

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Görthe.

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

No. 633.—VOL. XIII. [Registered as a Newspaper] SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1893. [Registered as a Newspaper] PRICE TWOPENCE.

CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way.....	85	Records of Private Seances.....	89
The Ethics of Spiritualism.....	86	The Meaning of Life.....	90
Magic Cures.....	86	Thomas Lake Harris.....	91
Mr. Stead and the "Spook".....	87	Questions and Answers.....	94
The Seven Principles.....	87	Letters to the Editor.....	94-96
Buddhist Hells.....	88	Society Work.....	96

NOTES BY THE WAY.

In "LIGHT" this week there appears the first part of a very lucid address by the Rev. G. W. Allen on the philosophical speculations of Lake Harris. Mr. Allen has expressly stated that the personal character of Lake Harris does not come within his purview, and this we emphasise here. Mr. Allen's paper is full of suggestion, and to the suggestive aspect of the subject we must confine ourselves. No sacrament is damaged in its efficacy by the personal character of its ministrant, and no system of philosophy has anything whatever to do with the expounder of the system. What a man says is all we have to do with; why he says it is not in our province to ask.

There is a paragraph in an editorial of the "Christian Commonwealth" which has in it a good deal of reasonable suggestion when we consider what Mr. Stead himself has said about his communications with the living, and his repudiation in that connection of anything like a Spiritualistic hypothesis:—

Of course, it is possible to maintain with considerable plausibility the hypothesis that Mr. Stead is himself labouring under a delusion; but as he would not for a moment admit such a hypothesis, we are very willing to grant that he is the subject of some unseen influence just as he supposes he is. The question, then, arises, What influence is this? Mr. Stead himself greatly helps us to another hypothesis. In his communications with living persons he denies that an intermediary is necessary. Indeed, he flatly says that he does not attribute his power to communicate with living persons at a distance, in the mysterious manner he does, to any spiritual influence. Why, then, is it necessary to assume that the communications which he alleges to have received from the spirit-land are really from disembodied spirits? Is it not much more reasonable and scientific to believe that all his communications are due to some occult power which controls him through the influence of living agency? May it not be that Mr. Stead is under the influence of some hypnotic force, and that he is really made to write by some living person who has gained this control over him? Indeed, may it not turn out, after all, that the "Julia" who has been writing messages to him from the spirit-land is a veritable living personality who is using him for some special ends? We do not say that such is the case. We simply say that such a hypothesis is altogether more reasonable than to suppose that these messages really do come from some disembodied spirit. There are phenomena connected with hypnotism, clairvoyance, &c., of which no satisfactory explanation has ever been given. And if it be true that a hypnotised person may be compelled by the will of another to even commit murder, it seems to us not at all improbable that anyone who has really hypnotised Mr. Stead could use his hand to write any message he or she pleased, without letting Mr. Stead know who it is that controls him. If Mr. Stead insists upon a scientific explanation of the singular phenomena to which he calls attention, we consider that our explanation is more plausible than any he has as yet suggested.

We do not say we endorse this supposition; but that such outside influence can be used, and is used, is known to

some. If Mr. Stead is so easily influenced by his secretaries and collaborators, it is surely not impossible for him to have been acted on by some agency still embodied in the flesh, even in his communications with "Julia," though it is not very likely. It is certain that no attempt will be left unmade by the "dweller on the threshold" to destroy that proof of unseen disembodied intelligence which is so real to many, but which we want to be real to all. Some may not quite realise how persistent, as well as malevolent, are these attempts, but those who have to fight this fight know only too well what they mean. It is only because of the firm conviction of this that our fears as to the result of Mr. Stead's developments have been expressed. Spiritualism is not only a science, but an experimental science, and some of the experiments are hard to work.

The old accusation of immorality as the outcome of Spiritualism is being revived. Gross assertions were made by "Pastor" Frank Smith, of Peckham, in this connection; and as no special notice has been taken of them certain publications, mostly obscure, have supposed that these assertions are accurate. There are, doubtless, many evil minded Spiritualists just as there are evil-minded Baptists, Wesleyans, or Roman Catholics. But to condemn the Church of Rome because Alexander Borgia was once Pope, or because the monasteries had become hotbeds of vice, would be as ridiculous as to condemn the simple devotions of the peasant because of the Stigginses of the "Brick-lane Branch." There are some natures so debased that every opportunity of gratifying their vile propensities is seized upon, but if Spiritualism has been so abused, Spiritualism itself is pure. The most perfect religions have been misused by the malevolent, but that misuse has never depreciated the true value of the religion.

The "Daily Chronicle" concludes a very appreciative review of "The So-called Dead" with these significant words:—

These be things which come not within the ken of mundane philosophy. We have not seen them ourselves, so we cannot vouch for them; but, having expressed our belief in the good-faith of the writer, we feel no indication to belittle them. So far as we have been able to perceive, during a careful reading of the book, the conditions under which the experiments were made left nothing to be desired, and here are the results soberly set down by a man, and a clergyman, of seemingly transparent honesty, and of undoubted intelligence. Readers, sceptical or otherwise, may make what they please of them. We hold no brief for the Spiritualists, and we may add that the only professional mediums with whom we ever came in close contact were a trio of the most contemptible rakes and rascallions in Europe. But, as we have said, we are clean out of the atmosphere of Sludge in the book which we have here discussed. A final word. The Psychical Research people seem to think that they have disposed of the "miracles" of Spiritualism when they have found a conjurer who can imitate them. That, of course, is nonsense. The fact that a conjurer can do certain things by trickery is no proof that Spiritualists can *not* do them by other means. Hocus-pocus by a conjurer with a locked slate and a wisp of muslin has really not a great deal to do with the question whether Spiritualists can or cannot raise the dead. As well refuse to believe in a thunderstorm because they can produce first-rate lightning at the Lyceum.

THE ETHICS OF SPIRITUALISM.

The "Christian Commonwealth," after getting a fair amount of copy out of Mr. Stead, has become virtuous, and has regaled its readers, who possibly were becoming demoralised, with a short article on the "Ethics of Spiritualism." As to what Spiritualism in its higher and better developments means the writer of the article is hopelessly at sea. The following is, perhaps, true:—

Our own knowledge of the results of Spiritualistic teaching does not lead us to hope that the nineteenth century will wind up in a blaze of glory if a bureau of communication could be established at Mowbray House between this and the spirit world, with Mr. Stead as chief medium.

"Our own knowledge" evidently does not mean much, or the reference to Mowbray House in this confused manner would not have been made. The writer, whose knowledge of ethics is covered by the expression, "the holiest sanctions which the Bible enjoins"—which may mean anything, and, with such a writer, probably means nothing—goes on:—

Indeed, we are deeply impressed with the importance of the ethical side of Spiritualism to which attention has been called. We know quite well that in the United States at least, where Spiritualism had the fullest opportunities to test its practical utility, it has resulted in demoralising church life, family obligations, and in many cases has broken down all the barriers between vice and virtue which are distinctly taught in the Word of God, and generally recognised by men. And when this fact is placed by the side of another important fact it seems to us that the case is clearly made out that Spiritualism, as a practical help to right living, is already a demonstrated failure. The other fact is the entire absence of evidence that Spiritualism has done any special good.

Now, this writer makes two assertions of which he gives no proof: The first is that it is Spiritualism as such which has done all this evil in the United States; the other is that there is no evidence "that Spiritualism has done any special good." We have yet to learn that the evidence in favour of a system of thought having done any special good is to be taken as evidence in favour of the rightness of that thought; but the second condition goes much further: it means that the "Christian Commonwealth" knows what "good" is. The criteria appear to be of the usual materialistic kind:—

How many colleges has it endowed? How many hospitals has it built and sustained? What is it doing to-day for the amelioration of society? Has it done anything to feed and clothe the poor?

It might very well be answered that the foundation of colleges and of hospitals is not necessarily an unmixed good, and that the scientific demonstration of the existence of another world must ameliorate society, seeing that it would show that there ought to be no poor, which is better than clothing and feeding those who are the result of a debased system of ethics:—

We do not see that it explains anything about the future life that is not plainly stated in the Scriptures; but even if it did do so, we should have little faith in its explanations, while the life which Spiritualism begets on earth does not tend towards the life described on the other side of death.

This we pass over, as it does not seem to have any meaning, and come to another misleading paragraph:—

We do not wish to intimate that there are not many devout, spiritually-minded, and Christ-loving men and women who are professed Spiritualists. We simply affirm that the general trend of Spiritualistic teaching is to lessen the authority of God's Word with respect to some of the most important matters of life and death, of time and eternity.

In the face of such books as "Spirit Teachings" and "The Higher Aspects of Spiritualism" it is difficult to read the following without feeling that the writer has either a very curious library or makes a singularly curious use of the one he has—the last sentence is strangely fatuous:—

We have in our possession almost a library of works on Spiritualism, and we can affirm without the slightest fear of con-

tradiction that, judging by the teachings of Spiritualists themselves, there can be no doubt about the fact that Spiritualism is ethically unsound. We could give hundreds of extracts from eminent Spiritualists to justify this statement.

MAGIC CURES.

Under this heading the "Hospital" has collected a few cases of strange remedies which were not, perhaps, so much the outcome of superstition as of the perverted application of old world knowledge:—

Among the most prominent features of the cure by witch-sayer, magician, Obeah man, and the like is the principle of a life for a life. Originally, a human life was demanded for the staying of a plague, or the restoration of any illudicrous sufferer. Later on it was felt that blood was the chief thing necessary, and the life of some animal was substituted. It is, of course, understood that the propitiation of some power working evil to man underlies this principle. Once admit the need for propitiating the powers of darkness, and every kind of delinquent observance accumulates round it. To this principle must be ascribed all the revolting prescriptions connected with death and crime common to former ages, such as the touch of a dead man's hand for curing warts, the wearing of gallow's chips for agues, the valued ingredient in potions of moss from a dead man's skull (a preference that of a thief or murderer), and all the mixed unpleasantnesses got together by Macbeth's witches.

