

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT, MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by the Acting Editor.

I fear that "Theosophy," like Influenza some time ago, is very much in the air just now. The "Times" itself has condescended to insert a leading article upon it, and after this no one will have any excuse for regarding the subject as "disrespectable." It remains to be seen what use the Theosophical Society will make of this opportunity. They have a chance now of showing whether they care more for the brotherhood of man without distinction of race or creed than for propagandising their own favourite doctrines of the Authority of Mahatmas, Re-incarnation, and Karma; or whether, like most of us, they fall into the mistake of identifying their own particular notions with Universal Truth.

Anyway the cause of Universal Truth must be subserved. It thrives on conflict; and if there could be anything which could thwart it, it would be indifference. Perhaps, after all, therefore, the best thing truth-lovers can do is to furbish up their weapons and "go in." A high authority, who, like all true spiritual teachers, was apt to speak paradoxically, said not only "they that take the sword shall perish by the sword," but also, and in spite of that, "he that hath a sword let him take it." It is better to fall fighting for a really untrue but supposed true position, whereby we learn through its demonstrated weakness that it was untrue, than live to hold it still, in ignorance of its fallacy, because we never bring it to the test and proof of conflict. "He that hath a sword let him take it." Whoever has a truth let him carry it into the arena and not hold it concealed in his bosom. For in concealment the false may continue to seem true; but in conflict the really true prevails, and the false becomes known.

But amid the conflict about Mahatmic authority, and the dogmas asserted upon the strength of it, let neither side forget the truth of the Universal Brotherhood, about which there is no conflict, but the warmest agreement, between all "open" souls. For myself—while as a Christo-Theosophist, I will fight out my right to question the authority of any persons, or spirits, to dictate to me dogmas in any way other than by opening my understanding to see or feel their truth, and will refuse to admit that I cannot be a genuine lover of all humanity unless I accept the (so-called) Theosophist doctrines of Karma and Re-incarnation—I will even endeavour to admit on behalf of my opponents all that I claim on my own behalf. I have no quarrel with what any man believes, unless he asserts that I cannot be admitted to be a lover of truth, and a "brother,"

unless I submit to take his view upon all matters, and accept some particular authority of whose sufficiency he himself is satisfied.

And here I will state that (for me) there is not among all the doctrines of Eastern Theosophy a truth more momentous, more essential, than that which Mrs. Boole brought forward at the Christo-Theosophical last Thursday, the Unity Law, as she calls it, which is thus enunciated, "*Universe of Thought Equals Unity.*" It acts thus:—The Theosophists preach their doctrine, which I do not accept; I preach mine which they do not accept. It seems natural to me to regard mine as true and, by consequence, theirs as false. But here my "*Universe of Thought,*" which in this particular relation is *All Opinions*, and is dichotomised, or logically, divided for sake of definition into *My opinions*, and *not my opinions*, equals, not unity, but duality; *i.e.*, *my opinions* = all truth and no error: *not my opinions* = all error and no truth. But, if the Unity Law be true, these two must equal, not duality, but unity; that is—*my opinions* = some truth and some error: *not my opinions* = some error, some truth. But, some truth and some error = some error and some truth; therefore my opinions and not my opinions equal not duality but Unity. Thus I am true to my Unity Law, and do not divide the universe into two essentially different and ever irreconcilable elements, the true and the false, as undiscerning minds are so prone to do.

Thus observation is corrected by reflection. To the eye it seems that the whole universe is made up of opposites: *My opinions and not my opinions*, or, as we may represent it in the formula of the Unity teachers, *x* and *not x*. The Unity Law teaches that $x + not\ x = 1$. Mere observation would think that $x + not\ x = 2$. Here the mind must choose whether it will separate itself from its fellows for the purpose of being able to exalt itself by depreciating them; or whether it will believe that there are diversities of gifts, yet under them is but one Spirit; and diversities of administration, yet the same Lord dispenses them; and diversities of workings, but the same God worketh all in all.

But it is one thing to be sure of the truth of this principle and quite another to be able to carry it into practice on all occasions. I take up, for instance, the "*Agnostic Journal,*" which, for some reason or other, comes to hand with other papers sent to the office of "*LIGHT.*" The perusal of it causes real genuine pain: the pain one always feels on finding the action of a good man misrepresented, and perverted to seem as if bad, simply because somebody who gives out that he is the good man's friend is demonstrably unwise, and at times even self-seeking and untrue. The spirit is unbrotherly; evidently the writers feel that any one believing in Christ is an enemy to be scoffed at and annoyed by all the means in their power. The writers are quite consistent in this, for they, of course, do not accept the Unity formula— $x + not\ x = 1$. But I feel as I read that I myself am being, at every sentence, false to the law I accept. These men see exactly what I do not, and do not see what I so clearly do. They are the

"not x " to my " x ," and yet, though I know that $x + \text{not } x = 1$, I am ever inclined to feel towards them as they feel towards me, and it requires the most strenuous exertion of reason to enable me to remember that they are as they are for a necessary purpose; and, little as they suppose it, are doing the work of the Great Orderer and Evolver, and that their truth is not antagonistic to mine, but complementary.

And yet, when one comes to think of it calmly, it is not strange that men, who have never seen Christ in that light in which He is the promise and potency of the ultimate amelioration of all the ills of the world, should feel keenly indignant at what even I, who do see Him thus, must yet admit is too commonly the spirit of those that profess to speak in His name. To me the shortcomings of these are only proof that they are yet in such an elementary condition that they do not understand what manner of spirit they are of; and I know that eventually they will come to a truer spirit. But to those who—if they will forgive me for saying so—are yet in a development which is strong on one side but weak on another, it must seem as if these were fully developed persons who have distinctly and deliberately chosen the wrong way out of self-love, and a desire of enslaving and dominating others; as if, while knowing the truth, they definitely and deliberately entered into a conspiracy to subvert it, in the idea that, if known, it would upset their pretensions and interfere with their designs. Whereas it is no such thing. It is not deliberate closing of eyes, but most regrettable blindness; resulting commonly from inherited tendency; for which it is hard to hold the individual affected responsible.

And as to the Church having hampered the progress of Truth—what a blasphemy upon Truth to suppose such a thing! The truth that can be checked and thwarted by any combination of wicked and designing men is but a poor substitute for that triumphant Verity which is only demonstrated by being opposed and established by the very efforts made to overthrow it. To go whimpering about, complaining that Truth has been baffled and overcome, is half way to a confession that we have made the fatal mistake of confusing our truth with *the* Truth. The real Truth-lover fights earnestly, bravely, but never bitterly, for *his* truth, sure that the result of the conflict must be the establishment of *the* Truth; one side of which his truth may possibly be. It is an *a priori* assumption with him that whatever in the end *prevails* is *the* Truth; and he is far too generous-minded to be sour because he has not succeeded in establishing his own pet and particular view.

And I on my part must allow to others all that I claim for myself. I do not believe for a moment that the "Agnostic Journal" is hostile to *the* Truth, though it seems to be so to *my* truth. If I could see the position of its editor, from a point of view superior to my own one-sided and personal one, I should find him just as sincere and genuine as, I trust, I am myself; fighting for the truest he can see, as I for the truest I can see; and if he is a little more scornful of me than I am of him, and thinks that anyone is a bad man because of what he believes, instead of recognising, as I do, that if any one is to be blamed it is not for what he believes but for what he does—I am still sure that I have no right to judge him for this. It is the part allotted to him to play, and the antagonism is only behind the footlights: when the curtain falls at the end, and we put off our masks and costumes, all apparent oppositions will cease, and only brotherhood and love remain.

This is how the Unity Law would work in practice, and it is easy to see how it would mitigate the asperities of

controversy. Perhaps it is just for this very reason that the perception of it is closed in so many minds, so that the conflict may not slacken before the true and full end is really attained. If you let down the fire of your furnace before the process of refining is completed the metal will be short of perfect purity, and less precious than it should be. Heap up the fire, then, remorselessly, for not a grain of pure metal can be burnt, and when the impurities are all entirely removed there will be nothing more to burn, and the fire of controversy will die down of itself.

Thus the discernor of this most true Law will be able to act paradoxically: to fight enthusiastically, and yet to respect his opponents, possibly even to love his (seeming) enemies. We, therefore, shall not fail earnestly to contend for the truest we can see, and yet in the conflict we will ever remember that there is sure to be some error with us, some truth with our opponents, and that it is not *the* Truth, but our one-sided presentation of it, which they are seeking to overthrow.

In the "Review of Reviews" for October is a long and interesting account of Mrs. Annie Besant, a chapter of personal history well worth perusal. It was my privilege to know Mrs. Besant before she turned Theosophist, and while she was still fighting ostensibly in the ranks of Materialism. I regarded her then, as I regard her now—as all who really know her must regard her—as a strong, true, noble woman. Brilliant and clever to an extraordinary degree, but also, and far more important than that, earnest and open. In this day when anyone stands out prominently as a leader of a new school of thought, or of some new little coterie seeking recognition and converts, the question always is, Is the school, or the doctrine, a ladder by which he is hoping to raise himself from obscurity into prominence? is he desiring to exploit his truth, or is he willing that his truth should—so to speak—exploit him? If there be anyone who one may be perfectly sure is sincere, and not playing a game, it is Mrs. Annie Besant.

So much for the woman! For her present creed I can only say that, though I feel as strongly repelled by some of its doctrines as she feels from some of mine, yet I am rejoiced that she holds it, and has found in it satisfaction for the spiritual craving of her nature. Will she ever come round to Christianity? What an impertinent question, and how short-sighted to ask it! "They are not all Israel that are of Israel." Are there not enough narrow-minded, self-seeking, Christ-crucifying Christians to make us see that now as of old it is possible to win a proselyte and make him rather worse than better for the change? If any person who is earnestly desirous of knowing the truth, living out to the best of his power the best that he knows, cultivating love towards all men, and devoting his life to the work of service for the race, is not to all practical purposes "in Christ," then I myself would admit that Christ is not a Universal but a particular Spirit, and would devote the rest of my time to searching for that Universal Spirit of which He must be, if not universal Himself, a particular manifestation.

