiritualists are so often accused of may be found in other quarters. Mr. Prince, like Mr. Harris, is, no doubt, a strange and remarkable man:—

In the course of my travels last week in the West Country I drove through the village of Sparton, which, as readers of Hepworth Dixon's "Spiritual Wives" will remember, is the place where the sect known as the "Princeites" have their headquarters at "The Agapemone," or "Abode of Love." I naturally inquired as to the present condition of the sect, and found that though Brother Prince, its founder, is still living, having reached the patriarchal age of ninety, he and his reduced band of followers have fallen on comparatively evil times. Money is by no means so plentiful at the Agapemone as it was. The carriage and four, with out-riders and bloodhounds, in which Brother Prince and his more favoured followers used to do their shopping in the neighbouring town of Bridgewater, is seen no more. When any of the brethren now visit Bridgewater, it is in what the Americans call a "one-horse affair." Of course, the fact that Brother Prince still lives on, is so far favourable to his pretensions for having repeatedly given out that he will never die. The longer he can go on living the better it evidently is for him.

"The Agapemone" is yet a pleasant place enough. The flagstaff, with a lion rampant at its foot, is still a prominent object. The gardens are well-kept, and the younger "Princeites" are sufficiently up to date, I noticed, to have a lawn-tennis court marked out on the lawn. The large room, which was once the chapel, is very much as it was when Hepworth Dixon so glowingly described it. The velvet-covered sofas and settees are still there, though their colour has sadly faded, and the glorified musical-box, or barrel-organ, known as an orchestrion, is still a prominent feature in the apartment. But everywhere there are signs that money is not so plentiful as it was. As a matter of fact, the "Princeites" are a diminishing sect. New converts are rare, and when, in due course, "Brother Prince" departs this life, I think the last will have been heard of "The Agapemone" he set up in.

Meanwhile, a Mrs. John B. Martin, of Cincinnati, is doing her best to furnish material for another chapter in the interminable history of human credulity and folly. She has boldly announced herself to be the "Female Christ," and in that character has inaugurated what she asserts is the "Millennium." By way of stimulating the coming forward of converts, she has also made it known that those who first acknowledge her supernatural character shall be made rulers in her new kingdom. Her followers call themselves "Perfectionists," and so far they have held their meetings with such well-guarded secrecy that even the ubiquitous and indefatigable newspaper reporter has been unable to gain either admission to, or information about, them. It is more satisfactory to know, however, that there is no taint of immorality about the new organisation. Mrs. J. B. Martin was once, it seems, a leading light in American Methodism. Something more will probably be heard of her ere long, for she and a small band of her followers have resolved on starting a propaganda in Europe. A younger sister of this latest fanatic has just announced herself to be the third person in the Trinity, and, as several of the "Martinites" are said to be persons of great wealth, it is probable that this latest craze will "boom" for a time.

THE soul has need of pauses of repose—intervals of escape, not only from the flesh, but even from the mind. A man of the loftiest intellect will experience times when mere intellect not only fatigues him, but amidst the most original conceptions, amidst its proudest triumphs, has a something trite and commonplace compared with one of those vague intimations of a spiritual destiny which are not within the ordinary domain of reason, and, gazing abstractedly into space, will leave suspended some problem of severest thought, or uncompleted some golden palace of imperial poetry, to indulge in hazy reveries that do not differ from those of an innocent quiet child! The soul has a long road to travel—from time through eternity. It demands its halting-hours of contemplation.—BULWER.



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

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## Light:

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

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5th, 1891.

**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.

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### PROFESSOR OLIVER LODGE AT THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION.

One of the most interesting of the addresses delivered at Cardiff came from a man who has done much to investigate Spiritualism in a spirit more candid than that which we are, unfortunately, acquainted with. It is very desirable that Dr. Lodge's words, which have been well considered, should be placed on record. It is an open secret that he has convinced himself by personal experiment that there is much to be inquired into and understood in what Spiritualists set forth.

We quote his address at a length disproportionate to our columns, but its importance will excuse that:—

He now took the risk of introducing a rather ill-favoured and disreputable looking stranger in the assured conviction that he is not all scamp, and that his present condition is as much due to our long-continued neglect as to any inherent incapacity for improvement in the subject. What he had to say must rest on his own responsibility. He was willing to incur such amount of opprobrium as naturally attaches to those who enter on a region where the fires of controversy are not extinct. It would be a great pity if a too absorbed attention to what has already been acquired, and to the fringe of territory lying immediately adjacent thereto, were to end in our losing the power of raising our eyes and receiving evidence of a totally fresh kind. The ordinary processes of observation and experiment are establishing the existence of such a region; that in fact they have already established the truth of some phenomena not at present contemplated by science, and to which the orthodox man shuts his ears. For instance, there is the question whether it has or has not been established by direct experiment that a method of communication exists between mind and mind irrespective of the ordinary channels of consciousness and the known organs of sense, and, if so, what is the process. It can hardly be through some unknown sense organ, but it may be by some direct physical influence on the ether or it may be in some still more subtle manner. For brevity it may be styled "thought-transference," though the name may turn out to be an unsuitable one after further investigation. Further investigation is just what is wanted. No one can expect others to accept his word for an entirely new fact, except as establishing a *prima facie* case for investigation. Whether it be a truth or a fiction, there is not one of the recognised scientific societies who would receive a paper on the subject. There are individual scientific men who have investigated these matters for themselves; there are others

