

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 673.—VOL. XIII. [Registered as a Newspaper] SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1893. [Registered as a Newspaper] PRICE TWOPENCE.

CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	569	Time	574
Some "Spectator" Stories	570	Spiritualism on the Continent	575
"Immaterial Science"	571	Maria Blavatsky and "Master"	577
"Darwinism and Evolution"	571	An Old Telepathic Experience	578
A Book About Alchemy	573	Letters to the Editor	579-89
Intuition	573	Society Work	580

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Among the interesting matters referred to in Mr. Fleming's address will be found an account of the number of Spiritualistic journals published abroad, notably in Paris, where there are twelve of various kinds. We do not say that these are all of the highest merit; their literary ability, like their printing, may not be of the first rank; but there they are, and presumably they pay their way. Unhappily, in London this cannot be said with such entire satisfaction. Our own paper, which commands the confidence of the most scientific and most philosophic investigators of Spiritualistic phenomena and theories, has annually to ask for subscriptions for its support. We wish most heartily that this were not so.

We have often referred to Mr. Andrew Lang in these Notes, never we hope, unkindly, though sometimes perhaps banteringly, for Mr. Lang lends himself to that kind of treatment. A letter from him, however, appears in the current number of the "Athenæum" which makes our heart go out a good deal towards him, such is the spirit of justice that it displays. We print it here among the Notes, because here Mr. Lang has most often been mentioned. The letter was the outcome of a review which appeared in the "Athenæum." Bealings Bells is the point at issue:—

The reviewer of Mr. Thiselton Dyer's "Ghost World," in the "Athenæum" of November 11th, asserts "on good authority" that the earlier disturbances were caused by disrepute; the later, by mischievous young men. Is it indiscreet to ask for the evidence? What is the source of the "good authority?" The explanation given is infinitely the most probable and acceptable, but who vouches for it as a matter of his own personal knowledge? I am induced to ask whether, without indiscretion, the nature of the authority can be made public, because every fair-minded reader must have observed that testimony which would never be taken for a ghost is gladly welcomed if it tells *against* a ghost. Thus Scott in the introduction to "Woodstock," demolishes "the Just Devil of Woodstock," a Royalist goblin, on authority which is remote, undated, unsigned, contradictory of known historical facts, and above all, *introuvable*. Some anonymous contributor to a magazine, long after the events, asserts that he has seen papers by one "Funny Joe Collins," of Oxford, in which Joe claims the credit of having caused the disturbances. The original statement of Joseph, like *ille sicarius* in Do Quincey, *non est inventus*. Now reverse the case; suppose that, in a magazine nearly a hundred years after date, an anonymous contributor says that he has seen a paper, by a certain Funny Joe Collins (otherwise unknown), in which Funny Joe avers that he saw a ghost, or witnessed a non-natural set of disturbances. Even some Spiritualists would see that this evidence was not worth a farthing. Besides, even if there really existed a Funny Joe at Oxford under the Restoration, he had a good motive for pretending to have caused disturbances which proved his loyalty, and annoyed the Parliamentary Commissioners.

It is, of course, incalculably more probable that the Woodstock affair was caused by Cavaliers than by sprites. But can anyone say that the authority for this explanation, so long accepted, is "good"? It is remote, anonymous, historically incorrect, and when Scott accepted it, he illustrated the logic of manly common sense. No proof in favour of a ghost is good, any assertion against a ghost is good proof. Just in the same way confessions of witchcraft wrung out by torture are, very properly, considered worthless; confessions of imposture in pretended witchcraft, also extracted by torture (as in cases mentioned by Eusebius of Cæsarea), are appealed to as excellent evidence. What is sauce for the ghost is not sauce for the gander. Thus, writing of the notorious affair of the Drummer of Tedworth (the racket in the house of Mr. Mompesson, in 1661-1663), Mr. Dendy, in his "Philosophy of Mystery," says: "Mr. Mompesson confessed that the mystery was the effect of contrivance." No authority could be better than that of Mr. Mompesson, the owner of the house at Tedworth. But Mr. Mompesson not only made no such confession as Mr. Dendy alleges, but repudiated the rumour that he had so "perjured and belied himself," in a letter to Glanvil, November 8th, 1672: "I am sure there neither was nor could be any cheat."

These examples, with many others, show that even the authority *against* an abnormal occurrence needs to be tested, a circumstance which sound manly common sense is apt to disregard. For common sense, just like superstition, is wont to believe what it wishes to believe without minute inquiry. I do not mean to impugn the excellence of the authority cited by the reviewer, but, of course, it cannot be accepted before it is stated, any more than unstated authority for a Headless Horseman can be regarded as valid. Moreover, if the *modus operandi* in the imposture can be revealed, it may be of service to householders whose bells go on ringing (as in a recently printed anecdote) after the wires are cut! The nature of the authority for this anecdote, however, is to me unknown. Of course, much less evidence is needed to prove a probable than an improbable fact. But even to prove a probable fact, as in any court of justice, the evidence must be good, and at first hand.

A. LANG.

The Editorial Note to this is both amusing and instructive:—

We fear it would be indiscreet at present to make public our grounds for our statement.

There is something very pleasant in Mr. Lang's utterances about "sound, manly common-sense." What iniquities are not perpetrated in its name! It is the divinity, the very Dagon of the Philistine. And the average scientific inquirer is one of the high priests of the cult. As to what "common-sense" is, and where it began, no questions are ever asked. Common-sense condemned Columbus and persecuted Galileo; it laughed at Lord Northampton, jeered at Stephenson, and half pilloried Rowland Hill. Yet all these men said could be done, was done. And we may be sure that common-sense will some of these days find out that there are ghosts after all, and we wonder what common-sense will make of them. It will be pretty to see common-sense face to face with a future depending on what it does here. And even more delightful still will it be to watch common-sense in the secret places of its action becoming cognisant of the cloud of witnesses ever about it. Alas for common-sense!

SOME "SPECTATOR" ARTICLES.

In the number of the "Spectator" for November 11th, there are some articles which emphatically show how the belief in unseen influences is permeating the minds of many thoughtful men. An article on "The Calamity at Santander" begins in this way :—

The existence of an incalculable disruptive force, lying beneath all human arrangements, which must be controlled by Providence, but which in its capricious action seems sometimes to be guided by accident and sometimes to be directed by malignant will, is once more broadly illustrated by the calamity at Santander. As in all the greatest calamities of our times—in the famine of the two Shans, which swept away nine millions of people, in the flood which destroyed an island in the Ganges, when four hundred thousand human beings died in a few minutes, in the terrible Holmfirth disaster, in the volcanic outbreak in Japan, in the massacre of children at Darlington, and in a dozen other calamities—no human will appears to have been operative in even the smallest degree.

This is plain speaking. That a malignant will should be dreamt of in the carrying out of these events is a new departure, even though it is tempered with the "must" of Providential control. The article then describes the frightful disaster in some detail, and after showing how utter was the demoralisation, significantly adds :—

As usual, the savage side of human nature woke up first, and the criminal class, delighted with the catastrophe, began plundering the dead, the deserted houses which remained, and even the burning buildings.

How terribly suggestive is this idea, of the savage element in human nature delighting in the catastrophe! And why was there this horror? For no apparent reason :—

We fear that, taking into account the deaths from shock, from exposure, and from the increased liability to disease always displayed for a time in a place so stricken, the mortality caused by the explosion will approach nearer to two thousand than one, while the loss of prosperity is incalculable. Not a Spaniard will for years go near a pleasure-port so obviously "unlucky." A perfectly innocent place, guiltless even of the neglect which may be pleaded when a pleasure-town is crippled for years by a burst of typhoid, may be pronounced for the present ruined.

And the article concludes with the following remarkable paragraph :—

How much dynamite is there stored in London or Liverpool, or, perhaps, unloading at this very moment in Cardiff? There is hardly a limit to what a fire or a flood or the cholera might do, and yet men live on, full of a reasonable security born in all of long experience, and strengthened in a few by a confidence, not quite so reasonable, that Providence will not suffer a huge calamity. Providence has probably suffered the annihilation of worlds. Every now and then the security is broken by an event like the explosion of Krakatoa, which has never been sufficiently described, and which might have altered the face of the world, or an occurrence like that at Santander, which threatened a whole city; but they occur at long intervals, in widely different regions, and usually among the races which do not record. The world goes on, and forgets, and philosophers repeat more and more certainly that the abnormal can never happen, and that for every event there must be some natural cause. What was the cause, other than "accident," of the destruction of Santander; and what guarantees London, or Liverpool, or New York, from an accident equally destructive? It is certainly no foresight in her citizens, who no more expect a stupendous calamity than the citizens of Santander did, and who, if it assumed a proportional magnitude, would probably find that civilisation had gone hardly deeper with them than with those unlucky Spaniards who stood gazing as their houses burned. It is the protection of mankind, not the destruction of mankind, which is so wonderful.

If this is a true picture, as it probably is, of our boasted civilisation, how great is the need for watchfulness against the operation of a "malignant will."

There is another article, on the question as to whether *Requiescat in pace* is a prayer or not, which is equally striking. A dispute has arisen in a country district as to

whether *Requiescat in pace* might not be placed on a tombstone instead of a direct request for prayer for the departed. On this the writer says :—

It seems to us a very odd sort of theology to maintain that we may legitimately hope for what we may not legitimately pray for. What is prayer, except the expression of a fervent desire subject to the better and purer will of the Almighty? We pray for rain with submission to God's will if our prayer is not in conformity with it. Why may we not pray for the salvation of human souls under the same conditions? We suppose the view to be that we do not know for certain that God's will in respect to rain may not be in part determined by the character of the prayers we put up; but that God's will in relation to the salvation of souls is finally determined by the state of those souls at death, and can never afterwards be affected by any human petition. But we should like to know the justification for that assumption. There is none, so far as we know, in any passage of Scripture, nor are we ever warned that we may legitimately hope for that for which we may not pray.

And again :—

If prayers for the dead are to be excluded by any dogma as to what is and what is not the date at which God's will is finally made up as to man's salvation, how little there is for which we could pray with any confidence.

Which puts the case very clearly and succinctly.