"J. INWOOD" writes to us:—I should be glad if you could find space for a short letter from me treating of my cure. I have been suffering for years great pain internally, and in my head and back. I could get no relief; and my doctor then treated me for cancer, as there were strong symptoms of it. I was getting worse and worse, when I heard of Mrs. Durant, who was visiting other patients in this neighbourhood. Even the first treatment relieved me of my pain, and each succeeding one produced a longer relief, until my pains and all other symptoms entirely ceased, and I feel, with unspeakable thankfulness, that I am cured. No one knows what I suffered not only bodily, but mentally, believing myself to be afflicted by that terrible disease cancer.

THE DOUBLE.

By "M.A. (OXON.)" 2

(Continued from p. 495.)

IV.—TRANCE.

"Spiritualist," May 22nd, 1874, vol. iv., p. 251:—

Letter from Thomas Tilson, minister of Aylesworth, in Kent, concerning an apparition seen in Rochester. Mrs. Goffe, ill at Mulling, greatly desires to see her children, who are at Rochester, before she dies. She goes into a trance. Evidence shows that she was seen by the bedside of her child by a nurse who spoke of it to certain persons. Said to be well authenticated.

"Spiritualist," January 7th, 1876, vol. viii., p. 10:—

Dr. Nehrer, formerly of Vienna and now residing in Hungary, writes thus to a friend in England:—"Your former hypothesis of the double is not at all to be given up; there is much probability, in some cases, that a spirit fit and ready for materialisation should avail himself of the ethereal form of his medium. In my second essay on 'Apparitions of Incarnated Spirits,' you will find the following case mentioned: A lady, while embracing her sister, whom she found entranced near the window, beholds in a moment, down in the garden, the double of her entranced sister, walking with their father. The apparition dissolved after her exclamation of surprise and at the same moment the entrancement was over."

"Phantasms of Living," vol. i., p. 565:—

Case of Rouse, of Croydon, seeing an old acquaintance in the road, near Norwich, when she was in a trance in London—sitting in circle.

"Phantasms of Living," vol. ii., p. 559:—

Another old case (1691) from Baxter's "World of Spirits." A dying woman visits her children in Rochester.

"Phantasms of Living," vol. ii., p. 671:—

A telepathic case. Interesting experiment under hypnotic treatment. The subject appears in form to a lady who on two occasions sees him while he is in the trance.

V.—FAINT OR SWOON.

"Spiritualist," vol. i., 1870, p. 32:—

Mrs. Hardinge relates:—An old lady named Dorchenbach, at Wisconsin, had bought some land and often visited it on a Sunday. One week she bought a new dress, intending to wear it. She was taken ill, and at the time to visit she swooned. Her son had fetched the doctor, and went back to the inn where he had left the horse. The landlord asked him who was ill, and, when he was told, said "That is impossible for she passed through my kitchen and went out to see her land as usual." The landlady also saw her and described her new dress. A lad came in from the land and said he had seen Madame Dorchenbach there. She had therefore been seen by three persons.

"Spiritual Magazine," O.S., vol. v., p. 366:—

Mr. T. reports a case in Cambridgeshire, November, 1853. A Mrs. Smith and her son met a friend, Susan Gilbert, and wondered at seeing her. She (Susan) did not speak. Both recognised her, dress and all. Susan Gilbert had fainted several times during an illness and died three days later.

"Spiritual Magazine," N.S., vol. iv., p. 521:—

S. A. W. reports a case. Mr. W. sees his wife at Leeds at the time she was in a faint in Edinburgh.

"Phantasms of Living," vol. i., p. 194:—

A child sees her mother as if dead lying on the floor. The mother had at the time been seized with an attack of heart, and faintness.

"Phantasms of Living," vol. i., p. 527:—

E. W. R. sees the figure of a friend at night. It was known afterwards that his friend had had a fall and was insensible at the time of the apparition.

"Phantasms of Living," vol. ii., p. 35:—

A barrister in his rooms sees the deathly pale face of his wife on a window pane. At the same time his wife at home had fainted through seeing an accident. Page 36. Another similar case.

"Phantasms of Living," vol. ii., p. 51:—

Mrs. Swithinbank sees her son approach and come up close to the window. At that time he was at school and had a sort of fit and became unconscious, calling his mother's name. He was ill for two months.

"Phantasms of Living," vol. ii., p. 85:—

Mrs. Stone records three occasions, each time by different persons, when she has been seen when not present in the body. "Double," she says. [Editor thinks that two of them are "casual" and in the other the percipient may have had a squint!]

"Phantasms of Living," vol. ii., p. 86:—

Mr. Goreham Blake, in the Humboldt desert, Nevada, became exhausted and insensible. At the same time his friends, the Copps, &c., in Boston, saw Mrs. Copp throw up her hands and say "Blake is dead."

"Phantasms of Living," vol. ii., p. 137:—

Mrs. R. Lichfield feels and sees her fiancé, who at the time was suffering from an accident and lost consciousness, saying, "May, my little May," just as he swooned. She felt the kiss and saw him.

"Phantasms of Living," vol. ii., p. 257:—

Two men, Barwell and Earle, of London, go to visit W. at the Lizard. While seated on the vehicle to drive from the station at Penryn, W. was seen by Earle, who exclaimed to his friend and both recognised W., who appeared to know them and waved his hand until the train was out of sight. It seemed on their arrival at the Lizard they learnt that W. had bathed that morning, and in coming out of the water fainted, and was with difficulty restored. That happened at the time of his "double" appearing in the train to his two friends.

"Phantasms of Living," vol. ii., p. 523:—

Algernon Joy's case at Cardiff, when he was knocked down and his double was seen by a friend in London at the same hour.

"Phantasms of Living," vol. ii., p. 526:—

A lady saw the face of a friend, was startled, closed her eyes and saw it again. She was at church, on a Sunday. The friend died on the following Wednesday and had been delirious for three or four days.

"Phantasms of Living," vol. ii., p. 609:—

Case of a mother in a swoon appearing to two daughters in another room.

"Phantasms of Living," vol. ii., p. 617:—

A drowning father appears to two children simultaneously. He recovered, but did not remember to have thought of his children at the time.

TRANSITION OF PROFESSOR KIDDLE.

(From the "Religio-Philosophical Journal.")

On September 24th Professor Henry Kiddle passed to spirit life. For a year or more before his departure he was afflicted with almost total loss of sight. The immediate cause of his death was paralysis. Professor Kiddle was born in Bath, England, January 15th, 1824. When a boy he came to New York City, where he studied under private tutors and at the normal school. In 1843 he was made principal of a ward school, but two years later resigned to take charge of one connected with the Leake and Watts Home. In 1846-56 he was principal of a grammar school, and he was then appointed deputy superintendent of common schools in New York City. He was made superintendent in 1870, but resigned in 1879 owing to an adverse public sentiment created by his over-zealous espousal of Spiritualism and his indiscreet and intemperate defence of his book, "Spiritual Communications," published in that year. Professor Kiddle received the degree of A.M. from Union College in 1848, and that of "officier d'académie" from the University of France in 1878. His published works are various pamphlets on education, Modern Spiritualism, and religious topics. He edited several revisions of Gould Brown's "English Grammar" and other text-books, including a "Text-Book of Physics" (1883). He also wrote "A Manual of Astronomy and the Use of the Globes"; "New Elementary Astronomy"; "Cyclopædia of Education" with Alexander J. Schem; "Year Books of Education," and "Spiritual Communications" above mentioned.

In his private and domestic life Mr. Kiddle was a model gentleman, a kind husband and father. "The Journal" extends its warmest sympathies to the surviving members of the family and expresses its profound respect for the abilities and noble qualities of the departed; and does this the more heartily, if possible, because of the wide difference of opinion on many vital questions between it and the arisen brother.

OLD age is a long shadow lying on the evening sunshine, but it points towards the morning.—J. P. RICHTER.

INSANITY AND OBSESSION.

By CHARLES DAWBARN.

I have just seen a beautiful girl taken to the asylum, hopelessly insane. I have learned somewhat of her history, and I think it may interest many of the readers of "LIGHT." Obsession and insanity seem related and correlated. There is the obsession that induces insanity, as the experienced Spiritualist knows full well. And through that knowledge he has discovered that will-power and magnetism may sometimes drive off the obsessing influence. But there is also the insanity that induces obsession; and then it is woe, unutterable woe, to the miserable sufferer.

Just thirty years ago, the mother of several children, of whom the eldest was but eighteen, became interested in Spiritualism. She and her husband encouraged the mediumship of the little ones, and presently became enthusiastic believers. The mother was advised to seek mediumship for herself by sitting alone for development, and full of enthusiasm she sat alone at any and all hours when she could escape from domestic duties. But our spirit friends are not always by our side. They have occupations demanding attention, although they keep an appointment with sacred punctuality. The undeveloped, and therefore more or less unprotected medium, who has no regular hour for sitting, thus easily becomes the prey of spirit visitors, who find a ready acceptance and then outstay their welcome. There is something so sacred in spirit presence, especially to the trained orthodox mind, that any spirit is likely to be greeted as a friend. But it is only those who are very sensitive who discover their danger by painful experience.

Presently this mother became clairaudient, and then she discovered that she was rapidly becoming the slave of those who claimed to be her guides, but were apparently working to do her harm rather than good. She realised her peril in time, and for nearly two months fought a silent battle for life, liberty, and love of her husband and children. She refused to reply to the voices around her, till at last wearied and disgusted, these spirits left her. She fought her battle to victory, but sacrificed her mediumship to avoid a second contest; thus through ignorance losing that which should have proved the greatest blessing of her life. Strangely enough, she continued to encourage mediumship in her children, but giving them no warning as to any possible danger. Her eldest daughter, though sometimes giving startling tests to her parents, most naturally thought more of this world than any other, and cared little for these family circles. She grew to womanhood, was married, and had a daughter sixteen years old before she became interested in spirit return. But she was none the wiser for her mother's experience. She was a true sensitive, and at first was much happier in her mediumship than her mother had been. It was orderly, and none but loved friends came to her inner life, until she ignorantly ran into a greater danger than her mother had experienced. She began to visit public miscellaneous circles—so dangerous to the undeveloped medium—at every opportunity, and then came sad proofs of hereditary tendencies and sensitiveness. Like her mother she heard voices. She also often saw her spirit visitors, and counting them as true friends encouraged their influence. But the old story was repeated, for she presently found herself compelled to say cruel and unkind things to her husband and daughter, whilst really devotedly attached to them. For months she was in an asylum, where her husband visited her daily, only to be insulted and attacked. Yet in his absence she was so perfectly normal, that the doctors and attendants could not realise but that she was only "making believe" to be insane. When she would beg these spirits to leave her they would reply that it was the only fun they had. At last her spirit sister came to tell her that her spirit father had succeeded in forming a band with power to protect her; and from that time the obsessing spirits left her. We may mark here, as perhaps of importance in its influence, that, although her husband was bitterly opposed to Spiritualism—as well he might be—yet acting under the advice of her mother, supported by the spirit father, heard clairaudiently, she secretly visited mediums, hoping for a promised development as a slate-writing medium: a promise not yet fulfilled.