who are willing to receive evidence, who hold their minds open and their judgment in suspense; but these are only individuals. The great majority feel active hostility to these researches and a determined opposition to the reception or discussion of evidence. A few tricks at a public performance, or the artifices of some impostor, and they decline to consider the matter further. But the question was the attitude to be adopted by scientific bodies in their corporate capacity. In the early days of the Copernican theory, Galileo for some years refrained from teaching it, because he considered that he had better get more fully settled in his University chair before evoking the storm of controversy which the abandonment of the Ptolemaic system would arouse. The same thing in very minor degree is going on to-day. Men hesitate to avow interest in new investigations (not credence, but interest) until they have settled down more securely and made a name for themselves in other lines. The field is the borderland of physics and psychology, the connection between life and energy, or the connection between mind and matter. It is an intermediate region, bounded on the north by psychology, on the south by physics, on the east by physiology, and on the west by pathology and medicine. (Laughter.) An occasional psychologist has groped down into it and become a metaphysician. An occasional physicist has wandered up into it and lost his base, to the horror of his quondam brethren. Biologists mostly look at it askance, or deny its existence. A few medical practitioners, after long maintenance of a similar attitude, have begun to annex a portion of its western frontier. The whole region seems to be inhabited mainly by savages, many of them, so far as we can judge from a distance, given to gross superstition. (Laughter.) "Why not leave it to the metaphysicians?" It has been left to them long enough. They have explored it with insufficient equipment. The physical knowledge of the great philosophers has been necessarily scanty. They appear to have guessed far more than they saw. The scientific method is different; it creeps slowly from the base of physical knowledge. A vulnerable spot seems to be the connection between life and energy. The conservation of energy has been so long established as to have become a commonplace. The relation of life to energy is not understood. Life is not energy, and the death of an animal affects the amount of energy no whit; yet a live animal exerts control over energy which a dead one cannot. Life is a guiding or directing principle, disturbing to the physical world, but not yet given a place in the scheme of physics. The transfer of energy is accounted for by the performance of work; the guidance of energy needs no work, but demands force only. What is force, and how can living beings exert it in the way they do? As automata, worked by preceding conditions—that is, by the past—say the materialists. Are we so sure that they are not worked by the future too? In other words, that the totality of things, by which everyone must admit that actions are guided, includes the future as well as the past, and that to attempt to deduce those actions from the past only will prove impossible. In some way matter can be moved, guided, disturbed by the agency of living beings; in some way there is a control, a directing-agency active, and events are caused at its choice, and will, that would not otherwise happen. A luminous and helpful idea is that time is but a relative mode of regarding things; we progress through phenomena at a certain definite pace, and this subjective advance we interpret in an objective manner, as if events necessarily happened in this order, and at this precise rate. But that may be only one mode of regarding them. The events may be in some sense existent always, both past and future, and it may be we who are arriving at them, not they which are happening. The analogy of a traveller in a railway train is useful. If he could never leave the train nor alter its pace he would probably consider the landscapes as necessarily successive, and be unable to conceive their co-existence. The analogy of a solid cut into sections is closer. We recognise the universe in sections, and each section we call the present. It is like the string of slices cut by a microscope; it is our way of studying the whole. But we may err in supposing that the body only exists in the slices which pass before our microscope in regular order and succession. We perceive, therefore, a possible fourth-dimensional aspect about time, the inexorableness of whose flow may be a natural part of our present limitations. And if once we



grasp the idea that past and future may be actually existing, we can recognise that they may have a controlling influence on all present action, and the two together may constitute "the higher plane," or the totality of things, after which, as it seems to me, we are impelled to seek, in connection with the directing of force or determinism, and the action of living beings consciously directed to a definite and pre-conceived end. By what means is force exerted, and what, definitely, is force? There is here something not provided for in the orthodox scheme of physics; modern physics is not complete, and a line of possible advance lies in this direction. Given that force can be exerted by an act of will, do we understand the mechanism by which this is done? And if there is a gap in our knowledge between the conscious idea of a motion and the liberation of muscular energy needed to accomplish it, how do we know that a body may not be moved without ordinary material contact by an act of will? We require more knowledge before we can deny the possibility. If the conservation of energy were upset by the process, we should have grounds for denying it; but nothing that we know is upset by the discovery of a novel medium of communication, perhaps some more immediate action through the ether. It is no use theorising; it is unwise to decline to examine phenomena because we feel too sure of their impossibility. We ought to know the universe very thoroughly and completely before we take up that attitude. Again, it is familiar that a thought may be excited in the brain of another person, transferred thither from our brain, by pulling a suitable trigger; by liberating energy in the form of sound, for instance, or by the mechanical act of writing, or in other ways. A pre-arranged code called language, and a material medium of communication, are the recognised methods. May there not also be an immaterial (perhaps an ethereal) medium of communication? Is it possible that an idea can be transferred from one person to another by a process such as we have not yet grown accustomed to, and know practically nothing about? In this case I have evidence. I assert that I have seen it done, and am perfectly convinced of the fact. Many others are satisfied of the truth of it too. Why must we speak of it with bated breath, as of a thing of which we are ashamed? What right have we to be ashamed of a truth? And, after all, when we have grown accustomed to it, it will not seem altogether strange. It is, perhaps, a natural consequence of the community of life or family relationship running through all living beings. The transmission of life may be likened in some ways to the transmission of magnetism, and all magnets are sympathetically connected, so that if suitably suspended a vibration from one disturbs others, even though they be distant 92,000,000 miles. It is sometimes objected that, granting thought-transference or telepathy to be a fact, it belongs more especially to lower forms of life, and that as the cerebral hemispheres develop we become independent of it; that what we notice is the relic of a decaying faculty, not the germ of a new and fruitful sense; and that progress is not to be made by studying or attending to it. It may be that it is an immature mode of communication, adapted to lower stages of consciousness than ours, but how much can we not learn by studying immature stages? As well might the objection be urged against a study of embryology. It may, on the other hand, be an indication of a higher mode of communication, which shall survive our temporary connection with ordinary matter. I have spoken of the apparently direct action of mind on mind, and of a possible action of mind on matter. But the whole region is unexplored territory, and it is conceivable that matter may react on mind in a way we can at present only dimly imagine. In fact, the barrier between the two may gradually melt away, as so many other barriers have done, and we may end in a wider perception of the unity of nature, such as philosophers have already dreamt of. I care not what the end may be. I do care that the inquiry shall be conducted by us, and that we shall be free from the disgrace of jogging along accustomed roads, leaving to outsiders the work, the ridicule, and the gratification of unfolding a new region to unwilling eyes. It may be held that such investigations are not physical and do not concern us. We cannot tell without trying. In that I trust my instinct. I believe there is something in this religion which does concern us as physicists. It may concern other sciences too. It must, one would suppose, some day concern biology; but with that I

