

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 786.—VOL. XVI. [Registered as] SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1896. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

We have received a rather important number of the 'Newcastle Daily Leader' (for January 21st), containing a long account of a remarkable healing medium in Gateshead. His name is J. H. Moss, lately, and for many years, a blacksmith in Abbot's Chain Works, Gateshead. His mediumship goes back about ten years, and during the whole of this time, for the most part freely, he has used his great gift to heal the sick, many of whom, according to the account before us, were regarded by the medical practitioners as in a hopeless state.

His greatest successes have been with people who were not Spiritualists. The writer of the narrative cites the case of the present Mayor of Newcastle, Mr. Riley Lord, J.P., and certainly it is a most striking case of cure after the failure of some of our greatest physicians. Two other interesting cases are mentioned, a science teacher and a Wesleyan class-leader, neither of them Spiritualists. Both of these were 'marvellously healed,' says the narrator, who adds:—

As a mark of gratitude, they presented Mr. Moss with his portrait, and entertained him and a number of their own friends to dinner. My informant was the only Spiritualist invited. It was like 'a Methodist experience meeting,' said my informant. After the entertainment, the company persuaded Mr. Moss to be 'controlled' by his guides, and in this condition, after a beautiful prayer, he gave an address. His guides made him say that a great many people wanted to know how he had this power. They wished to emphasise the fact that it was not Mesmerism or Magnetism. The Spiritualist obtained leave to question the 'guide' by whom the medium was controlled, and learnt that he had been the 'medicine man' of a tribe of North American Indians, and had lived about the middle of the last century. He had two hundred and thirty of his tribe with him in the world of spirits. He was the only one who could speak English and use the medium's brain, but the others helped the healing. He said they were 'children of nature,' and lived on natural products, and the healing and restorative power of herbs on the living body had been an 'open book' to them.

The medium freely uses 'passes' and prescribes herbs, which he supplies at a small charge. Luckily this is a form of mediumship which people are ready enough to take advantage of, and it has the excellent quality of leaving results behind that can be appealed to and tested. We hope to hear more of Mr. Moss.

Mr. J. Burns (Great Queen-street) has published 'The white wreath poems and other poems,' by Alice Hadfield Petschler. At the best, rhyme is a kind of plaything, and only a master can make it noble or beautiful. We believe it will gradually disappear. But this pretty little book seems all rhyme, and the rhymes often struggle for existence, and the lines do not always scan. We can honestly say, however, that the thought and feeling of the book are always human, spiritual, keen, and very reasonable. We wish the good lady had written it in untrammelled prose.

'From the Upanishads,' by Charles Johnston (Bengal Civil Service, retired: Member of the Royal Asiatic Society)

is a novel translation of portions of the 'literature which grew up around the Indian Vedas, perhaps the oldest products of the human mind known to us.' The matter is quaint, child-like, and intensely spiritual in tone and idea; the translation is singularly tender and simple. We should say it is rather literal, but cannot judge of that. If so, a freer but still careful rendering might perhaps be more enlightening. The publisher is Whaley, Dublin. A tiny book, in paper covers: and half-a-crown, net.

Referring to Edison's rather demoniacal promises in the event of war with England, that enlightened American journal, 'The New Unity,' says:—

It is safer to trust the gospel of kindness. The United States is most secure when it leaves its ports wide open and says to the bloodthirsty world, 'Come and cut our throats if you like, we will try to love and serve you still. If you possess yourselves of our land, why then our hard problems will be yours, that is all. The tax-collector of the Universe will present his bills to you and not to us.' Thus invited, who dares assume the unwelcome and dangerous task of invasion?

There is boundless food for thought in this simple paragraph. Talk about 'pluck'! No fighter, from Napoleon to Jameson, ever got so far as that. The Spiritualism of the Heavens is necessary even to realise it in thought. Will any nation on this planet ever climb to it in fact?