So far we have marked the effect upon mother and daughter of a sensitiveness which was used to their injury

by obsessing spirits. And we see the low standard of spirituality that was inherent or evolved, by the fact that the expressed wishes of the daughter's husband were set at defiance, as they secretly but regularly visited mediums, with whom the daughter sat for development. It was not long, however, before the husband died; and then the daughter and granddaughter moved to a distant city. The young lady had grown up with no interest in Spiritualism; though once or twice when a child she had seen and described spirit forms. She was both ambitious and talented, and intending to qualify herself for a profession seems to have overworked her brain. She became suddenly and violently insane, evincing hatred for her mother and a desire to do her injury. There was no apparent individual influence in this case. The attack was brief, and the poor girl remembered all that she had said and done. She is of a very affectionate disposition, and the unkindness of the insanity wounded her deeply. A year went by, and then came another attack rendering removal to an asylum a necessity. And from that time, at irregular periods, attack after attack broke up every attempt at home life by mother and daughter. But what I may perhaps call "spherical influence" has become very marked, as the unfortunate girl is now coarse and repulsive in her language and manner during the attack using oaths and other expressions foreign to the sensitive pure nature of her normal life. In other words, it seems now, as if the mortal brain in its insane moods vibrates in harmony with the spheres inhabited by such spirits as obsessed the mother and grandmother. A direct personal control has apparently become impossible, and thus we have, as it seems to me, insanity, inducing obsession, as distinct from the obsession that induces insanity. It is apparently hopeless. The skilled physician and the magnetic healer have tried to effect a cure and failed. And from the inner life comes no whisper of hope other than that she may soon enter the "gates ajar." We may call it an hereditary tendency to obsession: and had it been delayed in this last outbreak until the poor girl had married and become a mother, then in the fourth generation—if at all favoured on the father's side—we might have seen a very diabolism of spirit return. It is obvious that neither man nor spirit can change Nature's law, which is that brain movement—vibration—determines spirit association. Those of us who claim to be sane know that by thought we can actually change the movement of the brain atom, as I have tried to show in "The Science of Spirit Return" in "LIGHT" of August 15th and 22nd. But it seems from such experience as that of this family, that we may send down to our children brain movements that hold them to a spirit level beyond their power to resist, and that become insanity. If we could conceive of a brain held to contact with bright spirits by a movement its owner could not resist, that would be insanity too. The power to move the brain atom by thought is essential to manhood. The archangel who could do no wrong if he so desired, would be a slave, and therefore less than a man.

In the case of this mother and daughter, their experiences might well be ascribed to their ignorance of the rules governing spirit intercourse. They exposed themselves to dangers that could have been avoided. But the awful sufferings of the unfortunate granddaughter give no clue to their cause. No insanity can be traced in the family history of the parents and grandparents; and although evidently inheriting some mediumship, the poor girl had done nothing to develop it. Nor has she in her sane moments any consciousness of having seen or heard spirits. Whilst at times her language is that of the class of spirits that had obsessed her mother and grandmother, yet if they are really individualised, then they are compelled by the disease to manifest as if themselves insane. So much may be inheritance, but for the rest we can only discover an insanity that permits obsession, but offers no hope of cure.

For several years I have tried to arouse Spiritualists in the United States to the importance of this subject. But the craze for phenomena and the eager hunt for a new ghost have seemed to render every effort useless. Yet surely the cases of obsession everywhere around us are calling for study and action. The average Spiritualist has rested content with the thought that if our asylums were but thrown open to the skilled magnetiser the patients would soon be restored to reason. It will one day be acknowledged that physicians

and healers are almost useless as against laws of heredity ignorantly wielded for curse instead of blessing upon the unborn.

San Leandro, Cal., U.S.A.

[By an oversight Mr. Dawbarn's two articles in this week's "LIGHT" and last, have been transposed. "Insanity and Obsession" should have appeared in our last issue, and "A Spirit Battle with Obsessing Spirits" in this. They were both in type together and the error was not discovered till it was too late to alter it.—ACTING EDITOR OF "LIGHT."]

GERMAN BOOKS.

II.

"LUST, LEID UND LIEBE."

[Existence considered as Pleasure, Pain and Love.
A Contribution to Darwinism.]

The task that Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden has set himself is to put Indian philosophy into terms of modern science, but whether the views he so ably defends will find acceptance outside the Theosophical Society is very doubtful. Exceedingly ingenious, to say the least, are the schemes of circles and spirals to visualise for the reader the evolution in the microcosm and macrocosm.

A great part of the book is devoted to the subject of "Individuality."

"By this word is denoted in ordinary language only the idea of those signs by which one individual differs from another. But through the deeper meaning which we lend to the word 'Individuality,' is at once explained why each individual differs from the others. Darwinism thinks to attain this by the catch-words 'heredity' and 'adaptability'; and the words are certainly right.

"But on what does the fact of heredity rest? and what is that which is adapted? These questions have not as yet been satisfactorily answered by science and philosophy. We, however, solve this riddle in the following sentence:—

"The difference of all individuals rests exclusively on the fact that 'Individuality' develops." (Page 3.)

Again (Page 55):—

"It is our own causality, by means of which we are what we are; and it is no essential difference which separates us from the lower animals, from plants and from our fellow-men, but only a few steps in development. But when they all have gone through the series of further incarnations, they, too, will be what we are, and we ourselves shall reach the stage of those who are ahead of us."

We have not the least objection to having previously been a "gorilla," a "lark," and a plant (especially now that plants have been shown to be both sagacious and moral), but we must enter a protest against the disposal of our future fate, which Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden pronounces to be the logical consequence of the development theory. This is the Re-incarnation of man, and is illustrated by a threefold picture by Fidus, painted to represent "Winter" but applied here to typify the philosophy of Pleasure, Pain and Love, to which it certainly seems appropriate from its chilliness. In the first scene we see a youth and maiden skating (Pleasure); in the second the maiden is lost in the snow (Pain), and we are to think of this as another incarnation, the youth to whom she had been wedded in the last one, now to be imagined as the foolish father or mother of the girl, or wicked guardian, the cause of her dying of hunger and cold, and so the cause of her attaining to the higher stage of Love in the third incarnation; here we see her beneath a snow storm, sheltering a little brother in her arms; the little brother is the youth of the first scene.

To do the author justice we must say that he thinks hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years elapse between one incarnation and the next, by which time we may well hope the earth may have become as pleasant a place to live in as Heaven according to most people's conception. He also observes for the benefit of us Spiritualists, that our "spirits" are quite right when they say they are not re-incarnated, because it is not the personal consciousness that returns, but only when that has quite completed its own smaller circle of existence does the individual causality pursue its course, i.e., re-incarnate.

He further states that the recognition of this is the only solution of the problem of Free Will. But if our actions in past lives were as strictly determined as he says, no accumu-

lation of them could give us moral responsibility. He cannot even say with Schopenhauer, "It is your fault that you are what you are, though being what you are, you cannot act otherwise than you do." This distinctly weakens the doctrine of Karma, which, by its apparent solution of the problem of evil, and vindication of the justice of the order of the world, is, we think, the secret of the hold over many minds that Theosophy has acquired.

To return to "Pleasure, Pain, and Love," the word here translated pleasure is used throughout this book chiefly in its primitive meaning of desire, rather than the satisfaction of desire, and is considered as the source of all existence; i.e., the desire for life, the desire for an ever better life. It is the "thirst for life" of the Indian philosophy. It seems to us that this is but Schopenhauer's "Will" under a new name, but it is preferred by the author as necessitating no arbitrary meaning beyond what it has in common parlance, including unconscious as well as conscious impulse. This "Desire" then is the evolutionary force, that makes for multiplicity, the strife that is father of all things; Love, on the contrary, is the involutory force, that makes for unity, for perfection. In this way it is a new aspect of the "eternal feminine," while Desire is the masculine principle. Pain is that which keeps the individuality in its right path; it marks the passage from one direction to the other, from Desire to Love, and from Love back again to Desire.

This idea of involution following all evolution, and preceding another period of evolution on a higher plane is very suggestive, and there is much in the book to recommend it to those readers who are not afraid of metaphysics.

C. J. C.

LEFT ALONE IN THE HOUSE.

A movement in the empty house!
A step upon the stair!
A cautious tread, now on, now stayed—
Surely some life is there!

Surely in this deep, breathless pause
Some life besides my own
Unseen is near me, yet I know
That I was left alone.

And if a footstep should advance
(I dare not fancy how)
What presence that the eye could find
Would stand before me now?

Though not a speaking human form,
Might it not be some shade
Of one that has felt anguish here,
Whose feelings cannot fade?

With strangely acted retrospect
A spirit passed away,
In its strong pangs of old remorse,
Might meet the eye of day.

I think these silent gazing walls
Look conscious of some past,
O'erladen with a tragic freight,
When passion pulsed too fast.

I know one mournful life was wont
In this still room to pine—
That feeble frame, that sinking heart,
That long, slow struggle mine.

Yet, though time-severed from that self,
I cannot think it dead;
If lingering on the landing near
Where once such tears were shed,

With what a ghost-like sense of wrong
It might come gliding in,
Sad-eyed and speechless, to survey
The treasures time can win!

It would not find me rich in joy;
Submission gives me peace;
The present cannot hile the past,
But vain regret may cease.

—A. J. PENNY.

SPIRITUAL AND RATIONAL RELIGION.—The Rev. J. Page Hopps will conduct two Meetings for Religious Worship on Sunday, November 8th, at the Cavendish Rooms, Mortimer-street, Cavendish-square, at 11 and 3. Subjects of addresses—Morning: "Where is thy God, my Soul? A Study of the Limitation of God by Man." Afternoon: "The Jesus-Side of Everything; A Nineteenth-Century Study of Human Life." All seats free. Voluntary offerings at the close.