But the sacrifice of a life was generally, by the magicians proper, combined with or preferred to these crooked expedients adopted, it would seem, by the regular practitioner from a spirit of imitation, in pure ignorance of the source from whence they sprang. It may not be amiss to quote in illustration of this system of vicarious sacrifice an example taken from the life of no less a person than Blaise Pascal, and surely it was a curious bit of irony on the part of Fate to connect a "well-authenticated" story of witchcraft with the infancy of this acute thinker and severe scrutiniser of facts. The story is related by his niece.

It seems that the baby Pascal at the age of one year fell into a state of languor, varied only by extraordinary transports of rage at the sight of water, or what was still more unwelcome when his father or mother drew near to each other in his presence. This went on for a year, till he was near death. An old woman was then brought to confess that she had cast a spell over the child out of spite, and that the spell was for death. "My afflicted grandfather exclaimed, 'What, must my child then die?' She replied that there was a remedy, but that someone must die in his place, and remove the spell. My grandfather said, 'I would rather my son died than anyone should die in his stead.' She said, 'You can transfer the spell to an animal.' My grandfather offered her a horse. She told him that without going to such great expense a cat would be sufficient, and he ordered one to be given her." The cat was eventually thrown out of a window at a height of six feet from the ground, and was taken up dead. Pascal's father happily did not recollect until too late that all this involved a fresh evocation of the devil. When the true significance of it dawned on him after the child's recovery "he repented having given occasion for it." The cure was completed by the application of a poultice made of nine leaves of three kinds of herbs (three of each sort) culled before dawn by a child under seven years.

This is a typical case. With or without the element of the previous bewitching process hundreds of cases might be cited from almost any age or country containing this central principle of a life for a life. Is it too fanciful to trace in the modern practice of vivisection a scientific development of what has been too often the mainspring of vulgar and cruel superstition? The beautiful experiment of which we read sometimes when a devoted surgeon surrenders blood from his own veins to give life to his patient marks the highest pitch to which science has climbed along a road conspicuous at its outset by its foul and crooked windings.

A second feature largely present in the recorded accounts of the magic treatment of disease is that of sympathy. Something was done to an object (generally inanimate) unconsciously with the patient, or only momentarily associated with him from this action the gravest consequences, either for good or evil, were held to ensue. The stabbing of wax effigies of enemies, constantly charged against witches, is of this nature, and in the art of healing the principle was very widely resorted to. A few instances must be quoted.

Boyle gives the case of a physician who, having tried all means to get rid of a "marasmus," or ague, tried the sympathetic treatment. "He took an egg and boiled it hard; he then with a bodkin perforated the shell in many places, and buried it in an ant hill, where it was kept to be devoured by the emmets, and as they wasted the egg he found his distemper to abate and his strength to increase, inasmuch that his disease left him."

Scrofulous or ricketty children were commonly passed naked through a cleft tree. The tree was afterwards bound up and as it united the child gained strength.

A relative of the writer was strongly urged, not many years ago, by an old apple woman, to try the following cure for cataract. She was to steal a piece of beefsteak, apply it for a short time to the eye, and then bury it, when the disease would pass away with the decay of the meat. A similar remedy is quoted by Grove for the cure of warts.

The eminent antiquary, Mr. Douce, says: "It is usual with many persons about Exeter who are affected with ague to visit at dead of night the nearest cross road five different times, and there bury a new-laid egg. The visit is paid about an hour before the fit is expected, and they are persuaded that with the egg they shall bury the ague."

A nail driven into an oak tree is to cure toothache, and obstinate fevers may be reduced if the patient will pare his nails, tie them to a crayfish, and throw them behind him into a river.

Such observances might be almost indefinitely multiplied. They appear to depend on a sense of the mystery of the universe; on a perception of some unseen relation of things which renders it possible at haphazard to touch springs setting dimly imagined powers at work. Something of the same blind confidence in mighty results to follow, may be experienced by a princess when pressing the knob which is to launch a man-of-war. Readers of George Borrow will remember the autobiography of the man who was a victim to the mania of "touching." He relates that during an illness of his mother's he was visited in the dead of night by an irresistible conviction that if he could touch the topmost twig of a large tree near the house she would recover. At the risk of his life he performed the feat there and then, and, unhappily for the confirmation of his delusion, at the exact moment when a favourable change was noted in the invalid.

MR. STEAD AND THE "SPOOK."

The "Christian World," whose clear utterances as to the Unseen were noticed in "LIGHT" of last week, simply refers, under the above heading, to Mr. Stead's later assertions in the following words:—

What are we to make of Mr. Stead's mental telegraphy and his "spook"? The Psychical Research Society is going to examine the evidence, but in the meantime, to an interviewer of the "Christian Commonwealth," Mr. Stead said things that make us simply gasp. He claims that by pure thought he can communicate with persons at a distance. He has brought one lady in London to his office more than once by simply wishing her to come. Then, as a writing medium, people at a distance can take and utilise Mr. Stead's mind in such a way that his hand writes down any messages they please to send. And it is not the embodied only, but disembodied spirits can exercise the same power; and here the "spook" comes in. She is a deceased lady known to many people, and she has communicated to Mr. Stead facts quite unknown to him, and in some cases facts that had been forgotten, until recalled to them, by persons directly concerned, of minute events known only to her and to those persons, and the persons have borne testimony to the accuracy of the communications. The lady's colloquial mannerisms and Americanisms have also been reproduced in her messages written by Mr. Stead's hand. Only on Saturday week, at a séance in his office, the "spook" was seen standing behind Mr. Stead by Mrs. Bliss, a clairvoyant, who, although she had not known the lady, at once went to the mantelpiece and picked out her portrait from a number of others. Mr. Stead's theory is that we each have quite distinct a physical and a mental personality, and that the latter can be utilised by another mind to control the physical personality.

But why use this word "spook"? Either the thing is serious, or it is not. If it is serious, then any word used which conveys the idea of non-seriousness is out of place, and the word "spook" is one of these.

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES.

In an army the appearance of the rank and file tells us often more than the bulletins of generals. Of late, many of the less known members of the Theosophical Society have been publishing quarto orange pamphlets. I have read some of these. Certainly the contempt of these writers for the "mere husk" of the Spiritualists is quite as great as that of their president for Mr. Stainton Moses. The readers of "LIGHT" hold many divergent views about God, the next world, &c. But I think that all desire to know as much as possible about occultism. If the millions of souls, who in many lands call themselves Spiritualists, have only reached the "husk," it would be charitable to let them have a little corn. Any gleanings that I have got from my reading I will give for what they are worth.

"Buddhism," meaning the religion of Madame Blavatsky, and not that of Sakya Muni, had at starting three main teachings:—

- 1.—There is "no God, personal or impersonal."
- 2.—Outside living humanity and the "rosy" prison of Devachan there are no beings except malignant fiends. It is the function of "Buddhism" to control these, but never to consult them.
- 3.—The Seven Principles of Man. We need not waste time on the two first of these articles of religion. They have been I will not say thrown out of window—but packed up in brown paper, and placed in a lumber-room. But the third tenet is treated in quite a different way.

I must admit that the first effect produced upon the outside reader of the orange pamphlets of Theosophy is a sense of hopeless depression. Sprinkled about are phrases like this "The initiates will know what I mean," "Verbum sat sapienti, &c." When Lavater's violent death is mentioned we have this alarming phrase, "Let those who are entering on this study consider well the dangers that bristle in the path." It is announced that the mighty mysteries have sometimes been learnt without a "regular (italicised) process of initiation," but that the direst calamities have always resulted. As the poor student of Spiritualism reads all this a mighty terror seizes him. Would Eliphas Lévi have called his last séance with Husk *regular* and under proper guidance? But soon a ray of hope arises. Mixed up with grave and alarming warnings, he sees constant allusions to the "Seventh Principle," the "Fourth Principle," and so on. It soon becomes plain that with the modern Theosophist all this about the principles is the great arcanum.

Let us write down the Seven Principles:—

- 1.—The Body (Rupa).
- 2.—Vitality (Jiva).
- 3.—Astral Body (Linga Sharira).
- 4.—Animal Soul (Kama rupa).
- 5.—Human Soul (Manas).
- 6.—Spiritual Soul (Buddhi).
- 7.—Spirit (Atma).

Now if we examine the most approved Theosophical explanations of these "principles," what do we find? A confused jumble of two totally distinct ideas. At starting, Madame Blavatsky seemed to have meant by the word "principle," what Dr. Johnson means—principle—from *principium*—that which is from the beginning—primordial substance. But the good Russian lady whose mind was too quick to be logical, seems to have forgotten all this before she had done, and writing "currente calamo" to have changed her seven principles into seven states of spiritual progress. Of number seven she thus writes in the first draft ("Theosophist," October, 1881), "The Spirit—an emanation from the Absolute, uncreated, eternal, a state rather than a being." This, according to strict laws of English, means nothing at all. How can a "state" be an "emanation"? Madame Blavatsky probably meant that after many years, thousands and thousands according to occult teaching, a man may become of such lofty spirituality as to be one with God, a Being who had not apparently been dethroned and rendered "unconscious" by the Mahatmas, when her article was written. But how can a state that a man reaches in a million years be called a "principle"? This confusion of thought is also conspicuous in "Esoteric Buddhism." The sixth principle is "not in us," but said to be "hovering over us." (p. 26.) We learn too, that the "higher principles" are not "fully developed at first." This would, however, make no difference to a man, for if the sixth principle is not to be in him

until after at least 800 rebirths it does not signify much where it is hovering. But this confusion becomes worse confounded when we deal with the fifth principle, "manas." Mr. Sinnett tries to make that also a state of spirituality. He calls it "human soul," and says that in the "majority of mankind" it will be long before it develops. It is a "portion of this principle" (the language gets quainter and quainter) which, commonly called the astral body, is sometimes projected to a distance by an adept. Manas is simply the Sanskrit word for the intellect, and up to this point the original conception of the Russian lady seems to have been intelligibly carried out. To make this a state of the soul that the majority of men cannot hope to grasp until they become "fifth rounders," and what not, is certainly far from rational. But in Mr. Sinnett's favour it must be said that he had to make some sort of sense of the following definition of the fifth principle ("Theosophist," October, 1881): "The physical intelligence, or consciousness, or Ego, analogous to, although proportionately higher in degree, than the reason, instinct, memory, imagination, &c., of the higher animals." In a work published by Messrs. Trübner, in matter of fact Ludgate Hill, a trained writer could not well talk about a "physical" memory, a "physical" imagination, a "physical" reason. But if these are Kabbalistic words that have come from Mahatmas, do we gain as Occultists by Mr. Sinnett's substitutions?