Another article, on "Dying in Harness," suggested by the death of Sir Andrew Clark, contains a striking passage which we give, though it is not so much connected with the Unseen as the foregoing :—

There is one curious moral problem connected with this subject which we often hear mentioned in private, but have never seen discussed in public. Suppose a man knows to a moral certainty that in sticking to his work he is killing himself, or, as man cannot foresee, is greatly impairing his chance of living, is he then justified in going on? Is not that a kind of suicide? We should say, Decidedly not, any more than it is a kind of suicide for an officer who might retire to go into a battle. There is no particular moral duty obeyed in merely keeping alive; and no one is bound to shirk duty, or even avoid work, merely for that reason. The work must be done by somebody; it is So-and-so's place in the scheme of things to do it; and if through doing it death comes a little sooner, let it come. The sentry who stood to be overwhelmed by the ashes from Vesuvius did not commit suicide; and though few men's duty is as peremptory, still, if a man judges that for this or that good reason, duty, even duty to himself, urges continuance in work, he may rightfully continue in it. The judgment in each individual case must be a careful one, and must, of course, be free from the wish for early death; but once deliberately formed, it is, we feel assured, full justification for continued toil. Sir Andrew Clark was advising, and therefore presumably benefiting, patients up to the hour of his seizure, and as he could not know when it would arrive, or whether it would arrive at all, was clearly within the limits of lawful liberty. We may refine upon that question of preserving health till we at last live only to keep alive, which is a peculiarly base existence.

These three articles show a remarkable change in the methods of modern thought, and the feeling of change will be strongly accentuated if these extracts are compared with other extracts from the "Agnostic Annual," given in a previous number of "LIGHT."

ASTROLOGICAL EFFECTS.

The New Moon of October was an eclipse, invisible in England. An eclipse is invariably malefic over the whole world, but produces its worst effects according to the house in which it falls in that part of the world where it is visible. In England, this eclipse fell in the fifth house, which is the eighth from the tenth, and therefore signifies the death of great people. On October 17th, at 10 a.m., died Marshal MacMahon, the celebrated French soldier, at his chateau of La Forêt, near Montereau. He was born July 13th, 1808. On the next day Gounod, the famous musician, died at Paris, at 6 25 a.m. He was born June 17th, 1818. On October 21st, Lord Viriam, British Ambassador to Rome, died. On the next day died Dr. Knox, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, and the Maharajah Dhuleep Singh.—"Astrologer's Magazine."

"IMMATERIAL SCIENCE."

The "Literary Digest" condenses an article with this title from the "Popular Science Monthly" of New York for November. The writer is E. S. Moser. The article as condensed is somewhat "thin," but so must have been the paper which it criticises. For example, the division of matter into "ponderable" and "imponderable" is a little out of date. Nevertheless, it is a very good illustration of the kind of argument used by the small philosopher when he attacks a perhaps almost equally small but somewhat more enlightened opponent. From that point of view the article is useful:—

"The Material View of Life and its Relations to the Spiritual," by Professor Graham Lusk, in the "Popular Science Monthly" for August, presents to the mind of a layman a unique combination of facts and fancies, of scientific deductions, and metaphysical assumptions. The Professor's "material view," in the main, finds adequate support in the domain of demonstrable knowledge, but his "reasoning" process in support of his spiritual view is distributed over a good deal of imaginative and unknown territory. The Professor observes: "Matter is divided into ponderable and imponderable—ponderable, that which can be weighed; imponderable, that which cannot be weighed." Some proof is certainly required in support of this statement. The conventional terms of speech employed in treating of matter admit of a division of matter within certain limitations, to more clearly establish the differences in material forms; but to boldly imply that a portion of the matter in existence has no weight—is imponderable—is to challenge the presentation of clearly-defined evidence. The Professor may be right; he may be wrong. He may believe he is right; but belief, in the absence of knowledge, is *mere belief*; and one belief, in the abstract, is about of as much importance as any other belief, however ridiculous. Moreover, to assume to establish the existence of "ether" as a means of explaining "something otherwise inexplicable" is a process of reasoning which may pass at par with very learned metaphysicians, but it can hardly claim the serious attention of thinking minds, particularly when the "something otherwise inexplicable" is something the existence of which is taken for granted. The Professor continues his process of reasoning: "A man dies; the spirit passes from him; the flesh is left." The synthetical activities of the body which produced the activities of life have ceased; the analytic or destructive process is master of the situation; but "the spirit passes from him"! *What* passes from him? What is the *spirit*, Professor? "Imponderable spirit," is it? I don't understand you, because I do not know what you are talking about. You may explain that the spirit is ethereal matter. Will I be informed as to what spirit may be or is, when I know nothing about imponderable matter? And, again: "Now, is it not conceivable that, in the spirit after its severance from the flesh, our present imperfect senses may become perfect, and the influence of other now unthought-of sensations become possible?" No, it is not conceivable, if the conception is to rest upon a rational basis—truths at this time demonstrable. The existence of "unthought-of sensations" is a bold assumption. The conception is not scientific because our present "imperfect senses" are the outcome of purely physical (earthly) conditions, so far as science knows anything about the senses. What science does not know, or what science may know hereafter, has nothing to do, and can have nothing to do, with the Professor's conception at present.

I concede to every man a right to formulate a belief that will afford him some needed consolation in his struggle for existence, so long as he is perfectly willing to allow other men to do likewise without let or hindrance, but no belief should be set forth in the name of science unless there is something tangible in support of it.

It is frequently observed that some scientists are loth to accept, and to abide by, the result obtained as the fruitage of their laborious investigations. They observe the operations of Nature, closely study causes and effects, discern principles of action, and thereupon formulate truths. Forthwith these truths must be utilised to bolster up pre-conceived notions which have no foundation in fact. Thus valuable time is wasted, and the progress of scientific research retarded as well. No scientist should start out in search of nothing! He must have an object in view, and that object must, in a measure, be defined. Science has no business to halt by the wayside and inquire whether or

not the truth found in the book of Nature will horrify those who are nursing some creed or dogma. Truth is truth and any apology for its existence is quite superfluous. If the truths of science have terrors for a man's religion, there must be something wrong and untrue in connection with his religion. If his religion is based on knowledge, love, justice, and mercy, he will encounter no terrors in the realm of science; if his religion means a desire to know the why and wherefore of existences about him, and a desire to add his mite of power in helping to ameliorate human conditions, the truths of science will serve as his handmaidens.

DARWINISM AND EVOLUTION.

By GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

The teaching of Darwin that the evolution from the lower to the higher forms in plants and animals is due to the *struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest*, is with the reservation of certain "modifications" accepted by the great majority of scientific minds in Europe and America. As Thomson in his "Study of Animal Life" says, "Evolution by natural descent, with modifications, is the order of Nature and is Darwinism and truth, yet the relative value of the various factors in evolution is still an open question."

The influence which Darwin has had on the scientific study of natural history is immense, and as we contemplate his fine statue in the Natural History Museum at South Kensington we seem to see Socratic sagacity and persistent individuality; and theologians now admit that geology, by the discovery of beds of extinct animals, has proved that the animals now occupying this earth are not the primitive species of animals which they formerly have described as created by God and named by Adam. Nearly all, then, admit the fact of evolution in Nature, but the relative value of the factors in this evolution is still discussed by the best minds.

Wallace and Darwin simultaneously, but unknown to each other, arrived at the same idea regarding the evolution by "Natural Descent" in plants and animals, but these two great naturalists are not entirely at one; for while Wallace may be said in some respects to be more Darwinian than Darwin in regard to bodily evolution, he differs from Darwin when the latter teaches that the origin of the intellectual and moral faculties in man could be accounted for by physical evolution, which Wallace contends to be impossible.

Wallace says that the anatomical facts "amount almost to a demonstration that man in his bodily structure has been developed from some ancestral form common to man and the anthropoid apes," but "to a spiritual world we must refer, not only the complex forces which we know as gravitation, chemical force, and electricity, without which the universe as at present could not exist; and without which the religious, moral and mathematical faculties of man are inexplicable."

And here we may say that the resemblance between the highest apes and the lowest men (in whose body Thomson says may be found "a museum of some seventy relics of lower animal life") is truly appalling; but perhaps not more so than is the narrow difference physically between the idiotic or insane man and the man of sound mind.

Lamarck, the great French naturalist (1744-1829), about eighty years before the publication of the "Origin of Species" (1859), says: "There is a primary or predominant cause, which gives to animal life the power of progressive organisation, in connection with the needs of its surroundings, and new parts are evolved by efforts from within."

That is, according to Lamarck, animals have, during unknown ages, been modified in their structure by the formative power of their minds, acted on by the conditional environment; while Darwin says the origin of species arises from the variability ever occurring in plants and animals, and the survival of the fittest in the struggle for existence.

Thus, Darwinism is evolution, according to fitness in physical law, while Lamarckism is evolution, caused by the creative power of the mind; and it is interesting and important to know that there is a Neo-Lamarckism now engaging the thoughts of some of the best naturalists in Europe and America.

In the light of these divergent ideas it seems scarcely accurate to compare Darwin's law in biology with Newton's law in physics, for Newton's law is based on exact mathematics, while Darwin's law is based on a chain of evidence of which some of the links are still missing and may not ever be found.

With regard to Man, for instance, the skull of the highest ape is bestial, while that of the lowest tribe of men is altogether human, and generally comparable in size and form with the average skull in all parts of the world. But as the ape's skull could not, according to Darwin, reach by evolution an equality with that of Man for probably hundreds of thousands of years, and if so, should have strewn the earth with degrees of development in progressive evolution, sceptics have asked, "Where are the missing links?"

To this great question the Darwinians have replied, "We have not yet explored one ten-thousandth part of the later geological strata, and one day the missing links will be found." For myself, I cannot resist the terrible suspicion that the highest ape may be my distant relative, but the non-appearance of the missing link is still to me suspicious. I have, however, no alternative to offer, except the suggestion, on which I do not rely, that the primitive Adamic man might have had an angelic origin, and that the higher apes may be degraded men, notwithstanding the missing links in their descent.

Then the origin of the organs of sense can hardly come under the category of variations and the survival of the fittest, and Darwin himself, up to the last, used to say that he "could not contemplate the difficulty of accounting for the first organ of vision without a cold shudder."

Then no evidence exists that, except under artificial cultivation, any new species has arisen on the earth during the period of historic man, say seven thousand years; nor any change of form in that direction in animals; and although seven thousand years is, geologically considered, a short period, yet it is sufficient time to admit of appreciable changes in proportions.

That enormous changes did occur in the plants and animals of this earth is, however, beyond question, and therefore these must have arisen when through heat, moisture, or other causes, the growth of plants and animals must have been immensely accelerated.