have nothing to do. Biologists have their religion, we have ours, and there is no need for us to hang back from an investigation because they do. Our own science, or physics, or natural philosophy in its widest sense, is the king of the sciences, and it is for us to lead, not to follow. And I say, have faith in the intelligibility of the universe. Intelligibility has been the great creed in the strength of which all intellectual advance has been attempted and all scientific progress made. At first things always look mysterious. A comet, lightning, the aurora, the rainbow—all strange, anomalous, mysterious apparitions. But scrutinised in the dry light of science, the relationship with other better-known things becomes apparent. They cease to be anomalous, and, though a certain mystery necessarily remains, it is no more a property peculiar to them; it is shared by the commonest objects of daily life. The operations of a chemist, again, if conducted in a haphazard manner, would be an indescribable medley of effervescences, precipitations, changes in colour and in substance; but, guided by a thread of theory running through them, the processes fall into a series; they all become fairly intelligible, and any explosion or catastrophe that may occur is capable of explanation too. Now I say that the doctrine of ultimate intelligibility should be pressed into other departments also. At present we hang back from whole regions of inquiry and say they are not for us. A few we are beginning to grapple with. The nature of disease is yielding to scrutiny with fruitful result; the mental aberrations and abnormalities of hypnotism, duplex personality, and allied phenomena are now at last being taken under the wing of science after long ridicule and contempt. The phenomenon of crime, the scientific meaning and justification of altruism and other matters relating to life and conduct are beginning, or perhaps are barely yet beginning, to show a vulnerable front over which the forces of science may pour. Facts so strange that they have often been called miraculous are now no longer regarded as entirely incredible. All occurrences seem reasonable when contemplated from the right point of view, and some are believed in which in their essence are still quite marvellous. Apply warmth for a given period to a sparrow's egg, and what result could be more incredible or magical if now discovered for the first time? The possibilities of the universe are as infinite as is its physical extent. Why should we grope with our eyes always downward, and deny the possibility of everything out of our accustomed beat? If there is a puzzle about free-will, let it be attacked; puzzles mean a state of half-knowledge; by the time we can grasp something more approximating to the totality of things the paradoxity of paradoxes drops away and becomes unrecognisable. I seem to myself to catch glimpses of clues to many of these old questions, and I urge that we should trust consciousness, which has led us thus far; should shrink from no problem when the time seems ripe for an attack upon it, and should not hesitate to press investigation, and ascertain the laws of even the most recondite problems of life and mind. What we know is as nothing to that which remains to be known. This is sometimes said as a truism; sometimes it is half-doubted. To me it seems the most literal truth, and that if we narrow our view to already half-conquered territory only, we shall be false to the men who won our freedom, and treasonable to the highest claims of science. I must now return to the work of this section. But I hold that occasionally a wide outlook is wholesome, and that without such occasional survey the rigid attention to detail and minute scrutiny of every little fact, which are so entirely admirable and are so rightly here fostered, are apt to become unhealthily, dull, and monotonous. Our life-work is concerned with the rigid framework of facts, the skeleton or outline map of the universe; and, though it is well for us occasionally to remember that the texture, and colour, and beauty which we habitually ignore are not therefore in the slightest degree non-existent, yet it is safest speedily to return to our base and continue the slow and laborious march with which we are familiar and which experience has justified. It is because I imagine that such systematic advance is now beginning to be possible in a fresh and unexpected direction that I have attempted to direct your attention to a subject which, if my prognostications are correct, may turn out to be one of special and peculiar interest to humanity.

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MR. AND MRS. HAWKINS, whose advertisement appears on our first page, wish us to state that they will not be at home until Wednesday, the 9th inst.



### MRS. BESANT'S FAREWELL TO SECULARISM

Mrs. Annie Besant spoke for the last time on Sunday night, August 30th, where she has so often spoken, in the Hall of Science, Old-street, City-road. Her address was entitled "From 1875 to 1891: A Fragment of Biography." It was Mrs. Besant's farewell to the Secularist Society, and there was a great anxiety to hear what she might say. The hall was crowded to its utmost capacity. Leading Secularists occupied the platform, and Mrs. Thornton Smith was in the chair. In introducing Mrs. Besant, the chairwoman simply said, "To-night my friend Mrs. Besant speaks from this platform for the last time." When Mrs. Besant rose a voice cried "Shame," then there were many cries of "No, no," then cheering, which lasted for several minutes.

On February 28th, 1875 (said Mrs. Besant, in the course of her address), I stood for the first time on the platform of the Hall of Science, and spoke from that platform to a Freethought audience. I was announced in my own name, added to which was the one under which I had written in the "National Reformer." That was the name of "Ajax." I chose that name for writing in the "Reformer" because of the words which were said to have broken from the lips of Ajax when the darkness came down on him and his army. The words said to have rung from the lips of Ajax out of the darkness and the danger were, "Light, more light." It is that cry of light which has been the keynote of my own intellectual life. It was, and is so—wherever the light may lead me, through whatever difficulties.

#### A TRIBUTE TO MR. BRADLAUGH.

Months before, in the August of the preceding year, I had come to the hall for the first time to receive my certificate of entrance into the National Secularist Society. I received it from the greatest president the society has had or is likely to have. (Cheers.) From that time there dated a friendship to which no words of mine can do justice or speak gratitude. Had he lived this lecture would probably not have had to be given. If there was one thing above all others which Charles Bradlaugh did, it was to keep the Freethought platform free from any narrowness of doctrine or belief. I was elected vice-president of the National Secularist Society, a position I laid down when the president gave up office. I began my service in the society under him, and I can serve no lesser man. From that time forward I constantly occupied a part in the work, and they were rougher days than the Freethought party in the provinces have to face now. Of that first year I can remember some interesting things—stones thrown, broken windows, and walks through waving sticks. These are arguments people were readier to use then than now, for the party has grown much stronger during the sixteen and a half years which have elapsed. In two brief years that struggle came, in which Charles Bradlaugh and I defended the right to publish at a cheap rate information which we considered useful for the masses of the poor. How bitter that struggle was you all know. Its results were that no amount of slander or abuse could thereafter make much difference when one thought it right to take a particular line of conduct. When one has been once through the fire of torture, when everything a man or woman can hold dear have been assailed or maligned, all other opposition seems but poor and feeble.

#### FURTHER THAN EVER FROM CHRISTIANITY.

I do not regret the step I then took, for I know that the verdict of history is given, not on what one has believed, but on how one has worked. In 1872 I broke with Christianity, and I broke with it once and for all. I have nothing to unsay, nothing to undo, nothing to retract, as regards my position then and now. I broke with it, and I am no nearer to it now than I was when I first joined the ranks of the National Secularist Society. I do not say that my language then was not harsher than it would be now, for in the first moments after a great struggle you do not always think for the feelings of others with the charity and toleration which would commend you to them. But upon the groundwork of my rejection of Christianity then I have nothing to alter, and I stand on that ground to-day as I stood then. A man by the force of logic may break with opinions long held, but I doubt if there be any woman who can break with any faith she has held without paying some heart's blood as the price of the change, some bitter meed of pain for what is broken. Still people speak so lightly about change in theological

belief. Those who speak lightly have never felt deeply. (Cheers.) They do not know what belief is to a life modelled round it, and those are not the feeblest free-thinkers but the strongest who have been able to break with the faith they have outgrown but who still feel that the intellect has been the master of the heart. In the newer light to which I have passed, return to Christianity has become even more impossible than in any older days of the National Secularist Society. Then I rejected Christianity seeing its illogical impossibilities; now I understand as I never understood before. As regards belief in the personality of God, I have nothing to say different to what I said many years ago; the concept of a personal God is as impossible to me now as it was then. Glancing back to the materialism to which I clung for so many years, and the steps by which I left it behind, there is one point I desire to place on record. You have materialism of two very different schools. There is the materialism which cares nothing for man but only for itself, which seeks only personal gain, and cares only for the moment. With that materialism neither I nor those with whom I had worked had anything in common. That is a materialism which destroys the glory of human life, a materialism which can only be held by the degraded; never a materialism preached from this platform, or the training schools which have known many of the noblest intellects and purest hearts.