As a first-rate specimen of the thin and ignorant criticism of Spiritualism even by usually fair people, we cite this, from 'The Echo':—

The miracle-mongers of the present day—the Blavatsky gang, and the rest—will rejoice over Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace's new book on 'Miracles and Modern Spiritualism.' The Occultists will brag over the lamentable fact that a man so eminent in science is 'one of us.' They felt elevated—almost 'levitated'—when Professor Crookes turned Spiritualist. But the wisest of men are the victims of mental freak; and the Occultist folk do not reflect that for one eminent person who backs them up, a hundred still more eminent regard them with contempt. Dr. Wallace himself has seen no ghosts, no 'spooks' of any sort. But he knows people who have seen them. The old story. Imagine a philosopher of Dr. Wallace's repute believing such rubbish as the following (we quote Dr. Wallace himself):—'Lord Orrery and Mr. Valentine Greatrak both informed Dr. Henry More and Mr. Glanvil that at Lord Conway's house at Ragley, in Ireland, a gentleman's butler, in their presence, and in broad daylight, rose into the air and floated about the room over their heads.' No scientist has ever performed a miracle which Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke cannot cap.

That is every word of it:—an ill-written, ill-informed and ill-mannered jibe. What did 'The Echo' expect to accomplish by such a transparent foolishness? Of course, it will help to confirm the uninformed and prejudiced in their cheap scorn, but it will increase the faith of those who know and believe, just as the writer of these words got his confirmation by looking upon the ponderous attempts of the conjurers and their confederates to 'cap' the 'miracles' of mediums, in private rooms, without plat-forms, without machinery, and without confederates.

Why 'miracle-mongers'? The writer of 'The Echo's' Note does not appear to know the elementary fact that the true Spiritualist does not believe in miracles. He sees there is a larger natural, that is all. He puts no limits to Nature: all things are possible,—except perhaps the education and the conversion to perfect fairness of newspaper paragraphists.

What a *suggestio falsi* there is in the remark that Dr. Wallace has himself 'seen no ghosts, &c.'! A stranger would get the impression that Dr. Wallace, contrary to the habit of his life, was relying upon second-hand testimony, which is precisely the opposite of the truth. There is no suggestion of his years of patient, brave, and honest seeking for the truth. The 'contempt' of the 'hundred still more eminent' will weigh with us when the hundred have given to the subject a hundredth part of the time and care Dr. Wallace has given to it.

What does 'The Echo' mean by its remark that 'no scientist has ever performed, &c.'! That is *apropos* of nothing, and is really silly. If the writer had said *no medium* has ever performed, &c., it would at least have been coherent. Dr. Wallace never professed to perform a miracle. What 'scientist' ever did?

Another entirely frivolous review (*must* we call it *review*!) is that in the 'Daily Chronicle,'—an indolent and contemptuous little notice of the book, ignoring the facts, the arguments, the strong pleas, and fastening upon a poor little matter of a date, which only reveals the ignorance of the writer. Because Dr. Wallace asserts, respecting Eusapia Palladino, that Professors Lodge, Richet, and others hold that 'various phenomena were not produced by the medium in any normal way,' the writer of this notice gravely takes him to task as falsifying the record when he says his book has been 'carefully revised.' Perhaps it will surprise the writer of the notice to be told that Professors Lodge, Richet, and others, in spite of the Cambridge fiasco, *do still hold* that at various sittings with Eusapia 'various phenomena were not produced by the medium in any normal way,' and that the evidence for this is obtainable, not from 'The Spiritualist Alliance,' let us say, but from 'The Psychical Research Society.' But a notice-writer, who ignores the substance of the book he is reviewing, is not likely to go outside of it for information or evidence.

We make these remarks concerning these two specimen reviews simply to supply an object lesson of some significance.

LIGHT' SUSTENTATION FUND.

A few contributions to our Sustentation Fund, in addition to those already announced, have come to hand, and will be duly acknowledged in next week's 'LIGHT.' In the meantime we shall be glad if those of our friends who contemplate assisting us will kindly forward their remittances *as early as possible*. 'Bis dat qui cito dat.' Cheques crossed 'London Joint Stock Bank' may be sent to the Treasurer, Mr. H. Withall, Gravel-lane, Southwark, London, S.E.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A meeting of Members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held in the French Drawing Room, St. James's Hall (entrance from Piccadilly) at 7 p.m. for 7.30, on Friday next, February 7th, when an address will be given by Mr. F. W. Thurstan, M.A., on 'Psychical Powers: Some Practical Suggestions for their Development.' The subject is one of which Mr. Thurstan has been for some time a careful and painstaking student, and we have no doubt that he will so handle it as to convey to his hearers some very valuable instruction.

'LE DIABLE AU XIX^{ME} SIECLE.'