That all the Mammalia, may have come from a common ancestor is conceivable, and, therefore, it is not inconceivable that the mouse and the elephant may have had a common ancestor. But it is not conceivable that the Crustacea and the Insectivora can have had the same ancestor as the Mammals, nor that the mosquito and the lady-bird, for instance, could have had any common ancestor with the whale, the eagle, or the leech.

Further, Wallace says: "The remarkable difference between varieties and species with respect to fertility when crossed is perhaps the greatest of all the difficulties," and in a chapter of thirty-four pages he attempts to answer these difficulties, but the explanation given, he admits, is very difficult for the reader to understand, and I confess myself as yet unable to unravel it.

Then there exists the dispute as to the influence of heredity, for while Weismann, who is followed by most Darwinians, denies the heredity of acquired characters, Spencer and others believe in the heredity of acquired characters as a factor in evolution. Again, when we find that within a short century the form and voice of the inhabitants of the United States has so much altered from that of the typical Briton, we are impressed with the idea that the influence of climate and environment has not been sufficiently recognised. Lastly, instincts, which some regard as obtained by evolution, others would regard as mental causes of evolution. The one view may be regarded as physical, the other as metaphysical.

With these admitted differences and difficulties before us, although no untrained biologist can without presumption dogmatically urge opinions contrary to the Darwinians' fundamental law, and especially in its details, yet it is open to all sincere minds seeking truths to formulate their views, and I therefore venture to present the following argument:—

There was a time when this planet was a molten mass, during which time no vegetable or animal life could exist on its surface.

In the course of millions of years a crust of crystalline rocks became consolidated, and cooled sufficiently to admit of the condensation of steam into rain, rivers, and seas. These seas, rivers, and rain, assisted by air and wind during an indefinite time, triturated the rocks and formed mud, and, in due course, out of this mud first vegetable and then animal life appeared.

The cause of the origin of this life on the planet is entirely beyond the scope of our recognised sciences; and yet life appeared, and filled this earth with plants, animals, activity, life, mind, and beauty.

Matthew Arnold would name the cause of this "The Eternal not ourselves, that makes for Righteousness." Thomson calls it "The Almighty Volition as a Continuous Reality"; and the Hebrew Cosmogonist says: "The Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters, and said 'Let the waters and the earth bring forth grass, and fish, and birds, and beasts and man in our image, with dominion over all the earth.'"

It is impossible to doubt that the cause of this planet must be the same cause as caused all the life on the planet.

The physical cause of the planet and its motion is the action of attraction and repulsion, or gravitation, and this law is known to exist throughout the Universe of stars.

But, although the stars exist and move in accordance with this law, yet the forces which rule the earth and stars must be themselves ruled by their cause, that is, by Absolute Reason and Will.

If so, that Reason and Will must be as universally present as the forces of Nature are, and just as the smallest pebble on our shores is acted on by, and reacts on, the fixed stars in a certain relation to size and distance, so also must the ever-present Reason and Will, or Mind, act on all Life or Mind, from that of the lowest cell to the highest organisation.

Logically that must be so, and thus the ultimate cells of protoplasm and all plants and animals having Life or Mind must have sensation, and if sensation they must have desires, and those desires or actions of Mind must act on and be acted on by the Infinite Mind in as exact a ratio as that of the universal force of physical Nature; and thus every atom of Life or Mind is *en rapport* with the Infinite Mind.

If so, then the desires of cells and of complete animals must be as cries to this "Infinite Hearer and Answerer of Prayer," and thus we arrive at the logical reason for a universal evolution in Matter and in Mind, and thus all forms are Creations or Ideas miraculously realised: in the sense that miracle is the action of spirit on matter.

The standpoint of this paper is that Force is the Substance of Matter, and Spirit is the Substance of Force, and the facts of experimental Psychology as recorded in many volumes demonstrate this statement.

In accordance with this view it is conceivable that the higher apes might, by gradual increase of brain in the direction of the moral and religious regions of the cerebrum, caused by higher and higher desires, ultimately grow a brain of that size and form which admitted of the manifestation by influx of the Spiritual as in Man, and evolution in this sense is a gradual and ceaseless Miracle, or action of Spirit on Matter.

Phrenology is not now so much heard of as in the days of George Combe, sixty years ago, but in the pages of its now extinct journal may be read many illustrations of the gradual and general or local increase in size of the human brain by devotion to general or special mental culture; and if so the action of Mind over Matter is thus illustrated.

But although I regard Mind as the fundamental factor in Evolution, yet not the less can I admit that in "The struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest" we have a secondary factor, which as a machinery, aids the wishes of Nature in the production of higher forms.

AN UNINTELLIGIBLE HYPOTHESIS.—The claim of the intelligences to be the spirits of deceased men and women is supported by tests of various kinds, especially by giving accurate information regarding themselves as to facts totally unknown to the medium or to any person present. Records of such tests are numerous in spiritual literature as well as in the publications of the Society for Psychical Research, but at present they are regarded as inconclusive, and various theories of a double or multiple personality, of a subconscious or second self, or of a lower stratum of consciousness are called in to explain them or to attempt to explain them. The stupendous difficulty that if these phenomena and these tests are to be attributed to the "second self" of living persons, then that second self is almost always a deceiving and a lying self, however moral and truthful the visible and tangible first self may be, has, so far as I know, never been rationally explained; yet this cumbrous and unintelligible hypothesis finds great favor with those who have always been accustomed to regard the belief in a spirit world, and more particularly a belief that the spirits of our dead friends can and do sometimes communicate with us, as unscientific, unphilosophical, and superstitious. Why it should be unscientific, more than any other hypothesis which alone serves to explain intelligibly a great body of facts, has never been explained.—ALFRED R. WALLACE, F.R.S.

A BOOK ABOUT ALCHEMY.

"Sapere Aude" has published a valuable pamphlet on "the Science of Alchemy."*

He treats the subject rather from the point of view of the Western Occultist than from that of the Eastern, and says that he does so because the Science of Alchemy has been "handed down to us from the sages of mediæval Europe." "Sapere Aude" holds that to consider alchymic science as a purely symbolical science is as great a mistake as to suppose that it was purely material.

Very striking is the way in which the author points out that modern chemistry, having prided itself on its complete severance from the alchemy of the ancients, is no sooner face to face with such speculations as that of Mr. Crookes with regard to Protyle or primordial matter, than "the transmutation of metals, and the "elixir of life" reappear and once more enter the range of the possible."

How curiously the alchemists disguise their material knowledge is shown in the following from Jean d'Espagnet:—

Take a red dragon, courageous and warlike, to whom no natural strength is wanting; take also seven or nine noble virgin eagles, whose eyes will not wax dull in the rays of the sun; cast the birds in with the beast into a clear prison, shut them up strongly; under which let a bath be placed, that they may be incensed to fight by the warm vapour: in a short time they will enter upon a hard contention; until about the fiftieth day the eagles begin to tear the beast in pieces; this one dying will infect the whole prison with black poison, whereby the eagles also being injured, they will also be soon constrained to give up the ghost.

This "Sapere Aude" translates as follows:—

Take one part of a red powder *a*, and add seven or nine parts of the liquid *b*, which is volatile, i.e., able to fly; mix them, put the mixture into a glass retort—the clear prison; hermetically seal the opening, that is, shut them up strongly; set the vessel in a water bath, and then the heat will make the liquid attack the solid powder and dissolve it, and the result will be the production of a black substance, and both the red powder and the liquid will have lost their chemical characters.

Nevertheless this knowledge was generally combined with something which is not easily to be distinguished from spiritual insight. Such, indeed, we might expect when the student was not so hampered with the notion of "profit and loss" as he is now, for physical phenomena are only one form of spiritual phenomena, and the alchemists knew it. This the writer illustrates in the following passage:

The alchymic expression of "Solve et Coagula," meaning "volatilise and fix," as two contrasted changes seen alike in chemistry, physics, and in human development, are traceable in the Biblical allegories of the descent of divinity into man, by the putting on of coats of skin, when the human monad becomes material and fixed and suffers the consequent loss of the power of direct spiritual communion with the source divine; while on the other hand, we have the allegory of the Resurrection of the Son of the Divine One, who obtains reunion with the God-head by casting off the cloak of matter and returning to his Father and to our Father; and this resurrection is promised to all who seek it. By birth upon earth man's thinker or Manas is fixed, coagulated, and fettered by his environment. By death and by throwing off the scoria, slag, refuse and his precipitulum, man is released from his grosser bondage and passes at once to a plane of the Arupic worlds, even if his final absorption into Nirvana, or into Paradise be delayed, so that he may still further function as an entity of superior type and more exalted possibilities.

Altogether an interesting, but too small a pamphlet.

To live is hard; and there is not one of us, I fancy, who has not again and again been tempted to despair of life when he has dared to look upon its dark mysteries; but again, there is not one of us who has not found a great sorrow, a great disappointment, a great trial, an avenue to unexpected joy.

* "The Science of Alchemy: Spiritual and Material." An Essay by "SAPERE AUDE." (London: The Theosophical Publishing Society, 7, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C.)

INTUITION.

"Lucifer" for November, which altogether is a very good number, contains an excellent article on "Intuition" by G. R. S. Mead. After reviewing both Western and Eastern notions of what is meant by intuition, he concludes with the following paragraphs, which embody in admirable words what has often been urged in the columns of "LIGHT":—

Above all a man must be pure, the garments of the soul must be washed white. The eye of truth will not be deceived because the outer vesture is spotless while the inner vestures are befouled and stained with filth.

There is a beautiful legend of Persia (I believe) which explains this better than can much philosophising, and runs as follows.

Once upon a time an angel and a young man were passing through the streets of an Eastern city. As they journeyed onward they came upon a poor beggar man covered with leprous sores and clad in filthy rags, who craved from them an alms. The young man gathered his garments around him and stepped to the other side of the road in fear of the deadly disease, but the angel drew nigh the beggar and gave him alms and spoke to him words of love and comfort.

Shortly after, as the two journeyed on together there came tripping towards them a beautiful courtesan in the first years of womanhood, smiling, and gaily giving them good-day with coquettish glances; and the young man's heart went out to her, but the angel, gathering his robes about him, passed by on the other side.

The beggar was pure within, the woman was a moral leper.