Of the lower principles I need not say much. I must, however, point out one quaint slip. The Western mind, knowing nothing of the metempsychosis, has a very vague idea about what the Hindoos mean by the "linga sharira." A Western knows that he has from his mother an atomic body (rupa) at starting, and he hopes to get, but is little doubtful about it, a glorious body (linga sharira) at the Resurrection. With the Hindoo this order is reversed. The "linga sharira" is the perpetual envelope of the soul. "It is primeval," says Colebrooke in his analysis of the Sankhya philosophy (Essays, Vol. I., p. 245) "transmigrating through successive bodies, which it assumes as a mimic shifts his disguises to represent various characters."

Now it is very plain that both Mr. Sinnett and Madame Blavatsky, misled by early Western teaching, have quite failed to grasp this. The Russian lady meets, let us say, Koot Hoomi Lal Singh. She pronounces that he has rupa, an atomic body, and "linga sharira," and that these are "principles," things that have existed from the beginning. But if Koot Hoomi Lal Singh has been on earth "at least 800 times," with a gap of 1,600 years between each re-birth, his rupa, far from having been with him *a principio*, will have come into existence 1,280,000 years after his "linga sharira." The misapprehension grows more marked when Mr. Sinnett tells us that a ghost is a "mere aggregation of molecules." It is the "linga sharira" without a soul. ("Esoteric Buddhism," p. 23.) This is exactly what it is not. For if the "linga sharira" is present, the soul, according to all Hindoo ideas, must be present also. Another statement made by Mr. Sinnett is that the "linga sharira" is "perishable in its nature," and "absolutely done with by man at his death." Here again we have complete proof that neither Mr. Sinnett nor his female inspirer had any Asiatic mind behind them to check their vagaries. Mr. Subha Rao was once accused of this, but he has, I believe, repudiated the seven principles.

If this sort of writing really initiates an inquirer into the higher mysteries, he would, of course, be willing to dispense with sense and lucid English. But does it do so? Is Mr. Herbert Burrows with this "real corn" so very, very much superior to Mr. Stainton Moses with his "mere husk"? Have his occult powers ever enabled him to rise up and write his name on the ceiling of a room? Has he ever projected his "linga sharira" from London to Paris without the aid of the "Calais-Douvres"? Has he conversed like Mr. Stainton Moses for hours together with the spirits of the Heaven of Brahma? "Oh," say the Theosophists, "that is not only husk, but mildewed, poisonous husk!" And yet these feats are amongst the Shaddhabhijnā, the six magical "Knowledges" of early Buddhism. And Madame Blavatsky at first certainly based her claims upon her miracles. We must remember, too, that Mohini was first introduced in London as a sort of adept, but that he broke down with some hocus-pocus with a newspaper before Anna Kingsford. Mr. Eglinton, too, was patronised by the Theosophical Society, when he was thought to help them. Theosophical initiates consist of two groups: a small group who still write "F. T. S." after their names, and a large group who say openly that they joined the Society to learn magic, and that they were fobbed off with transparent excuses, and never learnt anything.

ALIF.

BUDDHIST HELLS.

The "Literary Digest" gives the following short *résumé* of an article by Leon Féer in the "Journal Asiatique" for the last quarter of the year 1892:—

Landresse, for his version of "The Voyage of Fa-hian," wrote an extended and instructive Note on the Buddhist hells. He gives the names of these places of torment, and a description of the sufferings undergone therein, without naming the crimes which are there expiated. More recently S. Beal, in his translation of extracts from the Buddhist Scriptures, has taken up the subject. The texts which he gives appear to be the same as those which Landresse had examined. Beal writes generally about the crimes which are punished and the length of the stay in the hells, details which are lacking in Landresse.

The generic name of hell in Sanskrit is *Naraka*. The Chinese call it, *Ti-yo*, which signifies a "terrestrial, subterranean prison." Landresse gives us the name of thirty-two hells, of which sixteen are "little" and sixteen "big." The sixteen big ones are divided into broiling and icy, and there are eight of each kind. The Buddhists of the South have no cold hells.

Beal has a description of the eight cold hells, which corresponds almost exactly with that of Landresse. The sufferings of the damned therein consists essentially of cracks or other alterations of the skin, the blood, and the bones, caused by excessive cold.

The names of the first five hells are nearly the same in the Sanskrit, the Chinese, and the Pali. As to the three remaining hells, the names differ in the three languages named. Yet the nine words are all the names of the lotus, adopted, say the Chinese texts, because the ulcers produced by the cold take the form of the different varieties of the lotus flower.

According to one commentary, held in repute among some Buddhists, the names given to the cold hells designate, not the existence of the cold hells, but the length of the stay which the damned is obliged to make in each. According to one text, respected by some, the damned must remain in the first of the cold hells five hundred years, in the second a thousand years, and so on, at the same rate of progression, which reaches thirty-two thousand years in the seventh hell, and sixty-four thousand in the eighth.

It is not easy to harmonise the Northern and Southern texts of the Buddhist Scriptures. These differences, however, are inspired by the same thought: to frighten the guilty and force them to turn away from evil-doing by the prospect of long, varied, and terrible punishments which, as recompense for their bad actions, they will have to undergo after their death.

All the Buddhists agree as to the existence of eight burning hells. These eight, which some double or divide into sections, correspond to one ascending grade in the intensity of the suffering, the duration of the punishment, and the criminality of the condemned.

LENTEN LECTURES AT ST. NICHOLAS COLE ABBEY, KNIGHTRIDER STREET, E.C.

A course of lectures will be delivered at this church during Lent, 1893, by the Rev. G. W. Allen, under the general title of "The Gospel of Christ and the Problem of Evil." The first of these lectures, that on "The Problem of Evil in Non-Christian Systems," will have been delivered before this issue of "LIGHT" is in the hands of our readers. The other three take place as follows:—

Thursday, March 2nd.—"The Problem as it Stands in Christian Metaphysics."

" " 9th.—"The Fall."

" " 16th.—"The Redemption."

" " 23rd.—The lecturer will answer such questions as may have been sent to him at 33, Bloomsbury-square.

Before each lecture there will be a short service, beginning at 8.15 p.m., the lecture is at 8.30 p.m.

We call attention also to the meetings of the Christo-Theosophical Society, which take place at 33, Bloomsbury-square, W.C., every Thursday; at 8 p.m. on the first Thursday in the month; and at 4 p.m. on every other Thursday. As all interested persons are invited, we hope many will attend these meetings, where a very important side of our subject is being developed.

RECORDS OF PRIVATE SEANCES FROM NOTES TAKEN AT THE TIME OF EACH SITTING.

No. XL.

FROM THE RECORDS OF MRS. S.

November 16th, 1874.—The circle met as usual. Raps were heard on the table before I had closed and locked the door. The room was soon filled with masses of spirit-light. Mr. S. M. had been spending the day with us, as he was not well. Several times during the day wet scent of the most fragrant description oozed from the crown of his head. When it was coming, he said there seemed to be an icy cold circle round the part of his head which became wet with the scent. While he was experiencing this sensation, if we put our fingers on the spot they were wetted with the most fragrant scent, sometimes verberna, but more frequently sandal wood. A cambric handkerchief placed on his head at such times would retain the scent for a long period. We were told it was a remedial process, and the medium felt greatly benefited by the treatment. Much exquisite sandal-wood scent was thrown over the circle and table. Kabbila sounded his drum and G. his double-bass. Dr. S. then remarked "We have never heard any wind instrument played." A minute after the remark, a blast as from a trumpet came between Mr. S. M. and myself. It was of the most startling character, and the note was repeated several times. The medium felt very cold and uncomfortable during this new manifestation. He saw the spirit who had made it standing near the harmonium. We were told afterwards that it was made by Benjamin Franklin, the most powerful of the physical spirits, and he hoped he would do much for us in the future. Dr. S. asked if they could make the harmonium sound; it was closed, but when Mr. S. M. blew, several notes were sounded. Mr. S. M. then became partly controlled by Judge Edmonds, who said he hoped to be able to speak to us through our medium. Unfortunately he was not successful, and Imperator took his place. He talked to us for some time concerning the different musical sounds and manifestations that had occurred. The Judge had failed to speak to us, through having made rather a rash attempt, and strange spirits, unaccustomed to control, often failed when making their first trial. Imperator then informed us that he wished our Sunday evening séances to be of a devotional character, and that he had arranged for Vates, Theophilus, Judge Edmonds, and many others (anxious to speak), to address us on subjects of an interesting character. They found some difficulty in using the material on our side, but they would do the best possible for the circle and mission. For a while he would stand aside to allow others to instruct the circle. This would have been attempted before but for the difficulties regarding the individuality of the spirit controlling, as it was almost impossible for the spirit to show its own peculiarities and keep its own identity. Now they intended to use the medium's voice for speaking as Rector did his hand for writing. While Imperator was controlling, the table was tilted and moved about, and the name "Altar" spelt through the alphabet. Imperator informed us that she was a friend of the Judge's, and influenced him much in his earth life; she had been a Druidess, and had lived about two hundred years before Cæsar came to our shores. She was burnt for the cause of truth, and was a high and beautiful spirit from the seventh sphere, in a different division from the one Imperator was in. She had been attracted to the Judge, as he, like herself, had suffered for the truth's sake. Imperator then implored the divine blessing upon us, and for all who followed after truth with honest hearts.