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

Light :

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

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24th, 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.

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

THE "TIMES," MRS. BESANT, AND MEDIUMSHIP.

It is amusing to watch the Philistine trotting out his Faraday once more, and to note the virtuous exponent of the unthinking, as he demonstrates the blind credulity of one set of men in terms of the credulity of another set. The "Times" which ever represents on the social side the *opinion*—God save the mark—of middle-class prosperity, is exercised about Mrs. Besant, the Mahatmas, and above all about mediumship ; and—as if the Society for Psychical Research had never existed—gives us the same group of assertions by way of argument as we were accustomed to a quarter of a century ago, and what Faraday, the Sandemanian, once said, is quoted as the triumphant exordium to a column and a-half of old-world common places.

People, notwithstanding what is called modern education, have, says the "Times," not learned to think any more than they used to do ;—which is true enough, as witness the possibility of such a leading article as that referred to :—

And thus it happens that doctrines and speculations as old as human nature are again and again brought upon the stage, with no other alteration than a change of actors and of costume ; and that, as often as they find exponents capable of felicitous expression, or calculated by their own personalities to arouse a feeling of curiosity, they attract audiences to whom their antiquity and their sterility are alike unknown, and who accept words and phrases, which, for the most part, are destitute of intelligible meaning, as if they really conveyed appreciable additions to the sum of contemporary knowledge.

Why should not "doctrines and speculations as old as human nature be again brought upon the stage" ? The fact of their antiquity and continuity is surely itself an argument *for* and not *against* their importance, and yet by an unfair combination of words this very antiquity is used as a reason for rejecting the doctrines and mocking at the speculations,—“their antiquity and sterility.” The “sterility” is merely an assertion which, if the judgment had been educated, as Faraday urged, would not have entered airily into the pretended argument ; but it goes well with the “antiquity,” with which it has nothing in common except the rhythm. Even allowing for a moment that the “speculations” were foolish, the historical facts of science controvert the assumption of sterility. Without astrology where would have been modern astronomy, and without alchemy, where modern chemistry ? There has been no “sterility” in these two cases at any rate, even on the low ground of material progress. This combination, “antiquity and sterility,” is clearly intended to catch those who “accept words and phrases, which for the most part are destitute of intelligible meaning.”

The great problems of life, by which all men are daily confronted, such as the unequal distribution of property and other benefits, the origin of evil, and similar questions, have always led to the formation of guesses at truth by speculative philosophers, and these guesses, oftentimes accepted by disciples as revelations, have differed among themselves chiefly to this extent, that each one has been date-marked, so to speak, by the peculiar beliefs, or by the peculiar ignorance, of the time or of the place in which it has its origin. Moreover, the

speculators have constantly been acquainted with what may be generically called the phenomena of mediumship ; second-sight, mesmerism, hypnotism, and the like ; and on the basis of these phenomena they have often claimed, or have been credited with, the command of powers of a supernatural order. In a large number of cases they have also practised the arts of the juggler, and have added what they knew to be deceptions to those tricks of a different kind which, depending upon weakness of the nervous system in those on whom they were performed, the performers may often, in their ignorance, have regarded as being evidence of the possession by themselves of some special gifts or qualities not common to mankind. It is now admitted by all physiologists that no such interpretation can be correctly placed upon them.

This appeal is still to the same class. A cheap sneer is not an argument. The great problems of life are not going to be settled “over the walnuts and the wine.” “Similar questions !” We know it all, the contemptuous shrug of the shoulders, the pity for “the peculiar ignorance of the time.” And then the usual haphazard farrago of words “second-sight, mesmerism, hypnotism, and the like.” The writer has not taken the trouble to make himself acquainted with even the alphabet of the things about which he talks with a specious pretence of knowledge, for wherein does *new* “hypnotism” differ from *old* “mesmerism” ? The tendency of research both from the physical and psychical standpoints is undoubtedly to destroy the belief in the supernatural by proving that the “supernatural” is but the not understood “natural,” but that is not quite the same thing as condemning the Christ, St. Paul, and other not unimportant “performers” as unconscious jugglers, on the evidence even of “all” physiologists.

The whole article is of the same kind. The following is another example ; the writer is attacking one of the points in Mrs. Besant’s St. James’s Hall address :—

The doctrine of the unattached Ego returning at last to some newly-born body which is adapted to its requirements, whether of strength or weakness, is not unlike that which was put forth, thirty years ago, by Fichte the younger, according to which the pre-existing soul becomes the formative agent of the frame into which it enters ; a doctrine which its author supported by many arguments, most of which were swept away by the discovery of the facts of Evolution.

This at first sight has a surface appearance of carrying conviction, yet a little attention will show that the main point is not touched, and that Fichte’s *arguments* alone were swept away by the “discovery of the facts of Evolution.” That may be true, and yet the doctrine as asserted by the Re-incarnationists be right. How far Evolution will *not* explain certain “facts” on the psychical side of our nature is shown in Wallace’s “Darwinism.”

But it is not with the rightness or wrongness of Theosophy that we have to do. Mrs. Besant is well able to take care of herself, as she has already shown in a letter to the newspaper whose feeble attack on her address we are noticing. The article, however, falls foul of the whole phenomena of mediumship, and so becomes general in its application : and here we have a splendid example of the ways of pseudo-science. There is indeed some small ground for gratulation, for the existence of mediumship is not denied, only its interpretation. But :—

The type of all these abnormal states is simply reverie, in which the occupation of the mind by a certain train of ideas shuts out all others. Reverie is a disturbed balance of power among the mental faculties, which, when they are all active and recipient, tend to check and to correct one another. A false impression received through the sense of hearing would ordinarily be corrected by the impressions received through sight and touch. In reverie, on the other hand, assuming that it was the sense of hearing which possessed for a time a monopoly of the available nerve force, the other senses would be dormant, and the subject would believe whatever he was told. What in such a case might be called the working sense, moreover, probably by reason of its temporary monopoly of nerve force, is often unusually active, sensitive, that is, to impressions of so slight a kind that they would pass unperceived in ordinary circumstances. Such reverie, in many persons of unstable nervous system, can be artificially induced by the influence of suggestion ; and, after a certain amount of practice, the response to

suggestion becomes extremely rapid, and the effect extremely complete. The persons so affected have been able to perform feats, depending upon exaltation of a single sense, which would have been impossible to them in their natural condition; and, after a time, they or those who have exhibited them have usually had recourse to imposture to supplement the performance.

The same unfairness pervades this passage as it does all the rest. That imposture does come in as is asserted is undoubtedly too true, but while certain of the phenomena are admitted—that could not be otherwise, for Charcot is still at the Salpêtrière—the “imposture” is inserted as if it were part and parcel of the whole thing, the astute writer knowing his public well enough to foresee the effect of this paragraph arranged as it is with regard to the context. Moreover, it is abundantly clear that only one set of phenomena is alluded to; the phenomena that happen in the “presence” of the medium—such as those detailed by Mr. Crookes and where “reverie” aided by “suggestion” can have no place—are tacitly ignored. This may not have been done wilfully, for the article is so fraught with evidence of ignorance that we can acquit the writer of conscious obliviousness. The main phenomena of mediumship are any way disregarded, unless they are casually referred to as the “imposture” which supplements the performance. And then—Faraday again:—

“Why,” as Faraday said, if their pretensions are well founded, “should they not move a balance, and so give us the element of a new mechanical power? Why have they not added one metal to the fifty known to mankind, or one planet to the number daily increasing under the observant eye of the astronomer? Why have they not corrected one of the mistakes of the philosophers? Why did they not inform us of the possibility of photography, or, when that became known, why did they not favour us with some instructions for its improvement?” From the dawn of history the tricks have been the same, and no good or useful purpose has ever been served by them. Apollonius of Tyana is believed to have copied them from the Persian Magi; and what they were in the days of Apollonius, such they are still in the days of Mrs. Besant and her Mahatmas.

And because Faraday, great experimental physicist as he was, sometimes talked nonsense, and because Apollonius of Tyana copied the “tricks” from the Persian Magi, but most of all because it is not quite comfortable to feel that another world where the “money market and city intelligence” are not prime factors of existence, impinges closely on this, we are to mock at the “great problems of life by which men are daily confronted.”

JUVENILE SCIENCE.

Here is an amusing extract from the “Journal of Education.” Etymologists tell us that ignorant persons of limited vocabulary, when they come across a word they do not understand, always try to turn it into something which is intelligible to them; like the charwoman who called the bronchitis “brown crisis.” It happened to me once, when looking over some essays written by boys of a parochial school with which I was once connected, to find “Judas Iscariot” written “Julius his Chariot.” Anyone who has had experience of the working of the juvenile mind will not feel that the following quotation is at all overdrawn or unlikely. He will recognise at once the odd tendency to mix up things quite unrelated, and to give readily the supposed right answer utterly regardless of the fact that it is so obviously absurd. Here then is a boy's essay on “Breath”:—

“Breath is made of air. We breathe with our lungs, our lights, our livers, and our kidneys. If it wasn't for our breath we should die when we slept. Our breath keeps the life agoing through the nose, when we are asleep. Boys that stay in a room all day should not breathe. They should wait till they get outdoors. Boys in a room make carbonic acid. Carbonic acid is more poisonous than mad dogs. A heap of soldiers was in a black hole in India, and carbonic acid got in that black hole, and killed nearly everyone afore morning. Girls kills the breath with corsets that squeeze the diagram. Girls can't run or holler like boys because their diagram is squeezed too much. If I was a girl, I rather be a boy so I can run and holler, and have a good big diagram.

THE FALSE METHOD AND THE TRUE IN THEOLOGY.

(Continued from p. 502.)

THE METHOD OF REVELATION.

From what has been urged previously regarding the various planes of consciousness or, in other words, of apparent Being, there follows a truth which is only too apt to be lost sight of, and from the non-recognition of which all confusion and seeming contradiction arise. This truth concerns what I have called the Method of Revelation. It is too usually assumed that, given one who knows perfectly and one who does not know at all, or but imperfectly, it is a quite simple operation for the former to tell the latter all that the latter does not know and that the former does. Which is equivalent to saying that if you have a full vessel holding thousands of tons (to put it concretely), and another vessel holding but a pint, it is quite easy for the former to empty itself into the latter. Put in this way it becomes somewhat more apparent that the question is not merely the simple one of providing a supply, but the more complex one of—given the supply, what is the capacity for receiving?