But difficult, and hedged round with many dangers is this path of self-purification; the greater the strain put upon the inner nature the more it is "developed," the more a man comes face to face with his past, be that past good or bad. The more he perseveres the louder challenge he issues to his deeds in past births, which lie embedded as seeds in his inner nature, and which would never have come to life in this birth, had he been content to live the ordinary external life of mortals. Then it is that these inner impressions sweep over him, and in his ignorance he takes as higher intuitions what are only the deep-seated forces of past action. Happy for him if they are good, for most often they are evil. Many fail just because of this; the old currents are so strong and deep-flowing that no reason from without can affect them, and the deluded mortal works out his "intuition" to the bitter end. Such tragedies are not infrequent in the Theosophical Society; may we all be on our guard to avoid the danger.

But in speaking of such high matters, let us not forget the day of small things. Intuitions are not necessarily brought to waking consciousness in overpowering rushes. A word, a look, a gesture, are sufficient indications, and if properly caught are the points of contact whereby a whole stream of intelligence can pass into our possession, for Buddhi is "mirrored in the tiniest atoms" as well as in the highest "principles."

It is wise to notice all such indications, and to draw our deductions at the time, checking them carefully by further experience. Little by little a man will thus learn to trust his intuition. But of one thing be sure, that if the motive is not pure, and the heart warm for others—if honour is not dear, and compassion burning brightly in the inner chamber, the impression will all be registered upside down. Friends will be hated, the dishonourable loved. Like seeks like in Nature, and no true intuition will come to the impure and evil.

Let us each then be pure and compassionate and wise, and so at last we shall be able to look back upon our life as of

One in whom persuasion and belief
Has ripened into faith, and faith become
A passionate intuition—

of peace and harmony and truth.

BEFORE we can dispense with the world we must, by a long and painful novitiate, by the probation of much thought and much sorrow, by deep and sad conviction of the vanity of all that the world can give us, have raised ourselves—not in the fervour of an hour, but habitually—above the world; an abstraction—an idealism—which in our wiser age how few even of the wisest can obtain! Yet, till we are thus fortunate, we know not the true divinity of contemplation, nor the mightiness of conscience.

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

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post free to any address, is 10s. 10d. per annum, forwarded to our office in advance.

Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and all communications should be sent to "LIGHT," 2, Duke Street, Adelphi, London, W.C.

All orders for papers and for advertisements, and all remittances, should be addressed to "The Manager" and a letter to the Editor.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria Lane, London and all Booksellers.

Light:

EDITED BY "M. A., LOND."

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2nd, 1893.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, London, W.C. 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, London, W.C., and not to the Editor.

TIME.

We are fast approaching one of those points in duration which stand out in the general life of the world, marking thereby the completion of one more portion of that one-dimensional series of effects which we call Time. In our separate lives these special separation marks come in the shape of birthdays, or other anniversaries; the silver or golden wedding has become a fashionable way of announcing certain proprietary epochs to the world. Nevertheless, the return of Christmas and the advent of the New Year are general betokenings that the whole world recognises. Something will have gone when the bells ring out the old of '93 and ring in the new of '94. We have less important divisions, such as the coming of spring or of winter, but they do not strike the general mind so forcibly as the approach and arrival of a New Year. But, after all, what is it? From the physical point of view, nothing but the completion of the earth's revolution and the starting of another cycle round the sun. From the psychical, nothing but a recommencement of the numbering of the sequences that we have associated with the previous revolution as a matter of counting.

It seems a little curious, however, that people, as a rule, do not notice that these sequences are reckoned in terms of one dimension. The arguers in favour of a fourth space dimension make use of somewhat crude illustrations as to what one-dimensional existence may mean, forgetting that they have constantly with them a one-dimensional phase of life, from which more apt illustration could be got than from the not too perfect methods generally adopted. Men never seem to want to go back on Time, or to go forward in any way, other than by what are termed recollection and anticipation. The one-dimensional nature of Time is recognised as an unalterable condition of our lives. But is it so?

The arguments used to prove the existence of a fourth dimension are derived from the supposed sensations of a flat-lander, who sees phenomena that his two-dimensional senses cannot comprehend, and as the three-dimensional person "knows" how the flat-lander goes wrong, so it is argued that the fourth-dimensional person may see the third-dimensional one going equally astray. Now, why should not this kind of reasoning be used in respect of Time? If there be four or more dimensions of space, why not two or more dimensions of Time? Is it a quite impossible thing to imagine an individual living in two-dimensional Time, seeing all the sequences we know of in our one-dimensional state of duration, as a man stands on the bank of a river

and looks both up it and down it with equal ease, though he may not be upon it?

One of the chief difficulties, perhaps the chief next to that of an occasional looking into the future, connected with Spiritualistic phenomena is the curious recovery of scenes of the past—such phenomena, for instance, as those recorded by Mr. Myers in his papers on "The Subliminal Consciousness." These occurrences are imagined to be "past." But are they? Suppose the medium—crystal-gazer or clairvoyant—in virtue of the effect of the crystal-gazing or clairvoyance, to be put aside for awhile out of the ordinary sequences, to stand as a matter of fact on the bank looking at the river of what we call Time; such the "past" is then no longer the "past" nor the "future" the "future." All is present. Nor is the "Actual Light" any longer needed.

And this supposition is not far-fetched. As we know in one instance certainly that a one-dimensional state does not preclude a two-dimensional, and a two-dimensional a three-dimensional, and so on, the argument from "analogy" is perfect. Even as things are it is not difficult to realise a case in which Time, as we know it, may have some of its conditions altered. Light travels with a certain fairly well defined velocity. No velocity has ever been imagined which cannot, at least in imagination, be surpassed. Now, let there be two suppositions made, both of which are feasible—one, perhaps, is a "reality" and not a "supposition." These are, that all events which affect the light vibrations of the ether go on for ever, and the other that some conscious entity is able to catch these vibrations in a distant part of three dimensional space. Such an individual would have for his "present" the ages ago of our planetary "past." As a matter of fact, in a certain way the very thing is occurring every time we look at the sun. Not a single aspect of the sun is seen as it really is. Everything which is present to us with regard to the sun occurred several minutes "before" we see it.

These, of course, are only illustrations of the want of exactness with regard to Time which occur even under present conditions. Yet they may lead to further considerations of the true meaning of Time—which is only a one-dimensional thing, but in terms of which Spiritualists, Theosophists, and Scientists equally, and, perhaps, unfortunately, explain their various phenomena.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

We beg to remind our readers that on Monday evening next, at seven o'clock, Mr. J. F. Collingwood will give an address to the members and friends of the Alliance, at 2, Duke-street, Adelphi. We trust there will be a large attendance, as Mr. Collingwood, who will speak on "The Significance of a Rap," is sure to have much to say that will be both interesting and instructive.

WE are asked to inform our readers that Dr. Mack (J. McGeary) has returned to London from Boston, and that his address is now 42, Craven Hill-gardens, W.

THE INVISIBLE.—All that the eye of sense, in its widest scope of vision, takes in, is but the *form* of being. Being itself—the inner power by which things consist—is invisible. Under every form of outward existence there lurks a viewless soul of vitality, which is the essence—the true being—of what we see. All power, force, strength, virtue, is invisible. We see the plant, but we see not the *inner force* by which it takes root and grows, puts forth buds and blossoms, lives and transmits life. We see the animal, but we see not the secret springs of its life and motion. We see man, but we see not man's soul. We see the worlds of space, but we see not the power which directs their courses—the mysterious sympathies by which their movements are harmoniously combined. In all these things, and in all things, the visible rests on the invisible. What we see is, not what is, but the show, the garb, of that which is. The form of Being change, but Being remains. That which is, is forever—the eternal in virtue of its source; for all things are of God, *I AM THAT I AM*, whom no man hath seen, nor can see. They and change belong not to powers and principles. These things that are seen are temporal, but the things that facts, unseen are eternal.

SPIRITUALISM ON THE CONTINENT.

ADDRESS GIVEN BY MR. J. M. FLEMING TO THE MEMBERS OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE ON THE EVENING OF MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20TH.

A good story is told about an old French aristocrat who lived in the days of the Encyclopædists when Rousseau quarrelled with Diderot. In those pre-Revolution times, thanks to the development of what was then equivalent to a popular literature, thoughts of a universal liberty were, in a vague fashion, fermenting in the heads of the people, and their interest in the personnel of its advocates was very widely spread—quite a different state of things from that which prevailed in the previous century, when letters could hardly be said to be anywhere beyond the domain of art. But by the time of Rousseau, Diderot, and D'Alembert they had taken a somewhat exalted place—had become in a sense the people's voice, giving speech to many of their wants and wishes. In fact, literature then seemed to poke its nose into most things, and sniffed everywhere in search of material bearing on the public good; while the finest minds in France joined its ranks, so that, when this quarrel broke out between two of the great trio who mainly carried on the famous work, the news blazed over all France. This old gentleman at Champfort, the Duke de Castries, could not understand it at all, and cried out "Good gracious! everywhere I go I hear nothing but about this Diderot, and this Rousseau! Can you imagine such a thing? No-bodies! People who haven't even got a house—who live on the third floor! Pah! Matters can't get along in that fashion!" Matters, however, did get along in the course laid out for them, and the highest and the lowest had to occupy themselves with such things. This position of literature in France about the seventies of the eighteenth century seems to me not unlike that of Spiritualism towards the end of the nineteenth. The former had to be reckoned with, and so it is apparently with the latter. Overtly it may not wear the aspect of an irresistible force, such as literature almost always assumes, but it undoubtedly has the power of a presence which is evidently setting minds thinking, inquiring, and frequently confessing. Where they are not doing one or other of these things, they seem to be doubting, gibing, or jeering, occasionally mixing the raillery with professions of the utmost indifference. Derision and disparagement are sometimes almost trustworthy evidence of a vitality in the interest which a subject arouses, and an attitude of indifference to any series of properly authenticated and astounding facts which may not have come actually within ken of any scientific mind can, when real, only be temporarily assumed as a matter of intellectual convenience.