November 21st.—This evening, as soon as we had put out the lights, the room appeared full of spirit light, and quantities of delicious scent, both dry and liquid, were wafted and thrown over the circle. The "fairy bells" played over the centre of the table. Mr. S. M. then saw a luminous hand dropping some things, which, we discovered, on striking a light, were pearls of three different sizes. The message was given through raps, "We have brought three kinds; preserve them, they are precious."

November 22nd.—This evening while at dessert, in full light, we heard raps on the dining-room table near Mr. S. M., and two pearl beads were placed on the table. Later on we went into the séance room, when many more pearl beads were brought, also a quantity of scent was thrown over the table and circle. We changed the room for a short time. While waiting in the lighted drawing-room beads were placed in three different places

in the room. On our returning to the séance room a shower of the same kind of beads fell on to the table and floor, apparently from the ceiling. G. then told us through the alphabet to "cease," and Catharine gave the message "Chief cannot come."

November 23rd.—We met again under the usual conditions. The room was very full of spirit light. Much exquisite scent was brought and there were heavy knocks and raps on the table. Imperator controlled for a short time. He told us that Judge Edmonds had been trying to speak through the medium, but had not been successful. He hoped that at another time he would succeed in doing so. The Judge was now in the fourth sphere, and had passed rapidly through the others. The knowledge he had obtained of spiritual truths had helped his progress. The pearls had been brought by D., and his influence had been much about the medium during the last two days. With regard to materialisation, Imperator said it was a very rare manifestation, and much deception was mixed up with it. While conversing with us his tone suddenly changed, and he said, "I must go, I am called; called, but I do not know why." He then hurriedly said "Farewell, friends," and departed. Mr. S. M. made several convulsive jerks and awoke, feeling, he said, as if he had been suddenly startled out of sound sleep. Catharine rapped for the alphabet, and through it told us to "cease."

November 29th.—This evening Mr. H. sat with us. Directly the light was extinguished the "fairy bells" commenced playing, and G. manifested. Much scent was brought. Kabbila and H. showed their lights. Imperator controlled and answered questions. He spoke of the advisability of always preparing the séance room before meeting, leaving it free from all influences for two hours, and preparing it with fresh air, afterwards censuring it with fragrant gums. He added that it would be well if the room could be used by the circle only. It was wisely done in ancient times to keep the medium and circle isolated and apart from the outer world. The higher spirits could not enter an atmosphere loaded with material substances. They had to prepare and provide for every fresh influence introduced into the circle before manifestations could occur. Imperator then left, imploring the divine blessing on us.

SEÑOR CASTELAR ON THE AFTER-LIFE.

"La Irradiacion," of Madrid, gives some interesting extracts from a letter recently written by Señor Castelar on the occasion of the death of a friend's son. "I am prepared," writes Señor Castelar, "to frankly admit that I know of nothing so comforting to the afflicted as deep religious faith. This hope in God, who, in His pity, has made us mortal, and fixed thereby a time for the end of so many woes, and for a change to perfect security in His Heaven—this hope is not built up of metaphysical cobwebs, but is kindled in us by the rustling of the wings of those good spirits who are no longer here below, but who await us on the other side of the tomb, to shelter and console us for ever. . . . But death does not kill: still less does it annihilate. It is but a birth into another life. It has the appearance of corruption: but does the bud ever burst forth till the seed has decomposed? or does the fruit grow till the flower has withered? Similarly, does a new form ever arise in the increase and progress of all being without effacing the old form? If there were no death there could be no renovation. Nature would be a stagnant and malodorous lake; humanity would become old and effete. The sepulchre is the cradle. While we are weeping for our dead, whose personality so laboriously conquered cannot be lost, other beings are being born, for humanity is at once infinite and immortal; and while there is sorrow and death there also will be religion."

SUSTENTATION FUND.

We gratefully acknowledge the following contributions, and hope that our friends will all give what they can, whether much or little. Remittances should be sent to the Treasurer, Mr. H. Withall, Gravel Lane, Southwark, London, S.E. :—

	£	s.	d.
Amount previously acknowledged ...	223	16	0
K. Q. ...	20	0	0
William Tebb ...	10	0	0
G. R. M. M., per R. J. L. ...	10	0	0
Mrs. George H. Dawkins ...	3	3	0
Thomas Pole ...	1	1	0
Rev. J. M. ...	1	0	0

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

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post free to any address, is 10s. 6d. per annum, forwarded to our office in advance.
Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and should invariably be crossed "A.C." & Co.
All orders for papers and for advertisements, and all remittances, should be addressed to "The Manager" and not to the Editor.

Light:

EDITED BY "M.A., LOND."

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25th, 1893.

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 MEANING OF LIFE.

That Re-incarnation should be a favourite hypothesis—nay more, a belief, with a large number of people—is not to be wondered at. When one regards the seeming inequalities that prevail amongst men, the unequal distribution of apparent good, and the prevalence of apparently unnecessary evil, it is not unnatural that a series of re-births, in which some sort of balance would be struck, should seem to many a reasonable way of redressing these grievances. No man with any, even the slightest, sensibility can pass through this life without feeling either that injustice is being done, or that he does not understand the meaning of what he sees. That there are numbers of people who believe that everything is for the best in this best of all possible worlds goes without saying, but with them we have nothing to do. To the man who has emerged even a pin's point out of the dead level of his own selfish security the inequalities that abound in life must at once become visible, and it is to such that we speak.

If man's existence begins here on this earth it is not easy to see why there should be any inequalities at all, because under such conditions there can hardly be outside influences to cause these inequalities, except on the supposition that each man's environment is so arranged for him that he may develop either along the line of evil or along the line of good. This leads to absolute necessitarianism, which, of course, may be true, and with it something not unlike a separate creation for every existent human being, which equally, of course, may be true, but can hardly be accepted if any other supposition is more reasonable.

There does, however, seem to be one other hypothesis, or, rather, series of hypotheses, which may explain to a certain extent the facts as we think we know them. These hypotheses grow out of the question "Whither?" as distinguished from that of "Whence?" "Going on" is an easy conception compared with "having gone on" from "eternity" as we think of it, and yet it does seem difficult to realise one without the other. The one is, indeed, a necessary consequence of the other. But if the question "Whence?" is admitted as not only possible but necessary, the problem of life assumes a somewhat different form. It is not then only "given your life here, what will be your life hereafter?" but also "given your antecedent life, what must be your life here?" The Re-incarnationist appears to answer this last question by supposing a series of lives here, the conditions of each of which balance in some way the shortcomings of the previous one. This, however, does not solve the question, for either

there was a first incarnation, which only throws back the question of "Whence?" or there has been an infinite series of Re-incarnations, which would seem to render inevitable the supposition that finite misery is the outcome of infinite progress. Both of these propositions seem to be untenable. There is, however, another hypothesis which suggests itself, and that is that this life is an episode in the infinite chain of existence, and is personal and more or less different for each individual.

Perhaps no greater fallacy was ever propounded than that, on the whole, happiness and misery are pretty equally distributed among men. Happiness is no more spread broadcast over the face of the earth than is literary power, scientific thinking, or philosophical insight. We all of us know people who are, as the world goes, prosperous, and without any great care, and to whom no great care could come, for no great care would affect them; and so "whence came they?" We meet others, certainly indeed, not so frequently, but still we know and meet them, whose sensitive organisations are irritated and pained by things that would not be recognised by, and could not be explained to, the first class of people. Again, "Whence came they?" Surely "environment" does not involve a sufficient answer. Now, however, let us suppose that the chain of existence being infinite—and this does not involve the question of where or how individuality begins—certain individuals in their progress upwards from a lower state, by what means or why we do not know, are passed into the conditions obtaining here. Such persons would live that placid, contented, not too sensitive life which we see about us so frequently—in the villadom of this nineteenth century British civilisation, in the contented squalor of far Eastern China:—the surroundings are different, the so-called civilisation is different, the development is about the same. Again, suppose certain other individuals whose capacities are not only greater than the capacities of those of whom we have just spoken, but are greater than can be exercised under the conditions holding here, and so are in a way bound and kept from their proper exercise by these earthly conditions—to such people this state would be more or less unhappy. Of how or why such things should be no explanation is offered, and it is doubtful whether the defenders of any other hypothesis would dare to give anything like an unconditioned answer to the questions "How?" or "Why?"

And this hypothesis would not only account for the unequal distribution of happiness, which is, after all, only another name for equilibrated compatibility with one's surroundings, but it would account for the unequal distribution of intellectual, moral, and, perhaps, physical power. The coming into the conditions prevalent in this our world might shut off some characteristics and not others, and as the individuals were unequally equipped before they came into earthly conditions, so the shutting off would leave differences, even while that shutting off applied to the same capacities which could not be exercised here.

These suggestions are thrown out as suggestions, and as suggestions only. They may be founded on utterly wrong imaginings; at the same time they seem to point to a train of thought not altogether without profit.

MR. EDWARD MAITLAND.

In next week's "LIGHT" we propose to present our readers with a portrait of Mr. Edward Maitland, accompanied by a brief sketch of his life and work.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

Mr. Thomas Shorter will give an address at 7.30 on Tuesday evening next to the members and friends of the Alliance, at 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, on "The Principle of Authority in Religion." The subject is one of considerable moment, and certainly could not be in better hands than in those of our esteemed friend, Mr. Shorter.

THOMAS LAKE HARRIS.

A DISCUSSION OF SOME OF HIS VIEWS.