#### MATERIALISM IS NOT ENOUGH.

To the materialism of such men as Clifford and Charles Bradlaugh I have no sort of reproach to speak, and never shall. I know it is a philosophy which few are able to live out—to work without self as an object is the great lesson of human life. But there are problems in the universe which materialism not only does not solve, but which it declares are insoluble—difficulties which materialism cannot grapple with, about which it says man must remain dumb for evermore. I came to problem after problem for which scientific materialism had no answer. Yet these things were facts. I came across facts for which my philosophy had no place. What was I to do? Was I to say that nature was not greater than my knowledge, and that because a fact was new it was an illusion? Not thus had I learned the lesson of materialistic science. When I found that there were facts of life other than as the materialists defined it, I determined still to go on—although the foundations were shaking—and not be recreant enough in the search after truth to draw back because it wore a face other than the one I had expected. I had read two books by Mr. Sinnett, and these threw an intelligible light on a large number of facts which had always remained unexplained in the history of man. The books did not carry me very far, but they suggested a new line of investigation, and from that time forward I looked for other clues. Those clues were not definitely found until early in the year 1889. I had experimented then, and before, in Spiritualism, and found many facts and much folly in it. In 1889 I had a book given me to review—a book written by H. P. Blavatsky, entitled "The Secret Doctrine." I suppose I was given it to review because I was thought to be more or less mad on such subjects. I knew on studying that book that I had found the clue I had been seeking, and I then asked for an introduction to the writer, feeling that one who had written it might tell me something of a path along which I might travel. I met Madame Blavatsky for the first time, and before long I placed myself under her tuition, and there is nothing in the whole of my life for which I am as grateful as the apparent accident which threw her book into my hand. I know in this hall there will not be many who will share the view I take of Madame Blavatsky. I know her; you don't—and in that may lie the difference of our understanding. You talk about a "fraud," and so on. I read the proofs of the supposed fraud; I judged those proofs false, and I knew them to be false when I came to know her.

#### IN COMMUNICATION WITH THE UNKNOWN TEACHERS.

You have known me in this hall for sixteen and a half years. (Cheers.) You have never known me tell a lie to you. ("No, never," and loud cheers.) My worst public enemy has never cast a slur upon my integrity. ("Never," and cheers.) I tell you that since Madame Blavatsky left I have had letters in the same handwriting as the letters which she received. Unless you think dead persons can write, surely that is a remarkable fact. You are surprised;



I do not ask you to believe me; but I tell you it is so. All the evidence I had of the existence of Madame Blavatsky's teachers and of the so-called abnormal powers came through her. It is not so now. Unless every sense can at the same time deceive me, unless a person can at the same time be sane and insane, I have exactly the same certainty for the truth of the statements I have made as I know that you are here. I refuse to be false to the knowledge of my intellect and the perception of my reasoning faculties. Every month which has passed since Madame Blavatsky left has given me more and more light. Are you, I would ask, quite wise to believe that you are right, and that there is nothing in the universe you do not know? It is not a safe position to take up. It has been taken up in other days and always assailed. It was taken up by the Roman Church, by the Protestant Church. If it is to be taken up by the Freethought party now, are we to regard the body as the one and final possessor of knowledge, which may never be increased? That, and nothing less, is the position you are taking at the present time. ("Yes," "Yes," "No," "No," cheers and hisses.) What is the reason I leave your platform? Why do I do so? I shall tell you. Because your society sends me off it. The reason this is my last lecture is because when the hall passes into the hands of the National Secularist Society I should not be permitted to say anything going against the principles and objects of that society. Now I shall never speak under such conditions. (Cheers.) I did not break with the great Church of England and ruin my social position in order that I might come to this platform and be told what I should say. Our late leader would never have done it. I do not challenge the right of your society to make any conditions you like. But, my friends and brothers, is it wise? I hold that the right of the speaker to speak is beyond all limitation save of the reason. If you are right, discussion will not shake your platform; if you are wrong, you should be glad to have arguments put forward which would act as a corrective. While I admit your right to debar me, I sorely misjudge the wisdom of the judgment. (Hear, hear.)

#### SOME WORDS OF GRATITUDE AND OF FAREWELL.

In bidding you farewell I have no words save words of gratitude. In this hall for well-nigh seventeen years I have met with a kindness which has never changed, a loyalty which has never broken, a courage which has always been ready to stand by me. Without your help I should have been crushed many a year ago; without the love you gave me my heart had been broken many, many years since. But not even for you shall a gag be placed on my mouth; not even for your sake will I promise not to speak of that which I know now to be truth. (Cheers.) I should commit a treachery to truth and conscience if I allowed anyone to stand between my right to speak out that which I believe I have found. And so henceforth I must speak in other halls than in yours. Henceforth to this hall—identified with so much of struggle and pain and so much also of the strongest joy nature can know—I shall be a stranger. To you—friends and comrades of so many years—of whom I have spoken no harsh words since I left you, for whom I have none but words of gratitude—to you I say farewell, going out into a life shorn indeed of many friends but with a true conscience and a good heart. I know that those to whom I have pledged my services are true and pure and bright. I would never have left your platform unless I had been compelled. I must take my dismissal if it must be. To you now and for the rest of this life I bid farewell.

During the closing sentences of her address Mrs. Besant spoke under great emotion—an emotion which was reflected by not a few of her hearers. Having ended she left the platform with the friends who accompanied her. Meanwhile the place rang with cheers.