Although Spiritualism in France cannot be described in explicit terms as demonstratively militant, any more than the higher aspects of it here can be so depicted—except, of course, when its doctrines are directly assailed—it nevertheless displays as a contemporary science a condition of ceaseless activity. It keeps open house, so to speak, where all sorts and conditions of men pursuing their inquiries from proper motives may have direction and guidance in their search. Here and there are to be found, as in every sphere of human interest, enthusiasts with a tendency to more or less inhibitive practices—a very natural recoil, perhaps, on the part of some who have suffered in the super-sensitive part of their natures from the gibes and jeers of the devotees of their great god "Pooh! Pooh!" But efforts of such a kind are usually gently negatived. Recently a proposition that Spiritualists should have a secret sign by which they might know each other without "giving themselves away," as young City men would describe it, was gravely submitted to the committee of a French provincial society. The patriarchs and fathers of the council wisely declined to take the proposal into consideration, as everyone who believes in God and obeys the Divine laws which prescribe the practice of justice and love for one's neighbour is a Spiritualist, although he may know nothing whatever about phenomena.

It would, I think, be difficult to occupy higher ground than that upon which those answering to the last definition would stand, seeing that it is the level from which have been promulgated the most exalted teachings that humanity has ever known. The spirit of secret propagandism seems as yet foreign to Continental Spiritualists, but among outsiders with whom they really desire to share the beneficent knowledge which they themselves possess, the old difficulty of getting people to listen seriously to what so intimately concerns them as to present

itself afresh in almost every generation. That appears to be a natural result of the character of the evidence with which inquirers are brought face to face. Miracles at a distance appear to be to some people much more easily credible than when they are close at hand. Whether the consciences of the majority of mankind are afraid of actual contact with the Unseen it would be a presumptuous thing for anyone to assert, but it does appear curious that, no matter how innocently interesting may be the phenomena; no matter how consoling, how comforting, or how encouraging may be the tenor of the messages, or how exalted and pure may be the teaching; no matter how dainty, delicate, or beautiful may be the form of the manifestations, the information about them is received by multitudes of people either with a gibe or a sneer, while, by another large class, the whole series of phenomena are allocated to the action of Satan and his officers. When parents from this latter presumably religious class sit down on a quiet evening and canvass the souvenirs of some of their early losses—recall the touch of tiny fingers, or the bright ways of their little people, how beautiful this one was, and how shapely the other—meditations like these are all inspired of God, of Heaven, of the angels, or, at lowest, by the finest of human feelings. Few will care to dispute that, but if a friend—no matter how dear and trusted she or he may be—happen to suggest that those who have gone before have been seen, have been talked with, have been touched, or that a message has come from them without any bad words in it; that all their talk was of the love they have for those who are still here, and the help they wish to give them—to minds of the type to which I have just been alluding all these are of the devil, and not a very exalted devil either. It seems to me an incoherency almost beyond belief that people can carry the "angel of light" theory quite so far as that.

I am speaking now, of course, wholly of one class of phenomena. With regard to other kinds of equally well attested phenomena, including lies, errors, tricks, and mischief generally, I can quite understand frivolous people poking fun at them; because frivolity would find it almost impossible to do anything else. But with those who, claiming to be serious-minded, nevertheless treat serious statements of seriously attested incidents with jeering and pooh-poohing, I confess to having frequent temptations to be perhaps unduly impatient, because it appears to me that they not only do not take the trouble to observe things for themselves, if they can secure the opportunity, but that they base their criticism and banter, not on the circumstances and incidents as related by the different observers, but on the various human interpretations of them. That seems to me to be the irritating phase in these encounters. Observers at seances did not always refrain from endeavouring to give the precise source of the message, and their own interpretation of all the surroundings, and the devotees of the great "Pooh! Pooh!" seized on the errors of the observer in order to discredit the circumstance which he was recounting as having occurred under exhaustive test conditions. It was not wholly an illegitimate thing to do, because when people are erroneous in regard to things which are easily got at, there is some excuse for assuming that they may also be mistaken in matters which are not so accessible. But when facts are attested by properly qualified investigators, who are almost by a kind of tacit consent deputed to carry on their examinations; who have the whole and sole control of all arrangements made, and who come out from the study convinced, one might almost say to a man, of the accuracy of the statements previously made, to find instead of serious attention to the conclusions or opinions of the savants, the good old gibing and jeering resuscitated must be one of the most irritating experiences which a well-established Spiritualist can have. I for one should not be at all surprised to hear from the lips of any irascible member of that body the compound epithet "Incoherent, incongruous block-head!" directed, of course, not to any specific individual, but as a kind of random shot at some abstract representative devotee of the great "Pooh! Pooh!" Many of these tributaries to the deep and wide stream of human levity occupy quite elevated positions among their fellows, and to unbiassed outsiders who quietly watch their movements they appear to behave like men who are afraid—positively afraid—to frankly and fully examine a subject lest they be compelled to admit its truth. They seem to have the fear of conviction before their eyes, and one of the most painful exhibitions of the nineteenth century is this of a number of highly cultured men, who have been trained to the observation of facts, refusing to take any step towards the inspection of a series of circumstances which happens to be

unknown to them down to the present. That is one kind of opposition with which the French Spiritualists have to contend, and I fancy there are those present who could say that, to a certain extent, a corresponding type exists here. It may not vary so much as across the Channel, but it is probably quite as rich in ability and in numbers. Over there it includes Atheists, Neologists, Positivists, Pantheists, Rationalists, many of the orthodox, and all kinds of doctrinaires who, from considerations of convenience, it is said, deny every phenomenon which might tend to embarrass them.

Another type of antagonist is of a much less important though, perhaps, of a more common description, and comprises among others the person who shuts his eyes and declares that there is nothing to be seen, and also the playful one who does not pretend to know anything about the subject and does not wish to know, but who, nevertheless, keeps edging in a little abuse of it whenever he imagines he sees a chance. Opponents of this class are familiar enough at home, and are, no doubt, slight causes of hindrance and irritation here as they are there. But in spite of all this antipathy and opposition the cause is advancing in France steadily, as it also is in Belgium and Holland. The friends there maintain that Spiritualism is an absolute necessity for the emancipation of human beings from the thralldom of mere dogma, and they ardently counsel the spread of its teachings, because these alone can explain the mysteries of a spiritual life, or offer guarantees of immortality—a doctrine, the truth of which has been proved by actual experiment. Spiritualism, they say, sets knowledge in the place of faith, and shows that the highest happiness comes, not from merely cherishing a dogma, but from individual activity in well-doing. They believe that with the spread of this teaching, combined with the proof of its verity, superstition and vice will disappear, because the teaching does not merely say that one's position in a future life depends on the career which has been led on earth, but *shows* that the case is so, and further that the consequences of all thoughts and actions reach into the Unseen and cannot be effaced in any vicarious fashion.

With regard to the literature of occult subjects, France and Belgium are exceptionally well supplied. There are, I think, in the French language upwards of thirty periodicals appearing respectively at intervals of a week, a fortnight, a month, or every two months—some dozen of them being published in Paris alone. Notwithstanding, however, this plenitude of monitors, they are not above seeking hints from some of the more distinguished writers of this country. Quite recently one of them had a very graceful allusion to the late Mr. Stainton Moses, which, as it is not very long, I should like to read to you if you will permit me. The writer was commenting on some of Mr. Stainton Moses's remarks on mediums, and said:—

"These considerations written by the late Stainton Moses some fifteen years ago on the occasion of the prosecution of Slade, who was accused of imposture by a *conjurer* of the name of Lankester (fancy the effect on the Professor's feelings of such an odd mistake), have all their value even now, in spite of the progress realised by the cause since that time. The lamented Stainton Moses indicates clearly the difficulties which surround mediumship, and no one could give a better account of them than he. He was a writing medium, a rapping medium, a medium for materialisations, and obtained communications either in his normal condition or in trance, and in spite of it all he repelled for several years the theory of spirit intervention because of his personal opinions. It required all the evidence of the facts presented to induce him to yield his assent, and to renounce certain beliefs which he had through his early training. If the position some fifteen years ago was such as has been portrayed by a man so well qualified to know it, in a country so far in advance of ours in regard to what concerns this question, is there not ground for believing that his advice may still be useful to us in many ways?"

In Germany and in Italy scientists have not been quite so indifferent in their manner of dealing with the phenomena of Spiritualism. Here and there in both countries distinguished representatives of many branches of experimental knowledge have given the subject a degree of attention which, judging from the various authorised reports and articles issued by the observers collectively and individually, would speedily make all their colleagues converts if they could only bring them face to face with the same or similar phenomena while renewing their own attention to the subject. The now world-famous séances in Milan came to some of them like bolts from the blue. The conditions were all under their own control; the premises were provided by themselves; the mechanical appliances which were

decided upon for test purposes were arranged by three of the number; and among the more widely known scientific delegations—if I may employ such a word where there was no actual delegation involved—who took part as investigators in the series were the bearers of those distinguished names Schiaparelli, Chiaia, &c., &c., which are now generally resuscitated in the columns of the Spiritualistic Press—and justifiably so—when ever the spirit of "Pooh! Pooh!" is desecrated making an effort to resume the old confident attitude which the lack of information on the subject used to inspire. In addition to the bearers of these names other people of note in their series walks were present at one or more séances, and among them the figure which probably attracted the greatest share of attention in certain circles was that of Professor Lombroso, of the medical faculty of Turin, and who is by many considered to be one of the greatest living authorities on mental diseases. He had been one of the most thorough-going unbelievers in the genuineness of the phenomena that you could fancy it possible to conceive of. So settled with him was this previous conviction of their unreality that he had no hesitation about employing against those who *did* accept them such playful sarcasm as frequently forms the ammunition of the scoffers, and which might easily be applied the other way about, if Spiritualism could descend to the use of similarly abusive epithets. The course which they have, however, in the main adopted is immeasurably the higher one—the culture of patience, which, however, need not exclude the precaution of keeping one's powder dry.

Russia has also now a Spiritualistic journal, if not more than one, and in Poland just such another conversion as that of Professor Lombroso has occurred in the person of Dr. Guilius Ochrowicz, of Warsaw, doctor in philosophy, distinguished psychologist, inventor of the hypnoscope, and author of a learned work on "Mental Suggestion." He is said to be the leading representative in Poland of the Positivist school, and in last May he had several séances at the house of a friend of his in Rome—a painter named Siemiradski. The medium was the same as at the Milan investigations, and this scientist declares that the phenomena which he saw in her presence were incontrovertibly real, and of the highest importance. He expects from their renewed study a great amplification of the field of science, especially that of physiology, which he says up to the present has been a mere skeleton. Like Professor Lombroso, however, he reserves his opinion as to the origin of the phenomena which he saw and is certain of, but frankly gives it with regard to what he calls the "unknown forces of the human mind"—which may strike you as curious. These unknown forces not being as yet thoroughly explored—the language seems odd—he thinks there is no absolute necessity to admit at present Spiritual influence to have any part in the production of the phenomena. You will be familiar with this line of thought, and the position which it illustrates. It is supposed to be one of caution. Dr. Ochrowicz has, however, also the frankness of Lombroso in admitting his former error. In the month of July last he wrote in a Polish periodical the following confession:—"When I remember that there was a time in which I wondered at that courageous investigator Crookes because he had the fortitude to acknowledge the reality of mediumistic phenomena and to make accurate investigations of them; when I think that I also read his works on these subjects with that stupid smile with which his colleagues of the British Association shunned him as being obviously fatuous, I blush with shame for myself and for others and cry from the bottom of my heart: 'Father! I have sinned.'"