Address delivered by the Rev. G. W. Allen to members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., on Tuesday evening, February 14th, Mr. W. Paice, M.A., Member of Council, in the chair :—

Some years ago a friend, to whom I owe many valuable books, gave me a copy of T. L. Harris's "Arcana of Christianity," part 3. The Apocalypse, Vol. I. It lay for a long time untouched, but a few weeks ago I was moved to take it out, and very carefully read it through. After reading a great part of it through a second time, I was confirmed in my first opinion that it was a valuable and suggestive work, containing many things that were true, and some that, while not presuming to say they are false, I prefer to say I am unable to accept. Some of these matters I propose to bring before you in this paper. They involve points of deepest moment to all persons who take any interest in spiritual things; and whatever we may think of the definite teachings of Mr. Harris, it is most certain that his opinions are worthy of earnest consideration, and are most suggestive of new ways of looking at these matters.

First, however, let me say in the most emphatic way I can that I am not prepared to discuss the personal character of Mr. Harris. Ever since Laurence Oliphant left him the subject has been much mooted, and many persons, whose knowledge of the real facts of the case is very insufficient, have made themselves enthusiastic partisans on one side or the other. If a prophet were one who never made a mistake, never made what might be called a moral error, there might be some point in the discussion. But condemnatory judgments on these affairs arise from the forgetfulness that upon every matter there are two points of view, and the man we may be able to condemn from one point of view we might be able to acquit from another. Therefore I will express no opinion, will have nothing whatever to say, as to whether Mr. Harris was, or was not, justified in his treatment of Oliphant. No judgment pronounced by any one who cannot read the heart is worth the paper it is written on, and as to read the heart is the property of the Lord alone, we had better leave all judgments to Him. I am concerned here only with Mr. Harris's opinions, and I shall refuse to deal with anything else.

The problem we are going to consider is the problem of all transcendental philosophy—Is man's outer consciousness all there is of him, and, if not, what is the relation of his outer to the inner? What is the significance of this outer world in which we find ourselves, and how is it related to that inner plane which—if there be an inner man—must presumably form his inner world? To these profound questions Mr. Harris has given a very clear and categorical answer, which we are now going to examine and consider.

It is, of course, at once assumed that man is much more than he seems. Looked at from one side he contains minuter realms within himself, while from another he himself is an atom in a vaster realm, which is itself an atom in a still vaster realm, and so on.

For myself I like to think of this matter as follows:—This bodily form I now possess is as the outside surface boundary of that entity which I call "I." In it dwells a consciousness which cognises matter, but is not matter, and there—as far as consciousness goes—the whole thing ends. We have thus the two great categories of thought, spirit and matter—matter being spirit expressed or manifested to sense; and spirit being the substance, the originating cause, of matter: the relation of the two being exactly the same as that of word to thought, or of thought to word.

Now, being self-conscious, I can look into the content of consciousness, and when I have brought together the

whole of my conscious knowledge I can call that the plane of consciousness. Now this plane of consciousness is not a hard and fast line which never varies; it increases as my knowledge extends; and finding that there is no hard and fast limit within my present conscious horizon I am impelled to ask—what reason have I for supposing that there is a hard and fast limit anywhere? And if at first I do seem to see a very good reason I soon see with equal clearness this:—that the wiser I get, the less cogency is there in that first apparent reason. Thus it is distinctly suggested to me that the cogency of the reason for supposing that there is nothing beyond my consciousness is strongest when I am most ignorant, and weakens as I advance in knowledge. In face of this conviction I am emboldened to feel sure that the supposed reason is no reason at all.

Now, the more I ponder over this matter the more I become aware of a strong intuition in my mind that existence far surpasses my consciousness, and finding, as I have shown that I do, that there is no presumption against this intuition, I am emboldened to trust it. And I now enunciate my apprehension thus:—Treating this plane of consciousness as the external boundary of my being, I say that within this are a practically infinite series of planes of consciousness, each made up of the same two elements as go to compose this; that is, spirit and matter under their manifested forms of soul and body. Thus within me fourth dimensionally—that is, not within me as the doctor with his scalpel would understand it, but within me spiritually and not physically—there are a virtually infinite series of bodies and souls, each with its own proper consciousness. Now, although all these must be capable of being brought into rapport, so that the whole form one grand, all containing consciousness, conscious of each one of the constituent parts or elements, yet in the case of most of us as yet this rapport is not established; so that while I am quite sure that all the rest of the series are there actually, this my present consciousness does not know them. But although I have no consciousness of openings into rapport with planes beyond this, there are certain persons who assert that they do consciously possess such rapport. These have been in all ages of the world, and are called "Seers," which is a much better term, in my estimation, than the more modern terms "Sensitives" or "Psychics." And if it be asked how this rapport is to be gained, this brings us to another most interesting and important theory.

Supposing we have two stretched strings, science tells us that in certain circumstances there will be a rapport between them, and apart from these certain circumstances there will not be rapport. A stretched string vibrates so many times per second, according to the particular tightness to which it is stretched, and the quality of the string. When the vibration numbers of the two strings are exactly alike, or are in a certain harmonic relation, the strings will be in such rapport that if one is made to sound, by being put into vibration, the other will at once sound without being struck; will sound, that is, by what is called *sympathetic vibration*; but if this relation does not exist between the strings, the one that is made to sound will not be able to evoke any response in the other.

Exactly the same law, it is suggested, holds good of rapport between planes of consciousness. We have said that the plane of consciousness is not a hard and fast line, but is constantly altering as knowledge increases. Now, supposing that at first this plane and the next had respectively such vibration numbers as were not in harmonic relation, the fact that one of the two was constantly altering would immediately explain how it could come to be that, where there was at first no rapport, rapport might ultimately come to exist. To give an illustration: Suppose the two planes were represented by two numbers, the lower by 11, the higher by 26; there is at present no simple

harmonic relation between these two numbers. But suppose that the lower of the two is evolving, and from 11 passes slowly on till it becomes 12. Twelve is to 26 as 6 is to 13; and 6 to 13 is a simpler harmonic relation than 11 to 26, and so some faint, dim response, perhaps audible only to the most sensitive ear, might now be possibly heard. But the evolution of the lower does not stop at 12; it goes still on, and at length 13 is reached. Now 13 is to 26 as 1 is to 2. Here is a very simple harmonic relation. It is that of a note and its octave. Let any of my hearers when they get home try this experiment on the piano. Hold down middle C without striking it—that is, by pressing the key slowly down, and holding it there keep the damper raised from the wire. Now strike smartly the note C of the octave below, with a strong staccato touch, not holding it down; and listen. Long before the sound of the lower C has died away you will hear upper C sounding, and yet you have not struck this note; you have only held the damper from the wire, so that it could vibrate if the note struck was able to start it by sympathy, as you now hear that it can. If you repeat the experiment, holding down both middle C and also G, the fifth above it, and strike the same note below, you will probably hear both notes responding sympathetically. On instruments with longer strings other over-tones can be heard.

The application of this fact is so obvious that it needs no pointing out. One question only requires answering. It may be asked, does the evolution stop at 13? And, if not, when it has reached 14 there must be a distinct loss in the quality of the rapport, for instead of 1 to 2 you have now only 7 to 13. To this I would reply that although the evolution is constant on the whole, yet most persons who take notice of their states are conscious of times of varying lucidity. This is certainly my own experience. Study the transferences in the evolution we have been considering. You will see at once that while the direct ratio varies, there is a constant, uninterrupted progress towards unison. There is a more intimate rapport between 13 to 26 than between 14 to 26, but, in spite of that, 14 to 26 is nearer unison than 13 to 26—that is to say, although the conscious advance would not be so clear, there would be nevertheless a very real advance. Of course, no numbers that we can take can perfectly represent the state of the case; they are at best but illustrations, to help our minds to see the great general principle involved. It only remains to add that, of course, as soon as unison is attained with the plane next in advance, the two, being now in unison, become no longer two but one, and this new one now begins to evolve towards unison with the plane next above it, and so on and so on, until all planes are at-oned.

Now, according to most Seers all existence is made up of realms, each containing three modes, or aspects, of apprehension, termed celestial, spiritual, and ultimate. These three modes apply to every object and every truth. When we see with bodily sight a tree, what we think we see is the substantial essence of that particular genus of divine manifestation expressed in ultimates. Had we spiritual sight we should see it expressed in a spiritual way and conveying an intellectual idea. Had we celestial sight we should see it in the celestial sense as conveying an affection. And these three notions may be said to represent fairly well the nature of the three modes of Being, the outer being of material, conveying sensations of form and colour, scent, touch and taste; the intermediate being intellectual, conveying ideas of truth, consistency, rationality; the inner being celestial, conveying feelings of affections, goodness, and love. The idea is that these are three degrees, in one or other of which we all are, the question in which we are determining what constitutes our idea of life, the nature and character of Being as we apprehend

it; and decides what shall constitute our good, what we most emphasise, long for, and seek after. In the outer realm it is sense; in the intermediate it is knowledge; in the innermost it is love. Or in another way of putting it, the three are, to receive, to understand, to give.

It is Mr. Harris's assertion that in all his comments upon Holy Scripture he gives the celestial sense; that Swedenborg gave the spiritual sense; while ordinary commentaries give only the ultimate sense.

Mr. Harris further suggests that these three realms exist correspondentially upon all planes from the lowest depth to the highest height; that is, through all depths of evil and all heights of good. There is a right way of receiving and a wrong way; a right way of understanding and a wrong way; and a right way of giving and a wrong way. Beauty rightly seen induces love; wrongly seen induces lust. Understanding rightly used leads to truth; wrongly used leads to falsity. Love rightly directed is divine; wrongly directed is hellish.