It has generally been assumed that the object of such a Divine Revelation as—say the Christian Scriptures—is to teach truth: that there is no problem about it at all; and, granted an omniscient God, all He has to do is directly and immediately to utter the truth to man. And yet history constantly bears witness that it is one thing to consult an oracle, but quite another to be really enlightened by the answer received. The fact that oracles are proverbially ambiguous, and often mislead instead of enlightening, arises from the truth I am endeavouring here to emphasise, viz., that it is not a quite easy and simple matter for a Being who knows all things to convey his knowledge directly to one who knows only a very little.

This being so it may next occur to me to ask—Would such a Being, seeing perfectly, as He must, the difficulties in the way, be likely to trust alone to simple narration, simple utterance of words of truth, for the education and evolution of the minds of His creatures? Would He adopt no safeguards to provide against the tremendous consequences of misapprehension of His meaning on the part of those to be taught? Would He, in a word, be content to utter truth, and leave it to men themselves to receive and interpret it as best they could; and remain unmoved by the fact that some, through errors in interpretation, went wrong, and were lost in falsity?

Such mere direct utterance of truth could certainly not be called *revelation*; it would be at best but *presentation*. And, if the Divine method be presentation and not revelation, then it must follow, either that the Divine Being desires to make distinction of His children, and does so in this way, dividing them by this trial into those who do and those who do not grasp His true meaning; or else that there is no difficulty in the immediate and direct comprehension of the whole content of Divine knowledge; and that if any one does misapprehend, it is purely his own fault, and a result of a wilful and deliberate intention not to understand aright.

If Scripture itself be examined it will be found that neither of these alternatives is affirmed therein. On the contrary, it is the key-note of the teaching of Christ that He ever taught the people as they were able to bear it. Parables for the simple; interpretation to His disciples; but even this only in measure, for it was to them that He said, “I have yet many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now.” (John xvi. 12.) And further on we read, “Then opened He their mind, that they might understand the Scriptures.” (Luke xxiv. 45.) He frequently told them of a Spirit He would send who should guide them into all truth. These passages are enough to show that the Divine method for conveying truth to man is not mere presentation, but revelation; at least in the conception of the Christian Scriptures.

Nothing is clearer in the study of Scripture than that the point of view taken is not always one and the same. Sometimes it is from man's standpoint, sometimes it is one transcending this: sometimes parable for the simple-minded who cling to the land; sometimes interpretation for those who have ventured forth on to the deep. Apprehension of this surely most easily grasped principle would solve many seeming difficulties and apparent contradictions, would explain why the Spirit is in parts so unideal, in other parts

so sublime, and why God seems to condescend to methods of which man feels that, were he omnipotent, he would never consent to use them.

To present truth is comparatively easy; to reveal it to a world composed of every sort—ignorant, blind, and careless, as well as intelligent, open and eager—is a very much more difficult task. It is easy to punish those who make mistake in the understanding of it: it is a task for Omnipotence to so arrange matters that every mistake a man can possibly make shall act as a guide to him towards the truth. Presentation throws the responsibility on hearers and readers. Revelation assumes itself the full responsibility, and is, in necessary significance, a guarantee that truth shall be conveyed, received, and apprehended by every one in the end; for if not the revelation has demonstrably not been given; truth has not been revealed. When I reveal a thing or truth to anyone I do not leave it an open question whether he has understood me or not; for if he has not, the truth has not been revealed.

But we, not discerning the extent of the problem (because very far yet from understanding the quantity of the content of Omniscience) or the difficulties to be overcome in mastering it, feel naturally that if we had charge of the case we should do the work more directly and rapidly. We should never be content to wait patiently while a semi-barbarous race was taken by a series of very slight steps from point to point on the way to fuller evolution. We should want to jump at once to the full and perfect end. But not so Providence. In infinite love and wisdom it waits and endures; never hurries the feeble, never expects too much. It sacrifices itself as to what it might *a priori* desire to see at once, for what, by virtue of the sacrifice alone, it may thus be sure to effect in the end. And purblind men take upon themselves to point out its errors, the unidealities it has submitted to through its boundless love, and resolve to leave not one behind unperfected, and they say, "How bungling, how clumsy, how unworthy a way! Is this your perfect God, all powerful and all wise, who can only accomplish His ends in this roundabout manner! Why, any man with his wits about him could have suggested a better method than that!" Oh, the pity of it! Not to see that it would be so easy to polish off the few capable of more rapid progress and evolution, but is at once harder and Diviner to go, what is humanly speaking, the slow but sure and satisfactory way, that lands all at the perfect goal at last.

I have spoken of the two ways which appear possible from the human standpoint, contrasting and comparing them as though God has chosen the one and rejected the other. But such is not true from the Divine standpoint. From this there can be to God no choice; no alternatives ever present themselves to Him. It is only to our human faculties that dilemmas present themselves. The Divine which sees all, nay, which is all, can have no problem, be confronted by no difficulty, and know no occasion for choice, being perfectly free in the highest sense of the word.

I would add also that, though I have spoken only of the Christian Scriptures, I do not desire in any way to limit or bound Divine revelation. All Scriptures are from God, for there is no one else for them to have come from.

And, rightly regarded, there is no book, no word, no act of any man which is not inspired; as is plainly taught by the Christian Scriptures when they say: "Thou also hast wrought all our works in us." G. W. A.

MR. WALTER BESANT AND HIS HAUNTED HOUSE.

I have just heard of a haunted house which I am going to watch carefully (writes Mr. Walter Besant in his "Voice of the Flying Day"). It has been standing vacant for some time, but was recently taken by a family. They began by complaining that they could not sleep at night. Noises were heard; they seemed like footsteps; a cold breath in their faces startled them into wakefulness. The father of the family said it was all nonsense; he would not hear of such rubbish; the family should put such things out of their minds. They prepared therefore to bear their sufferings and their terrors with a Spartan fortitude. Meantime the nervous condition of the girls became almost intolerable, and I know not what would have happened had not the father himself one morning, on coming down to breakfast, made an announcement. "We are going to leave this house to-day," he said, banging the table with his fist, "this very day." In an hour or two the vans came round, and the furniture went into safe keeping while the family removed to temporary lodgings. The house is now empty, and the board is up. I am curious to learn what will happen when the next family moves in. And I am most anxious to find out what the old man saw.—("Pall Mall Gazette.")

NOTES FROM MY SPIRITUAL DIARY.

By F. J. THEOBALD.

XIII.

[During the last year many of our relatives have passed on to join our spirit group. One, who is most especially dear to us all, very soon manifested his presence. For weeks he wrote through my hand messages of deep interest.

I will call him D. M. He was a believer in the truths of Spiritualism, and spoke to my brothers of the comfort he obtained therefrom as the time approached for him to be freed from earth-life to the fuller and higher life in the spirit land. His long failure of health, to which he refers, was "a form of cerebral *ramollissement*." Whilst I was (as usual during the summer months) on the move, and away from home, the communications were not so frequent. At last three weeks or more went by, and I had no sign. Then, one evening I had a few friends. One whom I will call S. A. was especially interested in the Christian Kingdom Society, and we gladly conversed with him upon the subject, whilst he entered into a few details as to its working and purpose. On the forthcoming day, suddenly, and quite unsought, I received a long communication from D. M., extracts from which I will now give. In the first place he referred to our conversation, as follows:—]

MY DEAR F.—We assembled in strong force last evening whilst your little circle was listening to your friend S. A. Truly he is one to be revered, for his most devoted services to Christ's Kingdom. You are right. He is a medium for the God-Spirits; and it is his mission to help on, in a quiet, unobtrusive way, the Kingdom of Heaven. He is helping on the Advent of our Lord. He has grasped the beautiful teachings of our Lord as few have done; and the leaven of Righteousness will spread as a Heavenly force far and wide. So shall His Kingdom come on earth, even as it is in Heaven.

We, your guardian spirits, are glad for you to bring together, as much as you can, your little circle of inquirers. Your work for Spiritualism will be helped greatly by the further and fresh influx of spirit-power; for many of God's spirits will be able to get at you in this way who could not do so so well in any other.

Yes, dear Fanny, and all of you, it is indeed joyous with me, so many of us in loving harmony, and I find a company of my loving friends awaiting me. Together do we visit again your earth, and I am privileged to see the workings for good and God which have been the beautiful result of the philosophical teachings I gave in my books. How thankful I am, but I see less and less reason for taking any credit to myself. I thank the Father for the talents He gave me, and which had come to me in the roll of ancestry of good and God-like men. I thank Him that I was so placed as to develop powers which, in others who are differently placed, may have been left latent and undeveloped whilst in your sphere. But one most grand delight to me is to see how truly the Father does bring out talents and genius, by which means many of the poor, humble, and uneducated ones of your earth, are enabled when here to unfold those hidden wings, and by them to soar to regions and delights of which they had no more idea when in their body, than the chrysalis can have of the beautiful butterfly life which awaits its development and growth from out of its condition of darkness.

It is indeed a glorious opening up of our powers, a grand development from the oft-times sad surroundings of the earth-life.

[I must here explain that in a letter received a short time back a friend who has passed through months of illness and pain, writes in reference to D.M.: "Ask him, next time he writes to you, if the extraordinary suffering of mind and body which goes on in this world now, at last appears to him reasonable? One clings to the conviction that it must be so, but it is a matter of faith, not of knowledge, and clear understanding. Has he (D.M.) got any clear understanding of the reason of evil and suffering? Does it depend in any way upon the life of the spirits *before* birth? I have found it a terrible experience." These remarks and questions were not in the least in my mind as D. M. was writing, but he knew, and thus continued in distinct reply:—]

But tell your friend from me, that the very faith which is engendered by the sadness, sorrow, and suffering on earth, brings its own reward. All the suffering he has gone through, all the heart struggles and lonely, weary watchings which have been his, and of which no one but the God-in-Christ dwelling in his very spirit can ever know, say to him there is a rich reward and a grand development to arise from this

heavy trial. . . . I find it has been so with myself. God, my Loving Father, only knew of my sorrow, of the deep depression through which He brought me. He alone knew my struggles for submission to His Will, as my powers failed, and I yet realised that days of darkness awaited me, because of the gradual darkening of my brain power, in which I had had a life-long enjoyment. For how I did revel in my power of grasping deeper truths than many others could, how thankfully did I clothe those thoughts in easier, freer expression, so that some of them might filter through, and help on the weaker intellect and brain of those whose mission led them into different grooves of life. How thankful I am now for all that. And let me reverently say that I thank my Father even for the bitter training which led me into the Valley of the Shadow. But when the darkest hour came I was unconscious of my trial; I had by then ceased to realise my own failure of power, and then it was that He led me gently on, through darkness, into His Most Glorious Light. I then saw the beautiful training I had been led through, and realised to the full, how by it, I was better able to rise into higher and more glorious spheres of thought, and spirit-power, and glory, than I otherwise could have done.