Similar conditions of real progress are visible everywhere: in Holland, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, and Norway, and centres of Spiritualistic organisation are in almost every important town. The literature is already pretty extensive and is increasing rapidly. Spain is particularly active in this respect both at home and in its settlements, there being, I should think, some thirty periodicals printed in Spanish. There are also a number in Portuguese; while if the Italian periodicals are not perhaps so numerous as in other countries of greater geographical area, it must be acknowledged that some of those which do exist are of high character. Progress is by no means slow there, although—or, perhaps, because—the Church began in a small way a kind of crusade against its teaching. In Venice, early this year, some conferences against it were held in the church of Santa Maria Formosa, where one of their most distinguished preachers stated as usual that Spiritualism was the work of the devil.

Without exception the important conversions in literary and scientific circles on the Continent seem to have been directly the result of the séance, although indirectly these have been led up to by the higher class of literature affiliated to the movement. What I may, for the nonce, call the official séance is largely utilised in the various important centres. As soon as a good medium is heard of and is willing to sit, preparations are speedily made in order that opportunities may be afforded for increasing the store of facts. But in Germany, although every day it may be said that public attention is more and more attracted to the subject from a literary point of view, and that Spiritualistic theories and doctrines are neither received nor treated with quite the same hauteur or disdain as formerly, there is an uneasy feeling that they are not making so much headway with sceptics as they could wish, and they appear to think that the difficulty is with the séance. It is not so manageable as they think it ought to be. This is not because mediums are scarce in Germany, for they claim, on the contrary, to have a plenitude of them. But those in comfortable circumstances, or whose social position is raised above the level of the working classes, seem disinclined to make any sacrifices of a personal kind for the furtherance of the cause. Their best mediums are concealed in the family, and have what is described by a leading journal as an "obsequious deference to public opinion, bowing low before its dreaded sceptre." Another reason given for what appears to them a want of success in the organisation of the experimental method is that their mediums exact conditions which arouse distrust. The physical mediums prefer, for example, to sit at their own tables—a preference which, of course, some experienced Spiritualists will understand, but which would naturally excite suspicion in the mind of an outsider if the question of a change were mooted and resisted in his presence. These little drawbacks seem to have in Germany a large adverse influence, which those in responsible positions think might be wholly neutralised if private mediums were, as they put it, less afraid of ridicule and more willing to help. There are, of course, two sides to that question. It is the most natural thing in the world for investigators, and especially for those who may not have been able to enter this sphere of knowledge at all, to think it a strange kind of selfishness on the part of those in possession of gifts which appear to have cost them nothing, that they should seclude themselves from opportunities lying so near at hand of advancing the cause of truth. On the other hand there are many reasons why private persons may not wish publicity quite apart from any fear of ridicule, and of these reasons the public must always remain in ignorance. Just eight years ago your late universally respected President, Mr. Stainton Moses, sketched a plan for minimising something like this difficulty from suggestions supplied by a previous Editor of "LIGHT," and this plan seemed to have in it many elements of success. Although some of those present will be familiar with what was then said, there may be others who are not acquainted with it, and I should like to read one or two short extracts from that address. Mr. Stainton Moses said: "I believe that an active plan of work, zealously carried out, would enlist with us some who now stand aside, perhaps in expectation of some more definite action on our part. I believe, also, that it is incumbent upon this Spiritualist Alliance to take a lead in some definite attempt to extend the area of our knowledge by organised experimental research, and to lay broad and firm the foundation for the faith that is in us. It is our duty to do what we can to guide the ignorant and inexperienced in the difficult path of experimental research. We must do what we can to afford facilities for inquiry into, and observation of, the phenomena and facts on which we rely, by any reasonable and rational methods." He then proceeded to lay the scheme before those whom he was addressing. I am not in a position to do more than refer to these projects. I understand that for some reason or reasons the plan was not successful when partially carried out, but it struck me, when dealing with the aspect of German organisation to which I have just referred, an allusion to the scheme of graduated circles which was then proposed might not be inopportune.

Be sure in a dark day of a light that will follow, that loss will terminate in gain, that trial will issue in rest, doubt in satisfaction, suffering in patience. Take your duty then and be strong in it. The great question is not what you will get, but what you will become. The greatest wealth you will ever get will be yourself.—DR. BUSINELL.

MADAME BLAVATSKY AND "MASTER."

In an interesting little book* by the Countess Wachtmeister and others, we get a near view of the daily life of a very remarkable person. We transcribe one chapter, which is from the pen of the Countess:—

Living in such close and familiar intercourse with H.P.B. as I did at this time, it naturally happened that I was a witness of many of the "phenomena" which took place in her vicinity.

There was one occurrence, continuously repeated over a long period, which impressed me very strongly with the conviction that she was watched and cared for by unseen guardians. From the first night that I passed in her room until the last that preceded our departure from Würzburg, I heard a regularly intermittent series of raps on the table by her bedside. They would begin at ten o'clock each evening, and would continue at intervals of ten minutes, until six o'clock in the morning. They were sharp, clear raps, such as I never heard at any other time. Sometimes I held my watch in my hand for an hour at a stretch, and always as the ten-minute interval ticked itself out the rap would come with the utmost regularity. Whether H.P.B. was awake or asleep mattered nothing to the occurrence of the phenomenon, nor to its uniformity.

When I asked for an explanation of these raps I was told that it was an effect of what might be called a sort of psychic telegraph, which placed her in communication with her teachers, and that the chelas might watch her body while her astral left it.

In this connection I may mention another incident that proved to me that there were agencies at work in her neighbourhood whose nature and manner were inexplicable on generally accepted theories of the constitution and laws of matter.

As I have already remarked, H.P.B. was accustomed to read her Russian newspapers at night after retiring, and it was rarely that she extinguished her lamp before midnight. There was a screen between my bed and this lamp, but, nevertheless, its powerful rays, reflected from ceiling and walls, often disturbed my rest. One night this lamp was burning after the clock had struck one. I could not sleep, and, as I heard by H.P.B.'s regular breathing that she slept, I rose, gently walked round to the lamp, and turned it out. There was always a dim light pervading the bedroom, which came from a night-light burning in the study, the door between that room and the bedroom being kept open. I had extinguished the lamp, and was going back, when it flamed up again, and the room was brightly illuminated. I thought to myself—what a strange lamp, I suppose the spring does not act, so I put my hand again on the spring, and watched until every vestige of flame was extinct, and, even then, held down the spring for a minute. Then I released it and stood for a moment longer watching, when, to my surprise, the flame re-appeared and the lamp was burning as brightly as ever. This puzzled me considerably, and I determined to stand there by that lamp and put it out all through the night, if necessary, until I discovered the why and wherefore of its eccentricities. For the third time I pressed the spring and turned it down until the lamp was quite out and then released it, watching eagerly to see what would take place. For the third time the lamp burned up, and this time I saw a brown hand slowly and gently turning the knob of the lamp. Familiar as I was with the action of astral forces and astral entities on the physical plane, I had no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that it was the hand of a chela, and, surmising that there was some reason why the lamp should remain alight, I returned to my couch. But a spirit of perversity and curiosity dwelt within me that night. I wanted to know more, so I called out, "Madame Blavatsky!" then, louder, "Madame Blavatsky!" and again "Madame Blavatsky!" Suddenly I heard an answering cry—"Oh, my heart! my heart! Countess, you have nearly killed me"; and then again, "My heart! my heart!" I flew to H. P. B.'s bedside. "I was with Master," she murmured; "why did you call me back?" I was thoroughly alarmed, for her heart fluttered under my hand with the wild palpitation.

I gave her a dose of digitalis, and sat beside her until the symptoms had abated and she had become calmer. Then she told me how Colonel Olcott had once nearly killed her in the same way, by calling her back suddenly when her astral form was absent from her body. She made me promise that I would never try experiments with her again, and this promise I

* Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and the "Secret Doctrine." By the COUNTESS CONSTANCE WACHTMEISTER AND OTHERS. (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 7, Duke-street, Adelphi, W. C.)

readily gave, out of the fullness of my grief and contrition for having caused her such suffering.

But why, it will be asked, did she continue to suffer, with powers at her command which would relieve suffering? Why, when she was labouring at so important a task through long hours of every day—a task that needed a mind untroubled and a sound body—why did she never stretch out a finger to amend the conditions and to banish weakness and pain that would have prostrated any ordinary person completely?

The question is a natural one, and it did not fail to occur to me, knowing as I did the healing powers she possessed, and her capacity to alleviate the pains of others. When the question was put to her, her answer was invariably the same.

"In occultism," she said, "a most solemn vow has to be taken never to use any powers acquired or conferred for the benefit of one's own personal self, for to do so would be to set foot on the steep and treacherous slope that ends in the abyss of Black Magic. I have taken that vow, and I am not one to break a pledge the sanctity of which cannot be brought within the comprehension of the profane. I would rather suffer any tortures than be untrue to my pledge. As for securing more favourable conditions for the execution of my task—it is not with us that the end is held to justify the means, nor is it we who are permitted to do evil that good may come. And," she went on, "it is not only bodily pain and weakness and the ravages of disease that I am to suffer with what patience I may, subduing them by my will for the sake of the work, but mental pain, ignominy, opprobrium and ridicule."

All this was no exaggeration, no mere form of emotional expression. It was true and remained true until her death, both in fact and in the history of the society. Upon her, standing in the forefront of the ranks of the Theosophical Society, fell the poison darts of reprobation and misrepresentation, as upon a living sensitive shield or bulwark, behind which the real culprits, the weak and erring ones, were concealed and protected.

She was, as it were, a sacrificial victim accepting a long martyrdom, and upon her agony, and the shame which she bore so undeservedly and bravely, was built up the prosperity of the Theosophical Society.