We must now turn to another point closely related to this. According to the perception of most Seers existence is thus defined—a wondrous whole made up of parts, the parts of which have a double relation; to the whole, and to themselves. They may be entirely unconscious of the whole and only conscious of themselves; or they may attain to the consciousness of the whole, in which case they lose the old, separate consciousness of themselves as not knowing the whole, and gain a new consciousness of themselves as being in, and one with, the whole. And this principle is of universal application. For instance, at first I seem to myself to be a single complete thing standing in a definite relation to God in myself alone, and in no way concerned with others. But really, to the divine apprehension, I am but an infinitesimal part of the one great body of humanity, fulfilling a special function in that body just as my eye, or even any single atom of matter of which my eye is composed, performs its function in my body. Consciousness is universal; and probably every atom of my body has a consciousness of its own, seemingly as complete in itself as my consciousness seems to be complete and yet is but an atom of the consciousness of a vaster body. And here arise good and evil, health and disease. When the smaller consciousnesses are aware of their relation to the larger, and—instead of trying to isolate themselves from it and be independent of it, and do only their own individual will—they find their life and blessing, not in their separateness, but in their relationship to the whole, and so obey the law of the whole, then ensues health, and all is well. But when they only know themselves as to themselves they seem to be, and think only of their own self-desires, and each seeks only that which is good in its own eyes, then ensues disease. These two states are called—the lower division or sin; the higher, at-onement or holiness. It is easy to understand that in the former the atoms are out of rapport with all planes of consciousness beyond their own, while in the latter rapport has been attained, and first sympathy, and ultimately unification, will be accomplished.

We have now got a definition of evil, that it consists of a loss of consciousness of the fact of relationship; but this does not explain how evil came to be, how the consciousness was lost. Whether in any of his other works Mr. Harris goes into the full discussion of this question I do not know; in the one that I have read he merely states the fact as he understands it, without any discussion or any attempt to show how in the nature of the case such a condition as he assumes could possibly come to be. But this is what he teaches. There was an earth once, inhabited by beings of glorious powers and potencies, ruled by a monarch, a very Son of God in knowledge and power. So high was he that his very height made it possible for him to think the thought of being independent of God. Here lay his trial: Would he resist the thought, and

remain in his allegiance; or would he yield to it, and fall? God had made him perfectly free to do either the one or the other. He fell; it was no one's fault but his. He fell; turned himself voluntarily away from his source and origin, and so became, with all his followers who joined in his rebellion, lost to truth and righteousness. He destroyed his rapport with the Divine, and entered into pure isolated selfhood. His world now constitutes the lost orb, and he himself is called in Mr. Harris's system the anarchy or demon of the lost orb. His Hell is the deepest Hell of all, and its inhabitants are the extremest and most terrible kind of devils. Their whole effort is to be in everything the reverse of what the Lord wills. Their kingdom is therefore the inversion of His. He acts from above; they from below. He seeks to uplift man; they to pull him down. When His breath descends through the nobler organs, they endeavour to inbreathe from below through the grosser, and thus in all ways they seek to oppose and thwart the action and designs of the Most High.

Thus there arise temptation and conflict for man; for it is the aim of these Beings in every way to assert themselves against God by seeking to subvert all that He desires to achieve. Whatsoever He can do on the one side they can do on the other; they are constantly at hand to suggest to man the desirability of asserting himself against the dominance of God, and delude him into the idea that he proves his freedom and independence by resisting the divine impulse, and asserting his own right to guide himself. They foster belief in every illusion of outer sense: all intuitive preceptions they call delusions and insanities; and never representing to man the real state of the case (which is that it is not a question of his freedom at all, but only of whether he will be dominated by the Lord or by the demon) they pander to man's false pride and desire for his own will, and thus confirm him in a selfhood absolutely incompatible with the attainment of the true rapport whereby man would be lifted out of, and above, his own poor miserable self-isolation into a conscious unity with all existence; the liberty of the glory of the children of God.

But while the nature and origin of evil are thus dogmatically laid down, there seems to be an entire absence of any attempt to show that it subserves any necessary and useful function in the great Order of the Lord's providence. In one passage, indeed, we find the admission that the devil's stream turns the Lord's mill; but the whole spirit of the teaching seems to me to be the old, hopeless, chaotic doctrine that evil exists against the Lord's will; He would have much preferred that it should never have been, and all He can do now is to overrule as much of it as possible for good. But to say that the enemy's stream turns the Lord's mill, and assert that the enemy brought his stream there against the Lord's will, makes us wonder how, if the Lord is clever enough to thus out-wit the enemy, He was not clever enough to have done without the enemy, and have had His own stream to turn His own mill. I am bold to assert that no one with any real natural logical faculty could for a moment accept that old impossible theory which finds a power outside and independent of the One and Only power, the Source and Cause of all; which also makes Omnipotence regret anything which has come to be; and represents God as able in some instances to use the devil for his own purposes, and in all other cases makes the devil stronger than God. If God uses him at all He uses him in all, and to assert otherwise is to be guilty of the grossest illogicality.

I am told that Mr. Harris in his later writings has either expressed himself more clearly, or has come round to the more philosophic faith about evil. For myself, I could not for one moment accept what appears to be his teaching on this point. But when he comes to speak of the methods and processes of man's regeneration he becomes much more suggestive and interesting.

His teaching about this matter he believes himself to have received by revelation during his intromissions into the celestial heaven. One word about this aspect of seership will not be out of place.

The only eye that may take what it sees as what is actually there, is the eye of an absolutely perfect Being. The eye of any creature sees, not what is there, but only so much of what is there as it is capable of apprehending. The value of his report cannot be settled until he has discovered what is (in the language of astronomy) his personal equation. If seers would give us their accounts as what *they saw*, there would be no harm done; unfortunately they almost always speak as if it were what *was there*. Both Swedenborg, and Harris, speaking of the hells, tell us what these places would be *to them*; but it by no means follows that they are thus to those who in them are in their own place. Torment would much more surely arise were God to compel a spirit whose right place was in Heaven to abide in hell; or a spirit whose right place was hell to abide in Heaven; and an altogether different understanding of these places, and of our Father's love in letting them be there, comes to us when we see that they are places specially suited to their occupants, and expressly calculated to be the means of carrying them one step higher in their evolution. I do not think that there is any single thing more to be desired than that those who do see with open vision should bear in mind the principle laid down here, and while telling us truly all that they do see, never speak as if there were no other point of view seen from which the whole thing might appear very different.

Now as to the methods of regeneration. It is Mr. Harris's theory that the Lord combats with the hells through His breath. Mr. Harris is especially the apostle of what is called Interior Respiration. I do not profess to know anything by personal experience about this, but what Mr. Harris seems to me to mean is somewhat as follows:—

As I breathe on this present plane of consciousness with physical lungs, so that inner self on the next interior plane (at present out of my consciousness) breathes with lungs which are as real and solid to the consciousness of that plane as my physical lungs are to this consciousness. So long as rapport is not established between the two sets of lungs they cannot breathe in unison, for the psychical lungs being behind consciousness, I cannot regulate, or even try to regulate, the rise and fall of my physical lungs thereto. According to Mr. Harris the very slightest possible partition separates, in a great many instances, the inner lungs from the outer; the inner ever seeking to break through this partition, and establish rapport with the outer. Exactly how this is at last done is not fully explained, but when it is accomplished the inner *at-once* the outer to itself, and when they become one, the two lungs inspire and expire in unison, and the divine breath flows in the true direction and current from internals to externals.

No mystic, I think, will question the importance of insisting on this order, from internals to externals, as being the true order in everything. The materialist is the only one who reverses it. Refusing to believe in God as the source of nature he insists on looking into external nature to find God, and not finding Him there he concludes either that there is no God, or, if there is, that the knowledge of Him is not of any consequence to one who is in the realm of nature, where, he asserts, God is not. Modern science has, as Mr. Harris would say, become *inveracit* through insisting on reversing the true order, and arguing from externals to internals instead of the contrary. To argue from internals to externals is to let what the mind or intuition feels must be true, guide us in interpreting what the outer eye sees of nature around us. The realm of the mind is every bit as real as the realm of the eye; nay, if anything, more real because close to us, in us—while the realm of the eye is (as far as consciousness goes) without us. And to

reject the evidence which is nearer to us, and rely alone on what is farther off, is a much more serious insanity than that for which many persons are shut up in asylums.

And as breathing is the central function of life, so to breathe from internals to externals is, I would suggest, not merely to think and reason from the inner to the outer, but to actually live from the inner to the outer; that is to make the inner motive in everything the determinant. The outer motive is the sense of selfhood, of individual wants and likes, mostly antagonistic to, and incompatible with, the wants and likes of others. This is only too usually the determinant of our spirits and acts. And I suppose that the first manifestation of, if not the attainment, at least the approach of internal respiration will be the development of a power of sympathy whereby we shall feel with others in ever wider and wider circles. If you will consider what this really means you will easily see that the life is always co-extensive with the sympathy. We can sympathise with every part of our body which is in living relation to us, but when a member mortifies we cease to feel it and sympathise with it. So also when by the growth of affection we take others into our life, when by love we make them one with us, we feel their joys and sorrows, and they become really part of us and their life seems to be united with our life. And when I ponder over this matter of internal respiration, and wonder (as I often do), how it is to be attained, I seem to feel that there is only one way: that is, to strive to so develop and extend the sympathetic faculty that, instead of being only aware of my own individual feelings and sensations, I shall be touched with the feelings and sensations of an ever widening circle of friends, brothers in the great family; until at last I am no more apart from them, but their life becomes one with mine, and I can grieve with them and rejoice with them just as naturally and as easily as I now grieve and rejoice at what I call my own joys and sorrows. The man who has open respiration, then, is the man who breathes in unison with all humanity. To him, and to him alone, inner realms reveal themselves, and the transcendent glories of spiritual landscapes disclose themselves to his view. For, breathing in and with all humanity, he has become capable of more than a mere individual existence, and attains thereby a plane higher than the individual. Of course no one jumps at once from an individual sympathy to sympathy with the whole of humanity: the evolution is gradual, growing from sympathy with a few, then with more, till at last it embraces all. But divine blessings attend even the commencement of the process, for, as our Lord said, where but two or three are gathered out of individualism into His name (which is "Brother") there is He in the midst of them.