As the quotations which 'C. C. M.' recently made from Dr. Hacke's work, 'Le Diable au XIX^{me} Siècle,' cannot fail to produce a certain painful impression on Spiritualists, it is, perhaps, as well for the English members of this community to be able to judge a little further for themselves, by some few other translations, and by a more personal presentation of this author's opinions, whether all the revelations he makes can be accepted unconditionally as unprejudiced truth.

Since making the few observations on the 'Case of Miss Vaughan,' which you kindly printed last November, I have received and am wading through the book itself, and am but the more confirmed in my first idea as to the *source* which has inspired this work, and the words according to St. Matthew xii. 24-28, stand more and more vividly before me:—

When the Pharisees heard it, they said, 'This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of devils.' And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, 'Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself cannot stand. And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges.'

Now the question which naturally arises on reading a work like Dr. Hacke's is, 'What manner of man is he who writes thus, and expounds dogmatical teachings as an apostle of light and severe judge of his fellow creatures?' What do we learn of himself by his writings, so that we can receive them at their proper value?

Throughout the whole work the dominant note is intense Anglophobia and hatred of all sects, save the one to which he himself belongs, and *par excellence* of Protestantism. Anglicism, laïque or ecclesiastic, he considers the chief factor and foster-mother of Luciferism, Satanism, and Freemasonry, while he maintains that the only possible true judge of the quality of a miracle, as to whether it be of celestial or diabolical parentage, is the Roman Catholic ecclesiastical authority. The Greek Catholic is by him considered quite as incompetent to judge in the matter as the most unecclesiastical sect; and all who do not believe and follow the teachings of his persuasion on the subject of Mysticism and Occultism, specially as propounded and expounded by the Jesuit Father Martin Delbrios, from his studies, on the matter, of the most eminent theologians, are lost souls under Satanic influence if they believe or trust in any other manifestation of invisible forces than those on which Rome has put its hall-mark.

Gnosticism and Esotericism, even Christianity, is for him of accursed and diabolical parentage. Occultism and all the various branches of this science he considers, even as did the priests of Egypt in long past ages of the world, as the special prerogative and monopoly of the (Roman Catholic) ecclesiastical body, and that it, through the hands of its consecrated servants, is the sole legitimate dispenser of this prerogative in matters of exorcism and administration of the Sacraments. The sinner too of to-day, condemned and executed, can only by *sanction of the Church* be elevated to the saint of to-morrow—although even in matters of beatification or canonisation Lucifer's man of business, 'The Devil's Advocate,' has his little word too,—for or against the acceptance of the would-be saint's acceptance into the heavenly circle.

As it is always wholesome discipline 'to see ourselves as others see us,' let us look on the mirror Dr. Hacke presents to the English nation, of their character and pursuits in various parts of the world. Speaking of the English influence in the East, he says:—

Singapore is much like Port Said—a sewer, human, I mean. All who have exhausted their good behaviour in Europe take

refuge at Port Said; in like manner, all who have used up their fund of the same in Asia find an asylum and protection at Singapore. This place is likewise an English possession, and there, as in all colonies of the British kingdom, the vagabonds, scoundrels, wretches of every description, criminals who have succeeded in evading the police of their own country, those condemned in contumacy, convicts who have broken loose, and assassins, domicile themselves there, and traffic for the profit of the great nation and its Most Gracious Majesty without making any scruples.

Ah, no, they are not squeamish in this matter, Messieurs les Anglais!

Australia and India are by these means peopled with the scum of nations, who there digest in peace the produce of their crimes. They have acquired an outward varnish of respectability more or less dignified, but, incompetent to dissimulate, their vices now become to them a second nature. Here we find the contemporaneous baronet descended from the thief, the marquis from the forger, the duke from the reprobate, while as for the rich merchant or commercial man of to-day, his grandfather slaved at the galleys or broke stones on the road.

What does all this matter to the English? All right! provided the money circulates and commerce progresses; for to become perfectly English, it is not sufficient to have been a murderer, or even parricide; it is necessary to know how to turn the crime to account—to gain money. That is all. A nice nation this! And, in conclusion, a fanatical Protestantism must be added; thus you see nothing is lacking.

In morals as in physique, and as in a religious point of view, this creature is hideous. Actually one never knows what sort of ill-bred person one is in communication with when addressing an Englishman. In addition, he is a Cant; and this cant takes the form of prudery—this affected austerity, this pose of reserve, which serves to hide and conceal vice.