AN OLD TELEPATHIC EXPERIENCE.

A correspondent sends us the following:—

SIR,—I send you an old telepathic story of August 23rd, 1736, taken from the "Gentleman's Magazine" for the month of April in the year 1752; which, perhaps, modern experience can better interpret, up to a certain point, than general experience was able to do at the time the tale was written.

It looks as if, a father and son being both psychics, the former's double or sub-consciousness is probably apprised of his only brother's death at Leith, when he himself, in body, is absent from his home at G. for a few hours (there is, and always has been, a mystery as regards the exact residences of tellers of ghost stories, probably on account of the tongues of neighbours). It appears also that however the father's sub-consciousness was excited by this death, his normal consciousness knew nothing about it until it got the news from Leith in the usual way, and this does not seem extraordinary with our present knowledge. The father being, as I said, for the nonce absent from home in the body on some ordinary business, his soul, at the moment being unusually excited, calls to his son from the home of his body, the son being close at hand, half-an-hour before the usual time of his summoning him to dinner. Father and son being both presumed mediums, we can well understand the story with our modern knowledge, even to the father's double appearing to his son, at noontide, as well as calling to him. But the more unusual point is that others should not only hear the voice but see the double also; for that two women saw the wraith and heard it also, as well as the writer of the tale, is evident, for he writes of "two senses of two persons besides himself" partaking in the phenomenon.

The lad gets home, which was at a house in the street just opposite the haberdasher's shop where he worked, twenty minutes before dinner time, and finds no dinner ready, but he sets his stepmother in a passion because he tells her the truth; naturally enough, under the circumstances. As is common in such cases, there is a hitch. The probable cause of the event, the death of the uncle, has, as I have shown, no effect at the

time in giving either his brother or his nephew any conscious knowledge of the event.

T.W.

SIR,—I was apprenticed to a draper at G—, a man of more knowledge in trade than religion. To prevent any taint of my morals, my father (as he lived directly opposite) chose I should still lodge and board at home, and his business obliging him to dine exactly at half an hour past twelve, I was daily called over by him at that time.

Though of a spare and weak constitution, my spirits and imagination were very lively, and bid fair for a youth of great vivacity; and by frequent reading of novels and romances, my mind was filled with notions of love and honour, more than of spirits and apparitions, the belief of which I was taught very early to decry and ridicule.

On the 23rd of August, 1736, at noon, standing at the shop door with my mistress, and maid servant, and Mr. Bloxham, then rider to Mr. Oakes and Co. (who now lives and follows the haberdashery trade himself in Cateaton Street), we were chusing figured ribbons and other millinery goods, when I heard my father's voice call *Charles* very audibly. As accustomed, I answered, *Coming, sir*. Being intent on viewing the patterns, I stayed about four minutes, when I heard the voice a second time call *Charles*. The maid heard it then as well as myself, and answered, *He is coming, Mr. W—m—n*. But the pattern book not being gone through with, I was impatient to see the end, and being also unwilling to detain the gentleman, I still tarried. Then I saw the door open, heard my father call a third time in a strong, emphatical, and angry tone, and shutting the door I heard its sound. Both the mistress and the maid heard this last call; on which she pushed me out of the shop with *Sirrah, get you gone, your father is quite angry at your stay*. I ran over, lifted up the latch, but found the door locked. Then, going in at the back gate, saw my mother-in-law in the yard, but, without saying anything to her, I immediately went in, where I found no father, nor any appearance of dinner. Returning, I inquired of her for my father: she said he was not come home, nor would dine at home that day.

My surprise was great, and I acquainted her with both my hearing and seeing him; but she treating the story as an idle tale, I was very near being thrashed for it.

I then went back to the company, whose consternation was as great as my own. The maid (a very sober, religious person) immediately told me it was a sign of death, and that I should not live long, and inculcated this notion in me so strong, that from that hour I thought of nothing but dying, and kept myself in constant preparation for and expectation of it.

Whether all this was the force of imagination, I cannot say. I believe it may, I will not argue to the contrary, though two senses of two persons besides myself could not, probably, be so liable to deception.

This I know, and believe, that an Almighty hand was concerned in it; for being (as I before observed) a lad of raised spirits and extreme vivacity, which might, perhaps, in time, have led me into the snares and pleasures of the present age, my mind and disposition from that hour received a new turn; I became another creature, one fresh-formed, of a grave, saturnine disposition, few words, despising the present vanities and vices of the world, and associated with very few youths from that time after.

It is commonly said that accidents of this sort are foreboding and prognostic, either of loss of friends or of fortune. This maid was an instrument in the hand of Providence to root this belief in me, and to keep me steady in the paths of virtue from that period, and it is very remarkable that I had an only uncle (who was gunner of the *Bideford*, then stationed at Leith) that died there that same day, and about the same hour.—I am, sir, &c.,

A. B.

STONE-THROWING IN BELGIUM.

In the small town of Charleroi, in the province of Hainault, there is considerable talk at present about some incidents which have been occurring in the establishment of a money-changer in the Boulevard Audent of that place. For some time M. B.'s skylights have been smashed by projectiles of various kinds, and the police have not been able to catch the depredators. While members of the force watched the premises the stone-throwing went on. The tenant naturally grew very wroth as each new day brought a fresh supply of missiles, and so he "went for" his neighbours in legal fashion, tooth and nail. They indignantly denied the charge, and so the matter stands, while poor M. B. is said to have scarcely a whole pane of glass on the premises. "L'Etoile Belge," "La Gazette," and other Belgian papers have been commenting on the matter, and all efforts, private or municipal, to discover the authors of the outrages have failed. They could not even distinguish from what direction the missiles came. The "Moniteur Spirituel et Magique," from whose pages we get the story, quotes it "with all reserve," but at the same time offers a possible explanation in a spirit of agreeable banter. It says that sceptics per- in denying the reality of spirit communication, no matter peaceful form or method may be adopted to prove its truth that in order to vanquish that incredulity the spirits res- these militant practices.

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 Subliminal Consciousness and its Assertion of Alterity.

SIR,—I beg to refer your correspondent, "C. M. P.," to Du Pin's "Philosophy of Mysticism," and especially to the chapter "Dream a Dramatist," in the first volume, for the answer to the question which he seems to have put repeatedly in "LIGHT" without obtaining any satisfaction. I translated that work in the as yet very partially realised hope that English Spiritualists might thus be led to vouchsafe some attention to transcendental psychology.

C. C. M.

A "Miraculous" Statue.

SIR,—I think attention should be called to a remarkable narrative in the November number of the (Catholic) "Month," entitled "The Miraculous Statue at Mellhela." The account is of Father McHale, one of the masters of the English Jesuit College in Malta. I have not leisure to summarise it, but will only say that it seems almost impossible to suppose the described movements to have been non-objective, and difficult to adopt any explanation of them by concealed mechanism. Says Father McHale on this point: "The idea of some cunningly devised machinery is impossible. The statue, as before explained, stands well away from the sides of the cave, which are of native rock. It rises from a rough-hewn rock and is itself a continuous stone." The closest examination was permitted, and no points could be detected, though without them the movements seem wholly inexplicable on mechanical suppositions. One would like, of course, to have the independent testimony of other observers, and to know more of the history of the statue. No direct profit seems to accrue to the custodians from the exhibition; but, of course, there is motive enough imaginable for a "pious fraud" in keeping alive a superstitious devotion of the populace. On the subject of animated statues, see Lamblichus on the Mysteries. I submit that the narrative in "The Month" should be reproduced, as regards the main particulars, in "LIGHT."

C. C. M.

[We purpose giving the summary suggested by "C.C.M." in our next issue.—Ed. "LIGHT."]

Metempsychosis.

SIR,—In reply to the questions on metempsychosis which appeared in your issue of the 11th ult., I may say, first, that the Indian doctrine of transmigrating is either an exoteric presentation of the fate of the lower principles after death, or else a blind to conceal, from the uninitiated, the whole truth concerning the evolution of the soul.

The solution seems to lie in the meaning of the term "soul." If "animal" soul is meant, then the Indian teaching is compatible with that of the esoteric philosophy which tells us that the "Kama," or animal soul, after separation from the higher principles gradually exhausts itself on the lower planes of being. Though it is impossible for the real human Ego-Manas to incarnate in the animal kingdoms, the fate of the Ego's "worn-out clothes" is another question.

And as there are some beings—we can hardly dignify them with the term human—who appear to have been "born too soon in human shape," it is not improbable that they may be relegated later on to their proper place in nature.

Animals are said to be Kamic forms clothed in gross matter. But the distinction between such "Kamic" souls, and the real Ego, the man, must always be kept clearly in mind.

Modern Theosophy differs from every ancient teaching in that it offers the real or esoteric meaning underlying the often crude, and generally figurative, expressions with which ancient writers frequently veiled their larger knowledge. The Temple mysteries sacredly guarded much of what Theosophy has now made exoteric, thus showing how the profoundest secrets of one age become, at the turn of the cyclic wheel, the common property of the next.

"F.T.S."

Nebulæ.

SIR,—In your impression of the 18th ult. your correspondent, Mr. F. Douglas Fawcett, states "the fact that a Nebula preceded our planet"; and "thus the Nebula preceded our planet as Julius Cæsar preceded 'C. C. M.'"

Now "a fact" is something demonstrated, and a demonstration is something rendered indisputable. I dispute "the fact" that a Nebula preceded our planet. I know all that conven-

tional astronomers tell us about Nebulæ, and I challenge those men to produce an iota of evidence to prove the positive existence of Nebulæ and the part they are alleged to play in the production of worlds. Whenever sufficient telescopic power has been brought to bear on so-called Nebulæ, they have been resolved; and the natural inference is that when they have not been resolved, sufficient telescopic power is wanting.

The manner in which scientific men indulge in the wildest hypotheses, and then assert them to be "facts," is amazing in the eyes of common-sense and philosophical caution. If Nebulæ do really exist, they are probably conveyors of concentrated forces, and fulfil some office connected with the waste and repair of the universe; but to state as "a fact" that they are worlds in rudimentary stages of development is simply monstrous guess-work and a gross intrusion into the grand domain of certainties.

42, Crutched Friars.

NEWTON CROSLAND.

[Is not Mr. Crosland a little incautious in saying that there are no Nebulæ, and immediately afterwards saying what their properties must be, if there are any?—Ed. "LIGHT."]

A NEW LONDON SOCIETY.