In reference to the mysterious messages spoken of in her lecture, Mrs. Besant writes as follows to the "Daily Chronicle":—

H. P. Blavatsky did not claim to have received any letters or messages from the "spirit world," nor did I say that I had received such since her death. Our position is this: There exists a brotherhood of highly-evolved men—men, not "spirits," in the sense of "disembodied spirits"—who have developed their nature in such fashion that they can communicate with others across any distance, ractically

instantaneously. The communication may be by voice or by writing. There is nothing more miraculous in such communications than there is anything miraculous in speaking by telephone from London to Paris, or by telegraphic writing across hundreds of miles; only, these men can speak and write by using currents without wires, instead of currents sent along wires. The letters received from these men—whom we speak of as Mahatmas, or Masters—during H. P. Blavatsky's life were said by her enemies to be fabricated by her; the point of my statement was that letters in the same handwriting had been received by me (and by others) since her departure, thus clearing her from the charge of fraud on this head. Apart from this vindication of her memory, the importance of the matter lies in the existence of men of our race who have evolved faculties and powers far beyond any yet normally enjoyed. It is from these men that the teachings of Theosophy have been received, and a large number of men and women in the Western world were the pupils of H. P. Blavatsky, and were being trained by her under the direct sanction of these Masters. Briefly, our contention is that man is an embodied spirit or mind, and can by proper training, conjoined with a pure and unselfish life, make his body the effective instrument of the spiritual intelligence which dwells in it, and that in the course of this development he obtains a knowledge of nature which places under his control all natural forces, giving him powers that seem miraculous because they are rare and are not understood. But this evolution is an evolution that takes place here on earth, and the Masters are living men. They are spirits, as you and I, Mr. Editor, are spirits, in the sense that every human being is a spirit, but they are not disembodied ghosts. The difference between them and average humanity is that they live in all the power of their essential spiritual nature, using matter as an instrument instead of allowing it to clog their action and blind their intelligence.

#### "FOR GOD AND HUMANITY."\*

It was doubtless the author's intention to convey in this novel an outline of his ideas upon certain fundamental matters of Divine truth in a pleasant and readable way, and in this it is our clear opinion that he has succeeded. The interest is sustained from first to last. The book abounds with incident which is often thrilling, and with descriptions of Eastern manners and scenery which are always graphic, while the didactic part is conveyed in a manner which is never wearisome, and the principles advocated will, we believe, command the assent of all earnest readers.

The hero of the story, Cyril Gordon, is—in main features—intended to represent the late Laurence Oliphant. We are duly notified of this fact in the preface, but so closely is the likeness drawn that to anyone who knew anything of Oliphant's life and views the information was scarcely needed. The scorn of conventional Christianity, the strong enthusiasm for perfect loyalty to the words and spirit of Christ, the utter self-surrender, whereby the man preached as much by what he was and did as by what he said, all combine to indicate the personality here masked under the name of Cyril Gordon: while, to make any mistake about the fact quite impossible, the scene is laid in Oliphant's Eastern home.

But although the main purpose of the book is clearly didactic, it is at the same time a genuine story, and abounds with incident and action. It opens with a murder, and closes with a tragic catastrophe involving the death of the hero. There is a dash of the love element, a sprinkling of the mysterious in the way of dream and presentiment, and a long description of a Greek wedding. Lost relatives unexpectedly turn up in unexpected places. There is a gambling scene in an undergraduate's room at Cambridge, which is, we are told in the preface, drawn from an actual occurrence; and there is an account of the iniquitous life and well-deserved death of a Turkish tax-collector, who not only grinds the natives, but seeks to entrap a rich English gentleman through the instrumentality of his (the Turk's) own beautiful daughter, and, after having been proved to be the instigator of the murder with which the story begins, is shot by one of his own servants, who had (much to his credit) interfered to prevent the success of his master's plot

\* "For God and Humanity." A Romance of Mount Carmel. 3 vols. William Blackwood and Sons. 1891.



against the Englishman, and so knew that the only question was which of the two of them should die.

This is quite enough to prove to the ordinary reader that the story does not lack interest. And along with the incidents go the most interesting descriptions of the scenery of Mount Carmel and the neighbourhood; of the Druses who inhabit it; and of their manners and customs; told in a way which will, we feel confident, beguile even the ordinary reader into forgetting to skip, while the reader who has no objection to be consciously instructed while he reads will peruse it with appreciation and delight.

But no doubt the real core of the book in the intention of its author is the promulgation of those views of the true spirit of Christianity to which he has been led by his intercourse with Laurence Oliphant. In learning from a teacher of strong personality there is sometimes a danger that the learner should adopt direct the views of his teacher, rather than form views of his own by means of the suggestion of his teacher. We do not think that this is at all the case with our author. The view he puts forward seems to be genuinely his own view, and there are matters upon which he does not shrink from differing from his teacher.

Quite wisely, we think, the author has declined to introduce into the book the more abstruse matters of Oliphant's philosophy. Here is nothing about the sympneumatic soul and the bi-unity of all Being, of which we read so much in "Sympneumata" and "Scientific Religion." But upon the great practical questions of what Christ's teaching as to conduct really means, and how far is a Christian bound to strive to obey it literally—questions in which many are beginning to take keen interest nowadays—these are very fully and clearly discussed, and a plain conclusion is drawn.

This conclusion calls for a word of comment. It is put in this way: Christ, being undeniably a person of common-sense, must have meant what He said, and, as the One by Whom all things were made, cannot be conceived of as inculcating a system of conduct which should be incapable of being practically carried out. But it is obvious that *if we assume the present-day system of competition*, many of the maxims of Christ will be found to be impracticable. Therefore, it must follow either that Christ did not know the world well enough to lay down workable rules, or that a power of living in some spirit contrary to competition has been lost by the Christian world. It is the position of our author that the latter is the case. That such a power does exist, and may be attained by those sufficiently in earnest to pursue and discover it, is proved first by the life of Christ Himself, and also by the lives of those heroes of Truth who have given up all for their faith in Him. The possession and application of the "power," while it may involve loss of much external matter, will bring gain of internal peace and blessedness, and ability to help in cases where—to the conventionally-minded—help seems impossible, but it cannot be attained by any whose main object is to save their own soul first, and who regard every self-sacrifice as a direct means of winning this good. There must be a surrender of all self-personal motives, and a genuine outgoing emotion of love to all, that, like St. Paul, would be willing to be personally accursed if only thereby others might be blessed.

One thing alone we permit ourselves to wish as we read the story, and that is that we had been shown the Christ-like life of Cyril Gordon lived out, not among the thinly peopled heights of Carmel, but in England, amid the turmoil of commercial competition and social conventionality. We should like to have had a glimpse of Sir Thomas Randolph returned to his home and Parliamentary duties, trying to live out there that more spiritual view of Christianity which Cyril Gordon had opened to him. To picture this, and to be true to life and fact, would be no easy task, though certainly it ought to be possible. Will Mr. Haskett Smith ever be induced to attempt it?

A CORRESPONDENT living in the South of London wishes to unite himself with a circle of Christian Spiritualists with a view of obtaining the benefit of more mature experience in belief and practice.—Address, P. R., office of "Light," 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C.