Singapore is one of the countries of cant. Study the Englishman closer. Very soon you will detect his sectarian propensities, the heretic modelled on the type of Henry VIII. or Cromwell, the deceiver in whom fictitious virtue masks every kind of moral degradation.

English Puritanism is the supreme cloak of hypocrisy, and the individual, in spite of his austere appearance, is assuredly the furious, headstrong heretic, whose Satanic impiety keeps up the outside semblance, by a religious make-up of rationalistic paradoxes.

Rob the Lutheran, it has been said, and you will find beneath the skin an impious nature full of strong pride and irreligious revolt, a disguised Luciferian. Scratch the English Protestant, say we, and, with the rare exception of a chance Puseyite, you will find a more or less conscious criminal, often the criminal duplicated by the Satanist.—'Le Diable au XIX^{me} Siècle,' Vol. I., page 178, &c.*

This is Dr. Hacke's *résumé* of the British character.

An astounding fact in the whole matter, is the cynicism with which he relates how he obtained his high diplomas that permitted him to penetrate into the most secret societies; how, by putting aside all regard to truth and honesty, presumably on the principle that the end justified the means, he hoodwinked grand masters, officiants, mystics, occultists, fakirs, Indians, Chinese, Japanese, demons, even the Author of Evil himself, and was able to remain as a spy, and coldly study all these various assemblies, without any member actually finding out his false pretensions and ignorance in many things, and denouncing him as a traitor. Where then was the supernatural or intuitional power all this time? Was there never present an honest mystic, a thought-reader, a sensitive, nor any who could or would lay bare the true features beneath the mask he wore? Was there so much affinity between him and his associates that the voice of Truth never spoke? Did he stifle his conscience so completely that, without sign or interference, he witnessed untold abominations, save when an occasional fainting fit overwhelmed him at a culmination of horrors, and only the interference of those whom he courted,

despised, and now betrays, saved him from discovery and chastisement?

There is an amusing artifice, practical in the extreme, to insure the sale of this work. All the startling illustrations therein, are each placed far in advance of the pages which contain the text they illustrate. During two years I used for many months of the year, twice a week, on my way to Maspero's Egyptian lectures at the Collège de France, in Paris, to pass the little shop, in a small street near the Boulevard St. Germain, where this work was published, and where the windows were filled with its numbers alone.

It ever drew my attention and curiosity, and I then particularly remarked that the illustrations never bore any reference to the text. Now that I have the book I see how subtle a reason there is in this arrangement, and how it is calculated to insure continued sale of one number of the publication after another.

It is no wonder 'C. C. M.' has declined to translate these volumes for the benefit of the British public, and it is a consolation to feel the weakness of this long-prepared and deep-laid scheme to dishonour Spiritualism and to frighten timid inquirers in the matter, and faltering explorers of the unknown unrecognised forces and laws of the Universe—those who but love and seek Truth, Light, and Divine Love, untrammelled by the swaddling bands of the superstitious ignorance of ages and the tyrannical dogmatism of those who declare in their pride that *they alone* hold and keep the key of the mystery of our spiritual existence and progress, cutting down this very essence of all true life to the lowest and most circumscribed limits. It is a comfort to know that this scheme has become, in all its ramifications, but an abortive attempt; a bogey, that will only frighten those not yet advanced enough to raise themselves above the horrors of the astral plane, and who still lack the courage to press onward to the mark of our high calling, as parts of one great whole, to our dear and loving Father and Creator and to His kingdom.

The worshippers of the Black Sun may try by every device of pride, malice, and treachery to veil the true light and wound the soldiers of the Great Army, but no weapon formed against them can prosper, no matter what form it takes, for the King Himself is leading His own troops to victory.

Our spiritual brethren here on earth have but to fix their eye of faith on His eternal promises, to carry out His two simple laws—to love the Lord our God with all our hearts and our neighbour as ourselves, as far as the infirmities of unregenerate human nature permit. Every little step along that simple, straight road is an advance from the finite to the infinite on the path of true religion, and gradually will the illusions of Maya fade away as we boldly and in humble faith press onward and vanquish the Watcher on the threshold, who *must watch and tempt*, while He defends the sanctuary from being trodden by profane footsteps, or the fruit from being plucked from the Tree of Life ere the Sun of Righteousness has matured it.

Rome.