On Friday evening, November 24th, a meeting was held at Cavendish Rooms, W., to inaugurate a new Spiritualist Society, projected by Mrs. Cole and Miss Rowan Vincent, by whom the meeting was convened. There was a large attendance, comprising numbers of representative Spiritualists, besides strangers and inquirers, for whose benefit the new society is more especially intended. Mr. John Page Hopps was in the chair, and in his opening remarks said that he was rather a weak reed, not being a society man himself, although always taking a deep interest in the welfare of all societies that sought to promote the welfare of humanity. It had been suggested that there was not room for a new society of the kind, in view of those already in existence; but he disagreed entirely with this view, which had its birth in a narrow and cramped policy. He did not believe in stagnation of any kind; he was a believer in running water. There was a general spirit of inquiry abroad in reference to occult matters. He himself was constantly receiving letters from people asking for counsel and advice, and begging for an introduction to quarters where they might learn something of the new philosophy. He advocated that the new society should be framed on bold, large, and free principles; that it should be a family rather than an official organisation. He was no believer in corporations and representative bodies. He thought that one of the objects of the society should be to get people in families "where the light had shone" to agree to have their names put down, as being willing to assist in the good work by permitting inquirers to be introduced to them with a view to private investigation into the subject. He then called upon

MISS ROWAN VINCENT, who gave an outline of the objects of the new society, the outcome of the deliberations of Mrs. Cole and herself. They had recognised the spread of inquiry into occult subjects, and had determined to do something towards providing a centre where those who were anxious for information might be assisted. The new society would begin its sessions in a drawing-room, but they had no intention of ending there. The society would open its doors to people of all degrees of faith, whether Spiritualists, Theosophists, or Re-incarnationists. Dealing with some of her personal opinions, she deprecated the hostility so current between Theosophists and Spiritualists; they were both seeking for truth; they were both contemplating the same phenomena, but they were looking at different sides of the shield. She quite expected people belonging to other societies to co-operate in the new venture. Spiritualists might be divided into three classes, those who were brought in by the death of some dear friend, and who (rightly enough) were delighted at the opportunity of communicating with those gone before, and realising that they still lived. Another class were attracted by the phenomena and the opportunity for sight-seeing. Both these classes in too many cases stayed at this point, and with mournful iteration went on communing with friends or gazing at manifestations, to the end of the chapter. The remaining section entered the investigation with the true desire of benefiting their fellows. These were the people they wished to attract. It was a hard up-hill fight; they were only just on the borderland of the subject. Like Sir Isaac Newton, they might compare themselves to a child on the seashore

picking up a few pretty coloured shells with the great ocean of truth stretching out undiscovered before them. Experiment was the most important method of discovery, and in their new enterprise they proposed to experiment in clairvoyance, psychometry, and hypnotism. In conclusion, she solicited the assistance of those present in forming the new society.

MR. EVERITT said he had been requested to say a few words. The chairman had spoken somewhat disparagingly of societies; but it appeared to him (the speaker) that when you had a grand truth it was necessary to form nuclei of men and women to make it known to the world. It seemed to him necessary that they should meet in families, societies, leagues, or whatever name they might give them. Lord Brougham had spoken of Spiritualism as a cloud upon the horizon, and certainly it was a cloud, but a cloud of dazzling radiance that tinged the earth with light and glory. They were not in the position in which they were placed some fifty years since, when mediums and Spiritualists were few and scattered. They were now growing strong and vigorous. He himself was a Spiritualist pure and simple; life was too short for the verbiage and hair-splitting involved in the discussion of the side issues too frequently associated with the movement. He welcomed the new society and wished it every success.

In reply to some questions from the audience, Miss Vincent said the headquarters of the projected society would be at No. 10, Sandwell Park, West Hampstead; their meetings would be fortnightly, on Wednesday evenings; and the subscription 10s. 6d. per annum.

The Chairman then called upon Mr. Dawson Rogers, who remarked on the somewhat inchoate state of the proposed society, and recommended that after the promoters had drawn up the constitution and rules they should hold a further meeting. He welcomed the effort heartily. They could hardly have too many societies. The work of organising a society implied a certain activity and enterprise. Therefore when a society got into danger of becoming inert and apathetic, let the members set to work and start another. (Laughter.) He could not see the object of inviting Theosophists to join a Spiritualistic society. Why, Theosophists had nothing to discover or learn. They knew all about it, and would tell the new society that their supposed spirit friends were merely shells or spooks. (Laughter.) There could be no community of feeling or interest between the two. Their lines of thought were diametrically opposed. As to the proposed "experiments," he thought that great caution was necessary, as mixed circles were fraught with danger. With due care and wise direction the new society might be productive of great good, and he cordially wished it all possible success.

DR. GALE made some remarks on the new society of a critical character, but he approved the principle of it, and wished it God-speed.

MISS VINCENT briefly replied to the objections raised. The promoters had called the meeting merely to lay the idea of the new society before them, not to present the plan of organisation. They could deal with that when they had a larger body of members. At present they had the names of twenty people who had promised to join, who had in fact joined them, and the meeting was intended to put the finishing touch to their preliminary arrangements.

The Chairman, in closing the proceedings, said that he had no doubt all present wished the two ladies at the head of the project every success.

A considerable number of people gave in their names for membership at the close of the meeting. D. G.

SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHS.—What are termed spirit photographs—the appearance on a photographic plate of other figures besides those of the sitters, often those of deceased friends of the sitters—have now been known for more than twenty years. Many competent observers have tried experiments successfully; but the facts seemed too extraordinary to carry conviction to any but the experimenters themselves, and any allusion to the subject has usually been met with a smile of incredulity or a confident assertion of imposture. It mattered not that most of the witnesses were experienced photographers who took precautions which rendered it absolutely impossible that they were imposed upon. The most incredible suppositions were put forth by those who only had ignorance and incredulity to qualify them as judges, in order to show that deception was possible. And now we have another competent witness, Mr. Traill Taylor, for many years editor of the "British Journal of Photography," who, taking every precaution that his life-long experience could suggest, yet obtained on his plates figures which, so far as normal photography is concerned, ought not to have been there. —ALFRED R. WALLACE, F.R.S.

SOCIETY WORK.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—Sunday, at 7 p.m. Mr. Bradley; Thursday, at 8 p.m., Mr. Vango, clairvoyant. —J.B.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W. We had a good attendance at our Sunday service. Mrs. Mason gave us a reading from the "Two Worlds" entitled "Your Life Class," which led to a very instructive discussion. Mrs. Wood's guides followed with an inspirational discourse, urging us present to lead a Christ-like life. Mr. Stewart Clark's healing was again successful. Sunday, at 7 p.m., open séance with organ recitals. Inquirers welcomed. Tuesday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason. J.H.B., Hon. Sec.

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKING HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—Meetings free, every Sunday at 6.45 for 7 o'clock. Speaker for Sunday next, Mr. A. Butcher. The half-yearly meeting of the members of the society was held on Sunday last. The report showed that the society had considerably prospered from May 21st. The membership number seventy-three. The stock of the society is valued at £110, and the cash in hand is £8. The members tender their thanks to Mr. C. Deason, who has for the past two years held the office of treasurer, and has now resigned that position, through exceptional circumstances.—J. RAINBOW, Hon. Sec.

311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—At a conference of South London Spiritualists, held on Sunday, November 19th, it was resolved that: "Recognising the need of central headquarters for Spiritualism in South London, an appeal is hereby made to Spiritualists to assist the South London Spiritualist Mission, supply that need, and that a subscription list be opened and collectors for the fund appointed. Donations to be made payable on or before March 1st, 1894." The response to this appeal has resulted in £35 being subscribed, but much more is needed, and we hope the need of South London will speedily be met by those blessed with this world's goods. Wednesday, inquirers' meeting, at 8.15 p.m. Sunday, séance at 11.30 a.m. "Magnetism of Evil," at 7 p.m.—CHARLES M. PAYNE, Sec.

SPIRITUAL HALL, 86, HIGH-STREET, MARLBOROUGH, W.—On Sunday evening last, after some very appropriate remarks from our president, Mr. T. Everitt, Dr. Reynolds delivered an excellent address, taking for his subject the suitable words attributed to St. Paul, "All things are lawful. . . . but not expedient," and "Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good." Spiritualism, said the lecturer, was either the grandest and most beautiful truth ever given to mankind, or else the vilest fraud that could be conceived of. He the lecturer had long since proved Spiritualism to be true. Dr. Reynolds then proceeded to lay before his very attentive listeners the cardinal truths of Spiritualism, and to enforce their immense value to all, and he begged inquirers to investigate the subject in a calm, reverential, though critical manner, but not with the criticism born of prejudice and bigotry. We cordially thank Dr. Reynolds for his great kindness in visiting us, and for expounding the truths of Spiritualism in a way that is possible to those only who have had great experience. On Sunday evening next, Mr. James Robertson, of Glasgow, has very kindly consented to deliver an address; doors open at 6.30; commence at 7; free to all. December 10th, morning and evening, Mrs. J. M. Smith, psychometry and clairvoyance.—H. R.

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. R. Palmer, 3101, North Broad-street, Philadelphia; Australia, Mr. H. Junor Brown, "The Grand Hotel," Melbourne; France, P. G. Leymarie, 1, Rue Chabanais, Paris; Germany, E. Schloclauer, 1, Monbijou-place, Berlin, N.; Holland, F. W. H. Van Straaten, Apeldoorn, Middelland, 682; India, Mr. T. Hatton, State Cotton Mills, Baroda; New Zealand, Mr. Graham, Huntley, Waikato; Norway, B. Torezonson, Advocate, Christiania; Russia, Etienne Geispitz, Grande Belozerski, No. 7, Lod. 6, St. Petersburg; England, J. Allen, Hon. Sec., 13, 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 13, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park:—Sundays, 11 a.m., for inquirers and students, and the last Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., reception for inquirers. Also each Friday, at 9 p.m., prompt, for Spiritualists only, the study of Spiritualism. And at 1, Winifred-road, Manor Park, the first Sunday in each month, at 7 p.m., reception for inquirers. Also each Tuesday, at 7.30 p.m., inquirers' meeting.—J. A.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

H. TOWNLEY GILL.—Next week.

MC. J. C. MUNRO.—Thanks for letter, which we would publish, but it seems undesirable to prolong the discussion.

O. MURRAY AND C. E. PARRY.—Communications received with thanks, but publication unavoidably postponed till next week.