Believe me, you are right to work on quietly and undemonstratively in harmony with, and on the spiritual lines of, the Christian Kingdom Society. Therein, as you are finding, is far more than meets the eye. Go on in God's name, prayerfully, trustingly, follow in the Master's steps and all will be well

My dear love to all who can take it.

Your most loving,

D. M.

LIFE, RATHER THAN DOGMA.

In all probability there are but few of the readers of "LIGHT" who have even heard of the existence of the "Christian Kingdom Society," to which reference is made in the message from D. M., just given.

And yet, as is said in one of the leaflets scattered by its members, "over 1,300 men and women of various sects and parties, have banded themselves together by its one simple rule, *i.e.*, to endeavour in all things to be loyal to the spirit of Christ." . . . (and again) "Although we differ widely in our views on many subjects, we regard one another as equally honest, and no quarrels or disputes have arisen amongst us." . . . "The society serves as a register of names of those of all nationalities, who publicly declare that, as followers of Christ, they are willing to co-operate with men of all classes and parties in moral and philanthropic work"; . . . "we do not expect additional service from those already occupied with useful work, but everyone who joins is an encouragement and help."

It is called the "Christian Kingdom Society" because its especial object is to direct attention to the idea of a "Kingdom" as put forward by Christ. This name suggests obedience to Law, rather than acceptance of Creeds, and it is significant to note that in Christ's teachings to His Followers, whilst He uses the word "Kingdom" over 70 (seventy) times, in the Gospels, the word "Church" only occurs twice.

He taught the Kingdom of Heaven was at our hands; that it was within and amongst us; that it is a state, rather than a place; and His prayer is that it might come to us, not that we might go into it. All these teachings are so entirely in accord with those that my spirit guides have always given to me (as also to most Christian Spiritualists, as distinct from the many who investigate the subject from a purely scientific point of view) that I have gladly become one of the members of the society. I find that there is, in its quiet, unostentatious movement, far more than meets the eye. I believe that when its leavening process is recognised by the multitudes, who in these troublous, but thoughtful, times are almost adrift, because of the violent "shaking of the dead bones" of the Old Theologies—this small society will count its members by thousands, instead of by hundreds.

No subscriptions are asked for. Members are welcomed as cordially from the most lowly position in life, up to the highest. The one rule alone is enforced. But naturally, when any true interest exists, a desire to help to spread the Leaven must arise, and voluntary offerings are gladly received from any who can afford them. The expenses of the society are never allowed to exceed the receipts. Thus its power of making its work known remains limited. Leaflets with further information can be had, either from the Rev. Alexander Smith, "St. Leonard's," St. John's-road, Penze, S.E.; or from myself,

25, Quentin-road, Blackheath, S.E. F. J. THEOBALD.

October 14th, 1891.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

"The Esoteric Basis of Christianity."

I.

SIR,—The propositions put forward by your critic, in reference to my pamphlet of the above title, are so startling as to demand some further consideration. I do not propose now to deal with the details of his criticism, but with the fallacy which he puts forward as his chief argument in his attack upon my position as a Universalist. He argues that "a true Universalist is never a propagandist," because "the true Universalist cannot see disorder anywhere. All is to him one—*one order, from the transcendent point of view.*" I have put these last words in italics because it is just there that the fallacy of his argument lies. Perhaps the fallacy will be a little more apparent if we alter the phrasæology, and read:—The true Universalist cannot (ought not to) see disorder anywhere (in the particular or concrete) because it does not exist in the universal or abstract. The sum and substance of his proposition amounts to this, that granted that the whole universe in its final conception is orderly and harmonious it follows that every part in its *relative* aspect is also orderly and harmonious. Now the one fact which is most prominent in our experience as finite creatures is, that relatively to ourselves everything is *not* orderly and harmonious; and this is admitted when your critic says: "Apparent differentiation then is between man in his present state of limitation and the unlimited, but the difference is, in logical term, an accident, not a property." Accepting this latter proposition, we should argue from it, that although differentiation (including in that term disorder and so-called *evil*) is a factor of our finite experience, it is not inconceivable that in the universal these do not exist. But this is exactly the proposition which, in its inverted form, is denied by your critic; for he says that a true Universalist (one who recognises law and order in the universal) is bound to recognise law and order in the particular, and that, therefore, he should not be a propagandist, and should not oppose or denounce any existing order of things, because that order is subversive of some necessary purpose.

It will be readily seen that if this is to hold good, then every great reformer has been absolutely in the wrong, for every reformer is necessarily an opponent of the existing order of things, is a propagandist, and necessarily speaks in terms of denunciation. But the fallacy of the reasoning is still further apparent when we consider, that even if we are prepared to admit that everything that is right, that in fact it could not be otherwise, we can in no possible way argue that everything should *continue* to be as it is. In order that the unity and harmony of the whole may exist, the discords must be *resolved*; and if it be in the order of things that evil should exist relatively, it is also in the same order that the reformer should exist to denounce and rectify the evil.

Your critic has therefore not merely totally misapprehended my position, but has been guilty of basing his objections upon a proposition which is entirely erroneous. He says that I am "under the illusion that the form or appearance of evil proves evil to be an actual positive thing." I trust, however, that what I have now said will make my position clearer. I admit the existence of evil as the most prominent factor of our daily experience, but at the same time I deny its existence *per se*, and I think I have made it clear that this position is not irreconcilable with that of a reformer or propagandist.

W. KINGSLAND.

II.

SIR,—There are some points in your review of this pamphlet upon which I should like to touch.

The "Christian who has begun to think for himself" may well be left to his own development. He is safe. But such Christians are, alas, so few, and it was with the view of inducing those who had not arrived at that stage to commence the painful and difficult operation for themselves, that this little book was written. I know a very large number of professing Christians, and I am sure that not one in five hundred believes that the Scriptures have an esoteric meaning. I quite agree with Mr. Kingsland that there is no esoteric Christianity in the Church. True, attempts have from time to time been made to demonstrate its existence, but they have been failures. If it is admitted that the individual is the final judge of truth then the Church and its doctrines are doomed.

Christianity, it is claimed, is Divine Truth. Yes; but which Christianity? Buddhism is also Divine Truth, and so is any other religion. But why give that which is common to all the misleading appellation of one? Why not speak of it as "Divine Truth"; or, if one word is preferable—Theosophy? "All members of that (the Theosophical) Society call themselves the Theosophists, as if Theosophy began with them and would die with them," says your reviewer. This is certainly not so, because its members recognise three facts: (1) That the name "Theosophy" is many centuries old and that hundreds of persons have called themselves Theosophists before the present Theosophical Society was founded. (2) That the members consist of Atheists, Buddhists, Christians, Zoroastrians, Agnostics, and, indeed, people of all shades of opinion, as well as Theosophists. (3) That many of the members have such a lofty ideal of what a Theosophist ought to be that they hesitate to call themselves such. Consequently it is only those who are ignorant of both Theosophy and its humble vehicle, the Theosophical Society, who suppose that the payment of a five shilling subscription makes one a Theosophist.

Finally, I am sure that Theosophists generally, and the Theosophical Society in particular, will feel much obliged for the "good advice" contained in the closing remarks of your reviewer. But the evil, so clearly denounced, does not exist. No one recognises more clearly than a Theosophist that his opinion on Theosophy is but a limited and, therefore, more or less illusive view of the Truth. Truth cannot be contained in any one creed or in any one book. It is eternal, infinite, unchanging. Our view of it to-day is different from our view a century since; and our view a century hence will be different from the present. Hence we cannot dogmatise, and far from taking up the position imagined by your reviewer the true Theosophist ever bears in mind those words in the Book of the Golden Precepts: "Be humble if thou wouldst attain to wisdom."

There is also a point in "Notes by the Way" in "LIGHT" of the 10th inst. upon which I should like to say a word. Mrs. Besant's sole object in mentioning the letters received from Mahatmas was to clear Madame Blavatsky from the charge of having fraudulently produced similar letters. Mrs. Besant's exact words were:—"And here is one fact which may, perhaps, interest you much, as rather curious from the point of view that Madame Blavatsky was the writer of those famous letters. You have known me in this hall for sixteen and a-half years. You have never known me lie to you. My worst public enemy, through the whole of my life, never cast a slur upon my integrity. Everything else they have sullied, but my truth never; and I tell you that since Madame Blavatsky left I have had letters in the same handwriting from the same person. Unless you think that dead persons write—and I do not think so—that is rather a curious fact against the whole challenge of fraud. I do not ask you to believe me, but I tell you this on the faith of a record that has never yet been sullied by a conscious lie." Now, so far as Mrs. Besant's object in mentioning the letters at all goes, nothing turns upon the contents of the letters, the paper they are written upon, or the way in which they were transmitted. The fact that the letters continue to come after Madame Blavatsky's death proves to a reasonable mind that she never wrote any of them.

London, N.W.

THOMAS GREEN.

October 13th, 1891.

[We shall publish a rejoinder to this letter, and that of Mr. Kingsland in our next issue.—ACTING EDITOR OF "LIGHT."]

A Remonstrance.

SIR,—During the discussion which followed Mrs. Besant's lecture at St. James's Hall on Saturday night, a speaker mentioned Madame Blavatsky's attempt to deceive Mr. C. C. Massey, particulars of which are set forth in Mr. Massey's letter of September 26th, quoted in "LIGHT" of the 3rd inst.

Mrs. Besant answered this attack by a torrent of invective, with which she closed the proceedings. This peroration was delivered so vehemently that I am unable to quote *ipsissima verba*. But I heard Mr. Massey's name mentioned in course of a passionate denunciation hurled at the slanderers of Madame Blavatsky.