WE regret to learn that the wife of Mr. J. J. Morse has undergone a most critical and dangerous operation, but are glad that the result has been favourable. Mr. Morse has been known so long to all sorts and conditions of Spiritualists that we feel sure that the sympathy of our readers will go out to him.

## ANTONINA: A "GENIUS" OR A SPORT.

ARRANGED FOR "LIGHT" BY NIZIDA.

### No. I.

As the holiday time of year has arrived and readers of "LIGHT" are doubtless mostly enjoying the *dolce far niente* of well-earned repose, watching the sportive happiness and listening to the innocent prattle of their young ones at some country or seaside resort, it may interest them to have presented to their notice a small psychic production of America, in the person of a young lady of five, or thereabouts, called "Antonina."

Professor Huxley has said: "Genius to my mind means innate capacity of any kind above the average mental level. From a biological point of view, I should say that a genius among men stands in the same position as a 'sport' among animals and plants, and is a product of the variability which is the postulate of selection both natural and artificial." Since the possibilities of variability in form and qualities amongst plants and animals are probably infinite, we concede that upon those lower planes nature may and does produce "sports" in illimitable variety; but when it comes to the evolution of intellectual beings upon the plane of humanity "above the average mental level," we cannot agree with the Professor that productions upon this plane stand by any means in "the same position" as a sport, or freak of nature. A "sport" or freak of nature in humanity would occur, we opine, upon the physical or animal plane alone, in shapes abnormal and inharmonious—deformities, in short; whilst indications of moral or intellectual superiority over the general level of humanity, and even of abnormal, harmonious physical powers of any kind, would be evidences of the evolution of a higher class or genius in humanity: a level which all human beings in the lapse of centuries may be destined to reach, inasmuch as they hold within themselves potentialities thereunto. The denizens of earth are being continually revisited by returning entities who have either evolved mental faculties and powers beyond the general level, or have so prepared the ground for them in former lives, that they display themselves at a tender age with a startling spontaneity before which we stand amazed. Especially does the present appear to be a period wherein the unsuspected powers of the soul enshrined in man are revealing themselves in a variety of ways, indicating that man is to attain a function upon a superior plane of conscious existence which scientists of materialistic tendencies would deny him. So strange do these unknown and at present abnormal functions appear to the halting scientist, buttressed as he is behind his carefully proven but entirely physical facts, that he is fain to view them as aberrations rather than a perfectioning of mental powers upon a higher plane. Complex being as he may concede man to be in his actual normal state of existence, yet he cannot conceive him as being more complex still, and destined to transcend his present level by many degrees of psychic and spiritual elevation—even on this earth. Taking this view, we would class the interesting little product of society at its present highest level in America, called Antonina, as a "genius"—for she certainly transcends by a great deal in precocity of ideas the average of child-humanity at the present day.

The "Path," of New York, has for some time been entertaining its readers with extracts from the private note-books of a certain enraptured "Auntie" of Antonina's, and her delight over the precocious sayings of this fascinating little specimen of humanity are not by any means to be wondered at. If ever a child brought to earth the reflection upon its mind of the heavenly home it last rested in; of the lessons of supernal wisdom it garnered up in its inmost soul during that rest for use on earth during its next incarnation—then this sweet little being has brought to us this heavenly light in unusual measure, and displays it in the midst of our lower darkness in momentary flashes and gleams, as the fluttering firefly displays its effulgence in the darkened reaches of fields and gardens at every lift of its tiny wings. To still further carry out the simile, Antonina's wings may be said to be the obscurations caused by the earthly personality now worn, which momentarily hides the light of the soul within, but being still tenuous and ethereal, can be lifted by the soul like fluttering wings, permitting its light to be seen. Unhappily, this obscuration must increase as the



child roots herself deeper in the earth-life; but the inner light can never depart, and Antonina, if she be not spoiled by the loving admiration of over-fond relatives and friends, may grow to be, in some mode or other, a spiritual leader of humanity.

It is rather a startling peculiarity on the part of this child that she prattles upon the fact of her having been on earth in a previous existence; and in her childish way gravely enunciates theories of an occult nature which are extraordinary, considering that her parents are neither Spiritualists nor Theosophists, and she can never have had these subjects brought before her baby mind in any shape or form on this earth. It is true her adoring Auntie is an F.T.S., but she has never talked Theosophy to the child, "feeling in honour bound," says the "Path," "not to do so."

We cannot do better than present Antonina in the beautiful language of "Julius," her present fascinated biographer.

When that small witch, Antonina, first appeared at the tea table, we were led into instant captivity; all, all, not one escaped the thrall of this airy little philosopher, gowned in white frills, mouth serious, eyes smiling, ready to laugh or frown as she might swiftly prefer. The halo of her four years hung innocently about her; she enchanted by her abrupt and natural transitions. Now she was a hearty child, running, laughing from corner to corner, a little romp, eager only for play. Suddenly she would drop down upon any preferred place, her deepening eyes would take on a far-away expression; her face grew rapt; it paled into that illuminated pallor which suggests a light shining through alabaster, and shows the interior soul-light breaking forth. In these moods truths seemed accessible to her. She had innate ideas. The child-like language in which she clothed them was poetical; its earnestness thrilled her hearers almost to awe. While we still vibrated with this sensation, presto! up jumps Antonina, again a jovial child, off to the lawn and her playmates and toys. Already she has the power when her baby fingers slip along the piano keys to produce little tunes of her own from them, just as she sings such new airs to rhymed verses of her own improvisation. These, she says, are taught to her by her Pillakatuka (Pillaka-tōoka). Asked what this Pillakatuka is, she replies, laying her small hand upon her breast: "The Pillakatuka is in here. When you see, Auntie, it is not you that sees, it is the Pillakatuka. You don't hear anything; you think you do, but it is the Pillakatuka that hears. When you go to sleep, the Pillakatuka gets out and goes to Heaven for a little while. If the Pillakatuka didn't come back, you would never wake up; you would be dead. My Pillakatuka knows everything." I do not know that word nor do those whom I have consulted. If Antonina were asked where she got it, and what it was, she would reply, as in effect she has, "The Pillakatuka is my Pillakatuka in here; you have one, Auntie, don't you feel it?"

She had been shut between city walls all winter, and on the first occasion of her being taken into the country in spring, she having then attained the mature age of four, her joy knew no bounds. All day she ran about the lawn; the ripples of her delightful laughter rang from every nook, and from under every spring-laden bush shone her beaming face. At dusk she abandoned her play. Coming into the house, she sat down in a corner, apparently revolving the day's pleasures in her mind. At last she spoke.