This then, as well as I can interpret it, is the significance of Mr. Harris's doctrine of Internal Respiration. Whether the breathing must come by divine gift before we are able to possess and manifest the sympathy, or whether the attainment, by a conscious effort, of the sympathy, fits us to receive the gift of a diviner breathing, I cannot say; probably the former is true from the divine and transcendental point of view and the latter from the human. Any way, the moral is, let us by all means strive to become more sympathetic, for, upon either hypothesis, if we succeed we shall know that we are attaining. For if breathing must precede sympathy, the attainment of sympathy will prove the attainment to the breathing; and if sympathy comes first, the attainment of sympathy will also prove to us that we have become capable of receiving the breathing.

(To be continued.)

NATURE and Christianity have been unwisely pitted against each other, as if they were irreconcilable antagonists. Both sceptics and Christians have talked and written as if it were a conceded fact that science and religion are naturally destructive of each other. If the depraved nature of man is regarded as a part of Nature, there is a conflict, and there ought to be; but the fact is, sin is a perversion of Nature, and no part of the original constitution of things.—Dr. H. MOORE in the "Methodist Review."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Under this heading we propose, at the request of several subscribers, to give from time to time such questions as may reach us—provided we deem them of a profitable character—with a view to their being answered, not necessarily by the Editor, but preferably by our readers. Both questions and answers should be stated clearly and succinctly, and in the replies the questions should be indicated by the number.

ANSWERS.

2.—Why, in astrological lore, is Saturn considered an unlucky planet, while his reign on earth is called the "Golden Age," to designate the happiest of all periods? A. C. M.

Only as regards our material or worldly self is Saturn a malefic; as regards our subjective or spiritual self it is a benefic. It has been noticed that self-consciousness has several grades, or notes—the tones and colours, as it were, of personality. There is not any absolute reason why these successive grades, either on our metaphysical plane or on the physical one, as in the musical gamut and colour spectrum, should be distinguished as seven. They each merge into the other, so that a more general distinction might only make three primary grades of consciousness, and a more particular one, distinguishing semi-tones, might make twelve or sixteen grades. But astrologers have adopted the septenary system of distinction. There is the conception of self or personality which arises (1) out of one's bodily presence, features, and form; (2) out of home environment and reactions; (3) out of social environment and reactions; (4) out of one's conscience and ideal conception of oneself; (5) out of one's energy and will; (6) out of one's political or public position; (7) out of one's spiritual environment or intercourse, conscious or unconscious, with the spirit sphere to which we severally belong. These seven grades have respectively received the names of Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, because the movements of these planets in the physical seem to synchronise with effects in the metaphysical plane of consciousness. Some of these notes make a discord with each other. Too much worldly blessing destroys the spiritual life. Jupiter gives the first, but kills the second; Saturn kills the first, but gives the second; Jupiter gives the plant of consciousness water and manure, which encourage the growth of leafage and roots; Saturn prunes the roots and branches in order to force the plant to flower and fruit. Jupiter and Venus, the benefices of the world and the flesh, tend to make the conception of oneself as particular and distinct from other centres of consciousness; but the Sun and Saturn develop a universal self, as one with all other consciousness. This conception in this life is hard to realise. We grow from it in infancy and towards it in old age. In the spirit world it is natural. I think the phenomena of community of consciousness or sympathy in hypnotism will explain it best. Possibly at times, in the cycle of ages, terrestrial inhabitants are more on this subjective universal plane of consciousness, and then, as each one gets a sense of possession, including, not excluding, others, struggles for possession cease. This is called the Saturnian or Golden Age.—P. W. T. (India).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents, and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views that may elicit discussion.

The Substance of Existence.

SIR,—Thinkers of a certain order of mind are often much exercised about excruciatingly remote subjects, such as the "origin of evil," &c. I notice in a recent issue of "Light" an interesting solution. "Charles Strange," in his letter "The Substance of Existence," writes some novel philosophical words:—

"Evidently he" (Mr. Newton Crossland) "cannot conceive the originator of all things must necessarily be an unconsentient and impersonal power, the very reverse of an omniscient being. For which is the most natural solution to account that the good, bad, and indifferent of this creation, &c. from a perfect Creator, who is supposed to have known a time what He was about; or from a blind unreasoning power one may almost say, a mechanical force?"

May I ask Mr. Charles Strange, as he has ventured to his daring footsteps on to the threshold of these mysteries, was the further originating source or force that started unlucky blind Force?

As Mr. Charles Strange doubtless interests himself in it as well as in philosophy, his logic will infer this not remarkably acute question and be able to reply.

Of course, I agree with Mr. Strange in not finding Mr. Newton Crosland's views are satisfactory, and I would almost go as far as agreeing with Mr. Strange in thinking that "the assertions of materialism and atheism appeal more to the reason than the dogmas of Mr. Newton Crosland."

I think the readers of "LIGHT" will however conclude that Mr. Strange has set himself a difficult task, if he expects to deduce any reasonable thinking on the matter, if at the same time the source of all thought is "unreasoning."

Liverpool.

ISABEL DE STEIGER, F. T. S.

Pre-existence—Soul and Body.

SIR,—In "LIGHT" of February 18th, Mr. George Harpur says: "We know that the body is only a modification of pre-existing matter, and in this sense, no doubt, the soul may be said to have pre-existed. Does 'C.C.M.' claim 'individual pre-existence' for the body? And if not, why not?" What is the point of this question? If I held, with Mr. Harpur, that the "soul" pre-exists physical birth no otherwise than in the elements of a future organisation, I should not speak of it as pre-existing at all. The "body" is an organic integration of material elements. It is not "the body" prior to organisation of the elements. Mr. Harpur conceives the soul analogously, as a composite, and I have no present occasion to criticise this conception. Let it pass for the moment, and for the sake of the argument. What then? It certainly does not pre-exist its own composition, but to pre-exist the composition of the physical body is not to pre-exist its own. How, then, does consistency require me to hold that the physical body is prior to its own composition, that is, to itself?

C. C. M.

Theosophy and Spiritualism.

SIR,—In your issue of February 18th appears a singular letter from Mr. Herbert Burrows, which, whatever may be its claim to speak for Theosophists, shows clearly that the writer knows nothing about philosophical Spiritualism, and has travelled very far from the position he occupied as a philosophical freethinker. But first let me inform Mr. Burrows what philosophical Spiritualism is. It is a study of, and inquiry into, spiritual laws and phenomena. Just as geology is a study of the earth's crust, and botany is a study of its vegetable products, so is Spiritualism a study of spirit in man and nature. To be a geologist or a botanist does not require that you must have a theory of any kind; only that you study the nature and relative positions of the rocks, &c., in the one case, and the classification of the various plants in the other. You may derive either from Eastern or Western writers certain ideas that appear to explain many difficulties which have troubled you, but as a practical geologist or botanist, you are bound to consider such theoretical notions as no part of either science till they have been proved to be true by a study of facts or phenomena. Spiritualism is a word so used in its meaning, that whether you are a Theosophist, a Mesmerist, a Hermetist, an Occultist, a Buddhist, or any other kind of spiritual student, you are a Spiritualist. If you do not believe in spirit nor the laws of spirit, then you are not a Spiritualist; if you do, then you are a Spiritualist, whatever views you may have, or whether you adopt the theories of Eastern or Western speculation.

Just as in geology or botany, a man may have any theory he likes, but no theory, however beautiful or however absurd, can prevent him being a geologist or a botanist if he studies the rocks or the flora.

The man who is a true student of geology or botany will remain a freethinker all through his studies, never accepting any theories till they are proved to his satisfaction. In the same way the man who is a true Spiritualist will reject all unproven theories and "ipse-dixits" of men or spirits, and will remain always a freethinker, depending upon what he can discover, or have proven to him, and guided all through by the light of his own reason.

Mr. Burrows is in error, I think, in believing that any branch of Spiritualism confines itself to the study of "old familiar physical phenomena," but he would be right if he had said that one branch—the Theosophical—does confine itself to old familiar and unproven Eastern theories, quite unsuited, as I think, for this age, because they are scientifically undemonstrable. The theories and opinions stated in a work like "M.A. (Oxon.)'s" "Spirit Teachings," or any other such book, have no authority whatever to cover the field of spiritual speculation, far less of ascertained spiritual truth; just as Theosophy and Occultism have no such authority.

It is to be hoped that such a painstaking thinker as Mr. Burrows undoubtedly is will come to see that it avails nothing to accept a cut and dried ancient system that professes to explain man and the universe; that no aspirations except of unthinking men can be satisfied in this way; and that our only resource is patient and deliberate inquiry and unbiassed free thought, the best of all food for man's spiritual nature. Whether man is advancing spirally or otherwise it is obvious that with every advance he attains a higher standpoint, morally, intellectually, and spiritually. Hence every system and theory is purely temporary. A final and perfect system must be in the very nature of things a pure chimera, unworthy alike of the philosopher or the scientist.

Theosophy is the abnegation of man's own reason in deference to an authority of Mahatmas, Occultists, &c., just as Newman's Roman Catholicism was a similar lapse in deference to the authority of the Pope and the Church of Rome. Both are due to a kind of despair, a distrust of the efforts of human reason, and a futile clinging to a dead past. Their devotees have seen the theories and systems of themselves and others perishing with every advance of discovery and enlightenment; and they have failed to see that this is a natural and inevitable law fixed by the very nature of things, and that it is quite hopeless to escape from it except by the destruction of the highest attributes of selfhood.

353, Clapham-road.

R. DONALDSON.

The "Fourth Dimension."

SIR,—In your issue of February 11th you have courteously inserted my very long letter on Question 5, "Fourth Dimension." It can hardly be answered fully without dealing with Question 6, the difference between "Soul and Spirit."

The answers to these questions, which, bear in mind, have never been answered yet, would require a treatise. I hope to deal fully with them in due time. At present I will try only to indicate the line of thought.