But, Sir, there was nothing of slander in the plain statement of fact, made by Mr. Massey in his letter of the 26th

ult., that Madame Blavatsky tried to deceive him, and make him believe what was not true, viz., that a letter had been conveyed to him by "Mahatmic" power, whereas it had really been sent from her by post to a confederate, with instructions to convey it to Mr. Massey as mysteriously as possible.

Violent abuse of the calm inquirers who have proved that Madame Blavatsky erred frequently by making false statements and pretences cannot aid the cause Mrs. Besant is working for. She has no right to tell an audience of 3,000 people that honourable men who decided in accordance with the laws of evidence are slanderers. Surely Mrs. Besant and her following, desiring, as they do, to serve a great undertaking, would do better by accepting Mr. Massey's charitable view of Madame Blavatsky's character and designs than by accentuating weakness in her endeavours tending to distract what of attentive reciprocity is available and likely to induce outsiders to come into the Theosophical Society; and in order to compass that end, I beg you, Sir, to repeat the penultimate paragraph of Mr. C. C. Massey's letter of the 26th ult., which reads as follows:—

"That, nevertheless, I still hold Madame Blavatsky in high honour will seem paradoxical only to those—the majority, no doubt—who make a single prominent feature in the complex individual character decisive of their judgment of the whole. This is a fallacy from which "Theosophists" should be specially exempt, both in point of charity, and by reason of their analysis of the component principles in human individuality. There are individuals among ourselves, as there are other races, who have not just those particular virtues which the average European or American makes the *sine qua non* of his respect, but who are superior to the rest of us in qualities the high spiritual value of which we have hardly yet learnt to apprehend. Our mere morality is largely what the word imports—just custom. For the use of the average social life, let us by all means keep it in esteem; but let us learn to understand that the sinner may be more spiritually alive than the most "respectable" British Philistine. Madame Blavatsky was not saintly, but she was a great woman and a great teacher. And if anyone, in the interest of true history, and of those who might now or hereafter be misled by false history, has again to insist upon repulsive facts in her career and character, that is the fault of those mistaken friends whose blind devotion cannot distinguish between the essential and the accidental in its object."

GILBERT ELLIOT, F.T.S.

A Reply.

SIR,—In your second article on "The 'Daily Chronicle' and Theosophy," you insert a summary of some objections to Theosophy, to which I venture to reply, as follows:—

(1) It is asserted that Theosophy is essentially callous, and preaches the subversion and stultification of human nature. If by this is meant that Theosophy preaches asceticism, or the crushing out of human emotions, I must deny the assertion; for there is a third alternative to allowing the passions to be our masters, and crushing them out, and that is mastering them ourselves. Theosophy teaches that the emotions are the forces of the human soul, which ordinarily control our will, but which when properly controlled can be used as agents for well-doing. For instance, when we cease to allow objects to attract our love we obtain mastery over the power of love and can use it as a beneficial agency on behalf of our fellow-creatures. Thus asceticism would thwart our purpose, and it is the first mistake people make to suppose there is no alternative between this and being controlled by the passions.

(2) That Theosophy substitutes for the "dreary conclusions of Materialism" a system of eschatology which seems even drearier, since it teaches extinction of the personality at death and a return to the woes of life; and that the goal of the Ego is a state of negation and dreamy subjectivity. We maintain that personality is a limit to consciousness and the main cause of misery, and there are many considerations which go to support this tenet; for instance, in moments of supreme enjoyment our consciousness leaves the personality and identifies itself with the object of our rapturous contemplation, the return to self-consciousness being accompanied by a pang. The ultimate goal of the Ego is not negation or dreamy subjectiveness, but an infinitely extended consciousness and life, the consciousness of the individual being blended with that of the whole universe, so that he lives, feels, and enjoys with it. This state is only negative in reference to our present consciousness, in the same way as light is the negation of darkness. Again, we do not teach

the continual return of the Ego to the pain of birth, but only so long as we desire the pleasures and pains of life; when we cease to desire earth-life we shall cease to be reborn.

(3) "That it professes to teach as its own peculiar gospel a system of ethics which is common to all religions." We do not claim any proprietorship of these ethics, we merely teach them because they are a part of the truth, and it is because they are a part of the truth that they form the basis of all religions.

(4) "That while it derides Spiritualism it sets up claims which, unlike Spiritualism, it can bring no evidence to support." Our doctrines are based on the teachings of mystics of all ages, whose testimony concurs on essential points; and on the internal evidence by which all truths impel to conviction. We believe, moreover, that there are more roads to truth than by the inductive method, and that scientific evidence is not essential to the establishing of conviction.

(5) The last objection—that Theosophy is unsuited to the healthy imagination of the West—assumes that the imagination of the West is healthy, and consequently leaves us free on our side to assume the contrary and to say that the imagination of the West is unsuited to healthy Theosophy.—I am, &c., B. A. CANTAB.

Necromancy.

SIR,—According to your number for August 29th, the Society for Psychical Research has among its members a man of remarkable learning and research, the Rev. Edward White. Some years ago he wrote a work called "Life in Christ," which made a great sensation in the religious world, and has borne much fruit. He showed in that book that the doctrine of eternal torment of the individual was not taught in the Bible, at any rate outside the Spiritualism of the Apocalypse, and it was he who perhaps produced the strongest arguments which appeared in the daily papers after Sir George Stokes, the President of the Royal Society, gave his famous lecture, in the same direction as Mr. White's book, on Sunday, March 30th, 1890.

The Rev. Edward White was also mentioned in "LIGHT" lately, on another occasion, to the best of my memory, as a friend of the late William Howitt, and it was also there said that he objected to Spiritualism, because necromancy was condemned in the Bible. Now, a conviction of a man of talent like Mr. White, sanctioned though it may be by tradition and custom, if inconclusive, has to be reasoned against by a man of greater talent in the world's estimation before its incompetency becomes plain and acceptable to the common herd. And this is precisely what has been lately done to a great extent by no less a person than Mr. Gladstone, in the "Nineteenth Century" for October, 1891.

Mr. Gladstone, in contradistinction to Professor Cheyne, does not think that the 16th and 49th Psalms, where a future life is perhaps first plainly stated in the Bible; and the twelfth chapter of Proverbs, where the same sentiment is put with more catholicity: "In the way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof there is no death," remained unwritten until the Persian age. Mr. Gladstone, on the contrary, thinks that the most important doctrine of all others to mankind, that of future existence (before which all other doctrines grow pale and are as nothing, so far as we are concerned), was believed in through necromancy by many earnest Jews, notwithstanding the Pentateuch. He says, "There is reason, outside the Psalter, to think that the Old Testament implies the belief in a future state, as a belief accepted among the Hebrews, although it in no way formed an element of the Mosaic usages. . . . But there is still evidence, especially that based on the practice of necromancy among the people, to show that it subsisted among the Hebrews as a private opinion rather than an obligatory belief." It certainly was not obligatory. Now, all this must be obvious to every student of the Bible, not least to Mr. Edward White. Surely, the Jews were indebted to necromancy as a foresight of future life and future knowledge, and ourselves also, through them. That which is strange and inexplicable is that Moses was learned in all the wisdom of Egypt; and it is notorious that the Egyptians believed in a future life. Pythagoras gained this knowledge from the Egyptians; and, as Mr. Gladstone tells us: "The great work of Sir Gardner Wilkinson, published in 1837-41, makes us familiar with the belief of the Egyptians, not only in a future life, but in a life of future retribution."

But it was necromancy which showed us to be not under the law but under grace. Necromancy was sanctified at and by the Transfiguration, and has been accepted by Churches as "the Communion of Saints." I need hardly add that for such experience we have especial advice from St. John; but, as there are always evil spirits abroad, "trying the spirits," precious as it has proved, should not be surely of universal application; since danger may lurk under the brightest demonstrations, how much more so when entered upon with thoughtlessness or irreverence. There is, however, so much good literature now on the subject of Spiritualism, and so much taught by the experience of others, that phenomena-seeking may now almost be left to the conjurers, or to the Society for Psychical Research, which seems never to be able to attain its object.

T. W.

Invisible Force.

SIR,—The occurrence of this expression at the head of a recent letter in your columns suggests to me the advisability of recommending Spiritualists to be more exact in their modes of expression. To speak of a force as invisible is to suggest the possibility of a visible force, which is an absurdity. For neither of the two essential constituents of being, force and substance, can *themselves* be visible, but only their resultant or phenomenon, which is the effect of their mutual interaction. The writer means, of course, an invisible *agent* or *vehicle* of the force in operation. The law in question is of universal application, obtaining alike in the unmanifest and the manifest, or the spiritual and the material. In every entity are, necessarily, the two "persons," force and substance; and every entity that is manifest becomes so through the evolution of its trinity, that is, through its resultant phenomenon, expression, or "word," which is thus the "third person" of the unity concerned, these three, force, substance, and their resultant expression being, not three entities but one entity. This is the solution of the problem of the ecclesiastical trinity in its earliest stage, wherein the force, being of masculine potency, is called the Father; the substance, being of feminine potency, is called the Mother; and the result of the interaction of these two, in and through which alone they are manifested, is called the Son, and these three are not three but one, being respectively that which makes visible, that which is made visible, and that which is visible. Hence the saying of Jesus, "No man can see the Father" (meaning the Father-Mother, or Divine energy and substance) "but by Me, their resultant expression." And "He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father" (meaning the Father-Mother) also. In saying which He is not claiming anything exceptional, but only evidencing an universal law, since every person or thing whatever, according to its plane, is the manifestation or expression of the Father and Mother, or force and substance of which it is constituted, which are themselves necessarily invisible.

E. M.

[The letter referred to occurred in "LIGHT," October 17th. We are by no means clear that the blunder in the letter is not our fault and not the writer's, as we have to invent titles for most of the letters that are sent to us. If so it was, of course, an unrealised slip due to the pressure of work and our small experience in the editorial office.—ACTING ED. OF "LIGHT."]

How Does the Conjuror Do It?