"Auntie, I shall sing you a song. It's a pretty song, Auntie. It's about 'spring birds in the air.'" The baby voice piped up, and she gave one of her little improvisations, the words and air being her own. Sweet it was, and of a flute-like quality; it might have been the "Great God Pan" piping among "the reeds by the river." A little pause followed, while again she collected her thoughts; her rapt face summed up experience. "Now, Auntie, I shall sing you another song. This one is much prettier. It is 'the song of the winds in the pines.'" A more finished air and song followed. "And now," she cried, "I shall sing you a most beautiful one. This, this is the prettiest of all! It is 'the joy of ripe fruit.'" I do not need to say how enchanting was this "prettiest song of all." In the babe the poet spoke. The ardent ferment and impulse of ripe fruit under the sun "wooded from out the bud," the first sentient thrills towards consciousness, were brought before the mind as Antonina, in her shadowy corner, sang, with veiled eyes and shining face, this occult teaching in her child's words, at the bidding of the "Pillakatuka."

On one occasion this Auntie had been reading to Antonina an account of a boy who had been much injured. It impressed Antonina so much that, climbing into the Auntie's lap, she said:

"Where did they carry that little boy?"

"I don't know. I suppose they carried him to the hospital."

"Well, why didn't they carry him to God's house?"

"Why," was the somewhat startled response; "I think they just took him to the hospital, where they could make him well again."

"Oh!" said Antonina, "they ought to have taken him to God's house. I've been there. I've been all through the skies; it's very nice there; he needn't have been afraid. It isn't dark there; that is, it isn't *very* dark; it's very nice."

"What do you mean?" said auntie.

"I was there once and nothing happened to me at all, and I saw a beautiful great Light coming towards me, and it was God Himself, and He asked me what I was doing there; and I told Him that I was getting made into a girl. It had to be made into something, you know, and it was a girl."

"When was that?"

"That was before I came here. I used to be old, and then I was made young again." After a short pause she added, "Why doesn't grandpa get made young again, like Uncle S.?"

We should call this a blending of two states of consciousness, and a reminiscence of *Devachan* (Heaven): vague, and dreamy, interpreted by the child according to her infantile earthly mortality. The great Light supposed to be God; God's house; and her soul, designated as "*It*," having to be made over into "something."

Antonina informs us that "Everybody has a Pillakatuka." One morning she lay in bed with her mother, talking about the Pillakatuka, its uses, and so on, and finally worked up to this: "And when you are asleep, you know, it goes up to Heaven, and then you seem as if you were dead, but you aren't, you know."

"What does it go there for?" asks mamma.

"To get something to eat; of course, it can't eat what we do. And when we *really* die, the Pillakatuka goes to Heaven and stays there."

"And what does it do there?"

"Well, you know, it doesn't stay there very long, because your Pillakatuka has to keep working all the time; so in a little time it comes down to earth again, and goes into another human being, and then it just goes on working here again. And Jack" (the dog) "has a *kind* of a Pillakatuka too. And when Jack dies his Pillakatuka goes to Heaven too, and perhaps, *perhaps*, next time he'll be a man."

Some time later she spoke of her "spirit," and was asked: "Is that your Pillakatuka?" "Oh, no!" she replied with quick scorn; "the *spirit* is in my heart."

These, and other precocious remarks which we shall quote from this remarkable little personage reveal the survival of memory across the great gulf intervening between one life and another, quite as strikingly, though in another manner of demonstration, as the wonderful powers displayed by those child prodigies in music, so frequently produced at the present day.

(To be continued.)

#### COLONEL OLCOTT.

Colonel Olcott has just returned from France, where he has been investigating the phenomena of Hypnotism in Paris and Nancy. Dr. Charcot and Dr. Bernheim, the heads of these respective schools, gave him every facility. He returns with the opinion we have so often expressed, that Hypnotism is dangerous to handle, and may, as it often does, deprave the moral sense. Colonel Olcott leaves England soon, returning to Madras, *via* Japan, where he intends convening a council of the High Priests of the various Buddhist sects to consider a draft of fundamental Buddhist beliefs common to both Northern and Southern Buddhism. These have already been accepted by the dignitaries of the Southern branch. We are glad to find that he is restored to health, and is as full of life and energy as he was twenty years ago, when our friendship first began.

TIME AND ETERNITY.—Dr. Garnett in his "Life of Emerson" says: A few pulsations of created being, a few successions of acts, a few lamps held out in the firmament, enable us to talk of time, make epochs with histories, date the revelations of God to man. It is a goodly name for our notions of breathing, suffering, enjoying, acting. We personify it. We call it by every name of dreaming, fleeting, vapouring imagery. Yet it is nothing. We exist in eternity. Dissolve the body and the night is gone, the stars are extinguished, and we measure duration by the numbers of our thoughts, by the activity of reason, the discovery of truths, the acquirement of virtue, the approach to God. And the grey-haired god throws his shadows all around, and his slaves catch, now at this, now at that one; at the halo he throws around poetry, or pebbles, or bugs, or bubbles. Sometimes they climb, sometimes creep into the meanest holes—but they are all alike in vanishing, like the shadow of a cloud.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Madame Greck.

SIR,—Will you allow me through your paper to testify to the mediumship of Madame Greck? Seeing some months ago your remarks in "LIGHT" about her I determined to have some sésances with her. The result is that I am so thoroughly satisfied that I should like others to know of her wonderful power. It seems to me to be a priceless privilege to meet such a splendid medium, and I am convinced that all investigators of Spiritualism cannot do better than make the acquaintance of her controls. The advice, comfort, and enjoyment I have received through her mediumship are the only apology I can offer for taking up your valuable space.

London, August, 1891. A READER OF "LIGHT."

## Trance Visions.

SIR,—On August 20th and 22nd the following dream, or rather trance visions, occurred. In the first the seer observed oblong grain stacks impelled as by a mighty wind in a south-easterly direction, while others were being kept from moving by the efforts of some people present. The vision may be purely symbolic. In the second, in an easterly direction, jets of smoke and flame issued from a waste place near a river, threatening to obstruct its course by a sudden eruption of volcanic matters. Similar jets issued from the side of a hill in a different direction. The events shadowed by the first will come to pass most likely between the end of September and November. Those of the other may be later on.

August 27th, 1891. W. S.