The ideas, Soul and Spirit; in Greek, Psyche and Pnuma; in Hebrew, Nephesh, and Ruach; come down to us from the times when Higher Intellects were said to have conversed with our ancestors, and the distinction seems to have been attributed to them. Be that origin true or not, it is curious that we never have thoroughly understood the difference, a fact favouring its non-earthly origin.

The sayings attributed to our Supposed Visitors are at times called Oracles; or, Answers, which themselves require to be thought out.

I dislike our term "Spirit," believing it to be what I call a Babel term, or a muddling of ideas; not representing what the original traditions intended. "Pnuma" and "pneumatic" will not do, as they also are applied to other things. May I use Numa, Numatic for the moment?—the sound is the same, but I could keep this spelling for the one idea only.

Numa then would be the opposite to Material. Psyche then would be to Numa what an organised Body, a plant or animal, would be to Material; organised Numa. So we correctly say a Psyche. A Numa is not quite so correct, yet we may say a Numatic element, or shortly a Numa, just as we talk of a material.

Be this as it may, let us return to Question 5. Certain ideas which seem to us as real as any material can be cannot be referred to the three dimensions of material space. In fact they only exist Numatically, that is in Psyches.

In the old Oracles, there seems one exception to the use of Psyche. The Supreme Intellect is a Numa, not a Psyche.

On the well-known theory, sometimes called Berkleyan, all material, the whole physical universe, is regarded as Numatic, or of Numa origin, as a dream. This is from the evident resemblance between dreams and so-called reality; a resemblance so great that some cannot detect the difference.

Our Reality, then, or the Material Universe, would be the voluntary Dream or Imagery of the Supreme Intellect, into which Dream He can admit all Intellects created by Himself, that is, all created Psyches. As His Dream cannot be shaken off by the created, it is to them what we call Reality, and His Dream Space is Space, our three dimensional space; and we all feel that it exists independently of our Consciousness.

But some things seem equally real, which we do not refer to the three dimensions. They exist only in Psyches, or thus all Psyches might be annihilated, yet the Material Universe might still exist in the Numa of the Supreme; whilst, if all Psyches

were annihilated, some ideas would perish, as they exist only in Psyches.

As a curious instance, take that of money. Were all psychical beings swept off this earth for ever, gold, silver, &c., would continue to exist, but would no longer be money, any more than silver spoons or gold forks would be. An instance of what we deem very real indeed, yet which possibly belongs to our fourth dimension, and not to the three dimensions of ordinary material.

Just so the Heavens and Hells of our Religions do not exist in our three dimension space, or in the Imagery of the Superior Being. They exist only in the Psyches of their inventors. Hence the instinctive rage of such when the Real Heavens, or Heavens of The Supreme, were revealed by the Telescope.

But modern research is showing facts, the meaning of which the Professors of Science no more seem to see than the professors of Religion till lately perceived the meaning of the Heavens all could see on clear nights.

There now seem to be things in Nature which really exist, yet not in the three Dimensions, but only in Psyches, objects that are not material but Numatic. If so, we shall obtain demonstration of the Existence of a Supreme Numa, instead of mere arguments in favour of the idea.

We hope also to obtain strong arguments in favour of a grand Hierarchy of Created Intellects corresponding with the physical Heavens now known of. Hitherto, there has not even been pretence of proof of any psychic powers beyond mere Earthly Ghosts, &c., &c.

REJECTED.

Inspiration.

SIR,—We are told in the Bible that "things on earth" are "patterns of things in the heavens." The converse is equally true that the things in the heavens are the soul of things on this our material earth. A study of the science of Correspondence, by Swedenborg, will make this clear to any thinking person. How much violence might be saved were the advocates of revolution to understand that the various ranks in Church, State, and social life are some of the many sketches in the Father-Mother's great picture book of nature, "patterns of things in the heavens." More than that, that those things are channels, through which the life represented by them, and which is their soul, is poured into our earth from the various ranks and hierarchies on the other side. Therefore it is not their destruction we should aim at, but their purification only.

The Catholic Church, for instance, throughout the world, is a representative body, a pattern of things in the heavens, and one of the greatest channels of grace to the Christian portion of the earth. To other portions other churches have been given, suitable to their requirements and needs. Especially through her sacraments the Catholic Church brings us into correspondence and therefore fellowship with the worship of "angels and archangels and all the company of heaven," round the great altar on high. The focus of worship below naturally introduces us to the focus of worship above, as seen by St. John in the most glorious of all his wondrous visions. This is the same with regard to earthly kingdoms. The Bible ideal is that the priest-king, the head of the nation, should be, in the highest sense, a medium, and thus receive the Divine direction for His people; under him princes, prophets, priests, and social ranks of every order and kind opening up other doors towards the other side. Nature tells us that it is through the brain that the spirit works, and that a many-headed creature is a monster. Why? Because the descending ray darts to the highest point, and thereby enters the body. Diffused through the whole mass, it would lose all power through want of concentration. Inspiration having entered the human spirit, instantly it begins to express itself through the human brain, and light and order are the result. And so it is with regard to the head of all communities of whatever nature.

The earth atmosphere is at present, especially, full of angels and spirits of all sorts, bad and good, pouring through all the channels open to them into our homes and lives. Angels and saints vie with each other in making use of every sign-post to forward their message to earth. Advertisement boards, theatre boards, the names of plays, songs, books, Christmas and other cards, everything possible is pressed into the service. In the street and at home a passing remark of one person to another will often give an inspired message if our hearts and ears are open to receive it. The chariots and horses of fire are all around us, and if only we will open our eyes and be really and honestly willing to see the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the

truth, when it is shown us—but who is so willing?—we should learn, by degrees, this inner language of the spirit, be able to trace through the physical world the working of the spiritual world, and "to discern the signs of the times."

For instance, the outflow of books from the press, describing the other side, is a signal to us, still in the outer body that the veil between us and spirit-land is becoming so thin that some can even now see through it. The books that treat of intercourse between human beings and animals, language being fully understood on both sides, surely point to the rise of our four-footed friends to meet us, as our love and sympathy draw their souls upwards. The appearance of the white dove as an Easter card; of the lilies on a blue ground and the five rayed stars now so common in our churches; the advertisements "Absolutely Trustworthy," and of the ark with its motto "Security," pointing to the present return of "the days of Noë"—all over our Metropolis, contain a meaning it would be well for us to decipher. The promises are being even now fulfilled. "He shall lead you into all truth," "He shall show you things to come." To each as he can bear it the message comes; to some through the Divine current direct, to others through angels, saints, friends, animals; to others through nature and the inanimate objects round them. The only necessity is obedience to the command given at the last great crisis of the world's history—"What I say unto you, I say unto all—Watch."

Y. Z.

SOCIETY WORK.

[Correspondents who send us notices of the work of the Societies with which they are associated will oblige by writing as distinctly as possible and by appending their signatures to their communications. Intention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions. No notice received later than the first post on Tuesday is sure of admission.]

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—Service each Sunday at 7 p.m. Speaker for Sunday, February 26th, Miss Marsh. The committee tender their thanks to Mr. F. T. A. Davies, founder President of the above Society, for his kindly gift of the interesting book, "Oahspe," to the library.—J. A., for Sec.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—On Sunday Mr. Pursey delivered an excellent discourse upon "The Soul of Man," contrasting the joy of the Spiritualist with the fear and trembling of so many others. Mr. Chance presided at the organ. On Sunday, 7 p.m., séance, Mr. Humphries. Tuesday, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Mason, séance. March 5th, Mr. J. Hector Bangs, 58, Tavistock-crescent, Westbourne Park.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, 311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—Circle on Sunday morning, at 11.30; Lyceum, at 3 p.m.; and at 7 p.m., Mr. Long will give an address—subject, "Is Prayer Answered?" Social evening on February 28th with light refreshments; tickets, 6d. each; early application necessary. Mr. Long gave an interesting address on Sunday evening last, on "The Valley of the Shadow of Death."—J. PERRY, Assistant Secretary.

SPIRITUAL HALL, 86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE, W.—The guides of Mrs. Bliss interested a crowded audience on Sunday with some pertinent remarks upon the subject of Spiritualism, in its various phases. Some successful clairvoyance afterwards terminated the meeting. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mr. T. B. Dale, "Father Clarke on Spiritualism"; at 7 p.m., Mr. Percy Smyth, "Spiritualism: its Toleration." March 5th, Miss Rowan Vincent, "Re-incarnation." March 12th, Mr. J. J. Morse, "An Inquirer's Night; Answers to Questions from the Audience." March 19th, Mr. J. Veitch, "Psychometry." March 26th, Mr. T. Everitt, "Direct Writings, recently given."—L. H.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.—Information and assistance given to inquirers into Spiritualism. Literature on the subject and list of members will be sent on receipt of stamped envelope by any of the following International Committee:—America, Mrs. M. Palmer, 3101, North Broad-street, Philadelphia; Australia, Mr. Webster, 5, Peckville-street North, Melbourne; Canada, Mr. Woodstock, "Water-niche," Brookville; France, P. G. Leymarie, 1, Rue Chabanaïs, Paris; Germany, E. Schloschaur, 65, Königgrätzer Str., Berlin. S.W.; Holland, F. W. H. Van Straaten, Apeldoorn, Middelhaan, 682; India, Mr. Thomas Hatten, Ahmedabad; New Zealand, Mr. Graham Huntley, Waikato; Sweden, B. Fortenson, Ade, Christiania; England, J. Allen, Hon. Sec., 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or W. C. Robson, French correspondent, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne. The Manor Park branch will hold the following meetings at 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane:—Sunday, at 11 a.m., students' meeting; and the last Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., inquirers' meeting. Friday, at 7.30 p.m., for Spiritualists only, "The Study of Spiritualism." And at 1, Winifred-road, Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m., inquirers' meeting. Also the first Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., inquirers' meeting.