SIR,—Your observation in "LIGHT," of September 28th is indeed noteworthy. You say that we depend less and less on the argument of supernormal phenomena. You speak of them as an intrusion into the legitimate domain of the conjuror, which is no argument in favour of either religion or philosophy. Truly, phenomenal Spiritism has become "the legitimate domain of the conjuror." But it was not so forty-three years ago. Then the conjuror stood behind a large cloth-enveloped table, covered with the insignia of his craft, with an anxious look. Now he skips lightly on the stage with tight sleeves and a buoyant heart, and with no anxiety on his visage, because something or somebody else—it need not be a material body—does his tricks for him. We may say, without prevarication, that the conjurers have utilised physical Spiritism. When Lord Tennyson lately complimented his village hairdresser for dexterously taking two shillings out of his clenched hand, that he knew he had had hold of there, he complimented, I believe, the wrong source. It was either an external being that caused matter to pass through matter, or, if it was the hairdresser's double, it was that entity who deserved the compliment. But if it be our doubles who do these things, they are profound perverters of the truth, because the factors always say that they are external spirits. And we all must, I think, feel uncomfortable at the idea of our second self bearing such a bad character. I have seen the same "trick" done through the conjuror Bosco. Bosco referred the act to other than a double. He made two young men bandy a shilling from the closed fist of one to the closed fist of the other. But

before the transference, in each case, he made the young man who held the shilling repeat the following Italian words: "Spiriti infernali, ubbidite," which being interpreted means "Spirits infernal, obey."

I have the programme of a famous conjuror before me now. The ending of this programme has the following:—

"Spiritualism.

"A Private Séance. At the conclusion of each entertainment Professor Duprez, who has been termed the most Inimitable Spiritualist of the day, will give, to a limited number of persons only, one of his Original and Famous Dark Séances, which still remain a Mystery to the Whole World."

M. Duprez, a Frenchman, may exaggerate, but he is honest. He must be a powerful physical medium. I saw his performance some years ago, and although I was sorry for his birds that have to perform nightly in the glare of gas, I believe that there is scarcely a "trick" performed in which he is not aided or supplanted by unseen force. He certainly never will teach a religion or a philosophy, but I fancy he must make many people think, and believe also, that, even before the dark séance, there must be an unseen external force coming at every moment to his aid with skill and intelligence. I have, on a previous occasion, shown that the clever writer in "Punch" who indites the "Voces populi" is quite of the opinion that no quick-fingering of the carnal hand alone can account for half what the conjurors do in the present day. As regards M. Duprez, the "Manchester Guardian" writes of "his necromantic skill"; while the "Birmingham Daily Gazette" puts it in this way: "Indeed, it is a question whether his feats of legerdemain are his own." While the "Cardiff Figaro" says: "He staggers the least emotional by his masterful mysticism." He acknowledges himself to be, as we see by his advertisement, a Spiritualist and a medium.

To show how abnormal forces are to the fore nowadays, I give an extract from a letter that was lent me to read only yesterday, in which a young lady, whom I had only known in such matters as an admirer of the poet Shelley, and not as a telepathic medium for thought-transference or second sight, says of a lady friend of hers: "I always feel anything to do with her so much, for I know it beforehand, we are so terribly clairvoyant to one another."

One asks oneself: Have our doubles the power of passing matter through matter? and in the case of Bosco's "trick," making the shilling invisible as it passed from hand to hand? T. W.

SOCIETY WORK.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.—Assistance given by its members to inquirers. List of members, and sample copy of "LIGHT," &c., sent free on receipt of stamp. Also for the mutual interchange of thought between Spiritualists at home and abroad.—Address W. C. ROBSON, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne; or J. ALLEN, 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex.

24, HARCOURT-STREET, MARYLEBONE.—On Sunday morning last Mr. Dale gave us a very excellent discourse on Divine Influx. In the evening Mr. McKenzie gave a very comprehensive view of the points of unity and divergence between Theosophy and Spiritualism. Next Sunday, at 11 a.m., discussion on previous lecture; at 7 p.m., Mr. McKenzie on "Phrenology." Thursday, at 7.45 p.m., Mr. Towns. Saturday, at 7.45 p.m., Mrs. Hawkins.—R. MILLIGAN and C. WHITE, Hon. Secs.

KING'S CROSS SOCIETY, COPENHAGEN HALL, 184, COPENHAGEN-STREET, CALEDONIAN-ROAD, N.—Last Sunday morning Mr. McKenzie read an interesting paper on "The Seven Principles of Theosophy," to be discussed next Sunday morning at the same address. Strangers invited to take part. In the evening Mrs. Bell, of Peckham, gave a thoughtful address on "Experiences in Spiritualism." Next Sunday evening, Mr. T. Everitt will give an address on Spiritualism.—A. M. B.

WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—Last Sunday morning Mr. Humphries gave us the second address on the "Second Coming," urging that it was near at hand because the Jews were reassembling at Jerusalem, and because many of the "prophets of the Lord" were returning to earth. In the evening the Rev. Dr. Young gave to a crowded audience the facts which compelled his belief in Spiritualism. Friday, at 8.15 p.m., healing. Sunday, 25th, at 11.15 a.m., Mrs. Watkinson; at 7 p.m., Mr. Butcher. Thursday, 29th, the first of a series of public social entertainments.—J. HAWES, 36, Tyrrell-road, East Dulwich, Sec.

PECKHAM RYE.—During the absence of Mr. Lees, who is lecturing in Northampton, his place was occupied on Sunday by Mr. Dale. The fact of a new face upon the platform was the general signal for the assembling together in full force of the Christian opponents who have so often been defeated. But they could not successfully attack the position which Mr. Dale took up, that Christianity without Spiritualism was impossible; so finding side issues rather tame they attempted to wreck the platform, and but for the courtesy and fairness of an opponent would have probably stopped the proceedings. But a good meeting was held nevertheless.—J. H.

SOUTH LONDON SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, 311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E. (NEAR THE GREEN).—An account of the "death" experiences of one of our spirit friends was given on Sunday last, the announcement of which brought together a large and deeply attentive audience. Mr. W. E. Long closed an excellent meeting by some spirit descriptions, all to non-members. Next Sunday evening a special meeting of members will be held to ratify the purchase of a piano for the Society's work. A reply to the Rev. Dr. Talmage on Spiritualism will be made on Sunday evening next, and a discussion on the same address will be opened on Thursday evening, at 8.30 p.m.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—At our service on Sunday last Mr. Astbury delivered an excellent discourse upon Theosophy and Spiritualism, comparing the beauty and comfort derived from a knowledge of the truth that our loved ones still live, with the theory of Re-incarnation. Sunday next, at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mr. T. Reynolds on "Spiritualism: Ancient and Modern." Tuesdays, at 8 p.m., Séance, Mrs. Mason. Saturdays, at 8 p.m., select circle. A special seance will be given on Friday, October 30th, for the benefit of Mr. J. Hopcroft, at 8 p.m. prompt. Mrs. C. Spring, medium. Tickets 1s., to be obtained of Mr. Mason, who has generously given the use of the rooms at 14, Orchard-road.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION, ATHENÆUM HALL, 73, TOTTENHAM COURT-ROAD, W.—Last Sunday the hall was full to hear Mr. J. Ramanathen Chelva Rajan on "Spiritism in its Eastern Guise." The facts he detailed seem to go far to prove that there are magical phenomena in the East not to be confounded with, or explained by, modern Spiritualism. Miss Dixon sang two solos in a very artistic manner. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. Mead will lecture on "Man's Spiritual Evolution." As this involves the burning question of Re-incarnation we trust that those who are interested in the matter will not miss this opportunity of hearing one who, having been so well acquainted with the late Madame Blavatsky, has great knowledge of this subject. Before the lecture the Occult Liturgy will be read, and during the evening Miss Bendelow, a pupil of mine, will play selection from the "Stabat Mater."—A. F. TINDALL, A.T.C.L., Hon. Sec., 4, Portland-terrace, N.W.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—On Sunday last Mr. G. D. Wyndoe gave us a very able paper on "Food." Many facts and arguments were advanced to prove that abstinence from animal food was best for man's physical and spiritual welfare. An interesting discussion followed. At the close of the public meeting a members' meeting was held. The treasurer's report showed the receipts for September to be £6 15s. 10d., and the expenditure £6 2s. 4d., and that there was a balance in hand of £5 7s. We also decided to adopt for our services the songs from "The Spiritual Songster," by H. A. Kersey, Mrs. Gunn being elected leader of the choir. We shall also hold a concert in our rooms on Wednesday, November 4th, when a choice programme will be submitted. Admission to concert free. A silver collection. Sunday, October 25th, at 7 p.m., Captain Ffounes. Thursday, October 29th, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Wilkins.—H. W. BRUNKER, Sec.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

To correspondents who have sent me kind wishes my best thanks.

Rest and change are working for my good; if only weather would be merciful I should benefit more.—"M. A. (OXON.)"

R. H. P.—Thank you. We file for future reference.—"M. A. (OXON.)"

M. A.—Exactly the same question as you put was contained in "I. O.'s" letter, printed in our last issue. We do not consider it important enough to be put again.—Acting-Editor "LIGHT."

S. F. (Florence).—Your good wishes are appreciated and thankfully received. Be assured that words such as yours leave behind them a pleasant memory and a healing influence.—"M. A. (OXON.)"

J. S.—Letter forwarded. I am away in search of health, which has been very poor and is now somewhat improved. If Mr. S. C. Hall's pamphlet fails I can recommend none better. Perhaps your friend's "time has not yet come." It is one thing to feed "the children who cry for bread" and another to attempt to supply a want that has no real existence.—"M. A. (OXON.)"

MR. HOPCROFT'S CASE.—We have the pleasure to acknowledge receipt of the following sums on behalf of this appeal, and for which thanks are due:—Previously acknowledged, 19s.; Mr. Walter Kerr, Newcastle, 5s.; "A Friend," 2s. 6d.; Mrs. Wilkins' séance, 13s. 6d.; Mrs. Coates, £1; total, £3, which amounts have been handed to Mr. Hopcroft.—PERCY SMYTH, 34, Cornwall-road, Bayswater, W.

TWO COINCIDENCES.—We have received the following from a correspondent:—The following coincidences occurred to me the other day:—I wrote a letter to an intimate friend, and when she received it she had just finished writing one to me. Mine enclosed a recipe for cooking plaice, and at the moment it was delivered into my correspondent's hand the fishmonger was at the back door with plaice. My friend had begun her letter by saying that she did not owe me a letter but felt impelled to write to me.—L. M. P.