## Seance with Miss Marsh.

SIR,—Perhaps the following account of a séance I lately attended—my first, by-the-way—may prove of interest to your readers. In company with two or three other sceptical friends I was invited to attend a séance given by Miss Marsh, of 218, Jubilee-street, Mile End-road. We commenced the business of the evening by sitting round a large table with our hands resting lightly upon it. After some little time spent in conversing upon ordinary subjects, some light raps were heard upon the top and legs of the table. By means of these raps several messages were spelt out, and to my surprise, were acknowledged to be correct. The medium then rose to her feet, and speaking, as I afterwards found, presumably under the control of some disembodied human spirit, commenced to take each of the sitters in turn and subject them to a personal examination. I being first was taken in hand, and was considerably astonished to find a perfect stranger telling me of matters which I had hitherto believed were known to myself alone. Several of the names of my relations both living and dead were mentioned to me, beside their personal peculiarities, domestic surroundings &c. Many of the houses I am in the habit of visiting were described to me, and the names of some of the people living there. I was also told of two things which I propose in the immediate future. All of the sitters were treated in a similar manner, and all of them appeared equally as mystified as myself.

As I was greatly interested with what I witnessed on this occasion I should be glad if you could point out in your columns some book or books which are likely to give one an idea of the *modus operandi* of the phenomena, and by so doing help to solve the problems at present perplexing

A DWELLER ON THE THRESHOLD.

[A long list is printed in "LIGHT," at intervals, and a short description is given to each book.—ED. "LIGHT."]

## THE "ARENA."

The intellectual wealth of three continents is represented in the September "Arena." Mr. F. W. H. Myer, of Cambridge, England, speaks for European thought in a careful paper on psychical work. Kuma Oishi, M.A., of Tokio, Japan, represents Asia in a brilliant paper on the Extrinsic Significance of Constitutional Government in Japan; while such able thinkers as Rabbi Solomon Schindler, Rev. George C. Lorimer, Thomas B. Preston, Sylvester Baxter, and the Editor represent America. Mr. Flower's paper on "Fashion's Slaves" is illustrated by three full-page photogravures and over a score of smaller pictures, giving the prevailing fashions during the past generation. It is a strong appeal for dress reform. He considers the subject from artistic, hygienic, and ethical points of view. The frontispiece of this issue is a portrait of the distinguished Baptist divine, Rev. Geo. C. Lorimer. A good picture of Kuma Oishi also accompanies his paper.

## 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. No notice received later than the first post on Tuesday is sure of admission.]*

50, BECKLOW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—Sunday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mr. Norton. Tuesday, at 8 p.m., Mr. Holmes. Saturday, Mr. Norton.—C. N.

24, HARCOURT-STREET, MARYLEBONE.—On Sunday last Mrs. Spring's guides gave clairvoyant descriptions very successfully. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mr. T. Pursey, "Spirit Teachings"; at 7 p.m., Mr. McKenzie, "Phrenology." Thursday, at 7.45 p.m., Mrs. Spring. Saturday, at 7.45 p.m., Mrs. Treadwell.—C. WHITE.

CARDIFF.—At the Psychological Hall, on Sunday last, an excellent selection from the works of A. J. Davis, entitled "God: What and Where" was given by Mr. Rees Lewis. The preceding lesson consisted of one out of a number of choice messages given some years ago through the mediumship of Mr. Geo. Spriggs. On Sunday and Monday next addresses will be delivered by Mr. J. J. Morse.—E. A.

PECKHAM RYE.—Last Sunday Mr. Lees gave a lecture, showing that to a loving, forgiving, unchangeable Father the punishment of the innocent for the guilty was impossible, and that therefore the life-work of Jesus was not vicarious sacrifice but a revelation of his God to man, so making them "at one." Next Sunday, at 3.15 p.m., "Two Hells, Christian and Spiritualist."—J. H.

KING'S CROSS SOCIETY, COPENHAGEN HALL, 184, COPENHAGEN-STREET, CALEDONIAN-ROAD.—On Sunday evening next, Mr. H. Sells will deliver an address on "The Rev. Stewart Headlam and the Teachings of the Church." We desire to give timely notice of the tea meeting to be held on the 27th inst., to inaugurate the winter work. In the evening of the same day Mr. E. Bertram, of Forest Hill, will lecture.—G. T. RODGER, Hon. Sec.

311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, LONDON, S.E.—On Sunday last, Mr. Long spoke upon "Our Children in the Other Life." His remarks were listened to with interest, and the usual circle followed. Our tea and social meeting have been postponed until September 29th, owing to the holidays. Thursday, September 3rd, address. Saturday, September 5th, open members' circle. Sunday, September 6th, services at 11.15 and 7; Lyceum at 3.—A. L. WARD, 59, Trinity square, Borough, S.E.

WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—Last Sunday Mr. Lees spoke in the morning upon the methods of education of children in the spirit world, which has to vary as much as individuality varies, because growth is not by years but by progress. The end of all teaching, he said, was the elimination of selfishness, and for that purpose some children had to return to earth to gain experience. In the evening Mr. Lees' guides gave us some characteristic "birth speeches" of spirits entering the next existence from this, bringing out very clearly that it was deeds, not creeds which conditioned the welcome there. Friday, at 8.15 p.m., healing. Sunday, at 11.15 p.m., "The Latest Fruits of Theosophy"; at 7 p.m., Mr. Butcher, "False Theology."—J. HAWES, Sec., 36, Tyrrell-road, East Dulwich.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—On Sunday last our president read from the Bible the account of the visit of King Saul to the medium at Endor, after which the control of Mrs. Treadwell delivered on the same subject an earnest and practical address, throwing much new light on this part of the Bible. Our rooms were crowded by a very attentive audience. At the close of the service we held a members' meeting. The treasurer's report showed that the income for the past four months had been over £16, and the expenditure over £15, and that there was a balance in hand of over £4, and no liabilities. It was decided to have a tea and concert on Wednesday, September 16th; tea at 6.30 p.m., concert at 8 p.m. Tickets, tea and concert, 1s.; concert only, 6d. Friends cordially invited. Committee for tea and concert, Mrs. Bliss, Mrs. Gunn, Miss Matthews, Mr. Preyss, and Mr. Brunker. Sunday next, September 6th, Mr. Robson, at 7 p.m. Thursday, séance, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Bliss.—H. W. BRUNKER, Sec.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

IT having been repeatedly requested that all communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor of "LIGHT," 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to any other address, it is now respectfully intimated that letters otherwise addressed will not be forwarded. Foreign correspondents are specially desired to note this request. It does not, of course, apply to proof sent from the printer and marked to be returned to 13, Whitefriars-street, E.C. So much expense and delay is caused by neglect to read the standing notices to correspondents that it is hoped attention may be paid to the plain directions therein laid down.

CHARLES DALY.—Thanks, but not suitable.