HESPERUS.

* Miss X. desires to call attention to the fact that all contributions to 'Borderland' for which she is responsible are signed with the letter X. In consequence of the removal of the Editorial Office to Mowbray House, the 'Borderland' correspondence no longer passes through her hands. She is, however, still glad to be of any service to her many friends and informants in all parts of the world who have psychical phenomena to discuss, or facts to contribute which they may desire to communicate to herself, personally. Letters addressed to her at the 'Borderland' Office, Mowbray House, Norfolk-street, Strand, and marked *Personal*, will be forwarded, or they may be sent to 'Miss X.,' care of Society for Psychical Research, 19, Buckingham-street, Strand, or to the Office of 'LIGHT,' 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C. Foreign Psychical publications please copy.

* For further information as to how the British and American nations are regarded by the Ultramontane section of the Roman Catholic Church, I cannot do better than refer inquirers to a book recently published by Bernes, in Paris, 'L'Anglais est-il Juif?' by Louis Martin.

'OLD DIARY LEAVES.'

(Continued from page 28.)

Colonel Olcott says that no marvels of any kind accompanied the formation of the Theosophical Society, and that:—

Every circumstance tends to show that it has been a gradual evolution, controlled by circumstances, and the resultant of opposing forces, now running into smooth, now into rough grooves, and prosperous and checked proportionately with the wisdom or unwisdom of its management.

This places the Theosophical Society on the same basis as every other human institution; but we are told that it was planned and guided by the Masters nevertheless. Colonel Olcott spurs neither conjecture nor sophism to save the situation, making desperate efforts to relieve the Mahatmas from responsibility, while according to them credit.

The first attempt to found a Society failed. In May, 1875, Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky tried to get up 'a private investigating committee,' under the name of 'Miracle Club'; but their medium failed them, and the project fell through, although it had been 'ordered' by one of the Mahatmas. A certain Mr. Felt stepped into the breach, and proposed to invoke and bring visibly before the little company of investigators certain 'elementals' whose acquaintance he had made while studying ancient Egyptian Zodiacs. Madame Blavatsky promised her powerful aid, and on a motion by Colonel Olcott, at one of Mr. Felt's lectures, it was agreed to form a Society for the study of elemental creatures, and of ancient occult wisdom generally, the name 'Theosophical' having been afterwards discovered by scanning the pages of a dictionary. Mr. Felt, however, turned out to be a wind-bag, and Madame Blavatsky failed to furnish phenomena; so the members of the Society became sadly indifferent to ancient wisdom, apparently preferring tea and chatter; and the Theosophical Society might have come to an untimely collapse had it not been for the sensational cremation of Baron de Palm.

Mr. Felt seems to have been the first of the series of arrant humbugs whom the unsuspecting Founders have during a long course of years taken to their innocent and intuitional bowms; and Baron de Palm was the second. That wily old gentleman represented himself to the Founders as an 'occultist' and wealthy man, and he soon became an honoured guest in the Olcott-Blavatsky household. Not to be outdone in fraternal generosity, the Baron made the Founders his sole legatees; and soon afterwards he opportunely died, and 'became famous as a corpse'—in the following manner:—

Cremation was then being vigorously debated in the United States, but had never been tried. There was a 'Cremation Society,' and Dr. Le Moyné was building a little crematorium for his own use in Pennsylvania. The doctor agreed to operate upon the body of the late Baron as soon as the furnace was ready, and the Founders seized upon this opportunity for a grand demonstration—first giving the Baron de Palm an ancient Egyptian funeral, to the immense amusement of New York, and then, after six months' repose in carbonised earth (which completely mummified him), using him to inaugurate the new crematorium. Our author gives a stirring description of the funeral service, with its Orphic hymns, and so forth, which was performed in the great hall of the Masonic Temple in New York, before an overflowing audience of two thousand persons, the whole of America being vicariously present through the reporters; and he also gives an interesting account of the subsequent cremation, which was attended by scientific men from various States. The process occupied two hours and a-half, and was a complete success.

But, alas for poor human nature! When search was made for the large property which the cremated testator had bequeathed to the Society, nothing was found worth a five-dollar bill; and authoritative information from Europe showed that Baron de Palm was a broken-down old swindler—although really a Baron. Colonel Olcott goes at great length into this De Palm incident, showing that the Baron was ignorant, superficial, and illiterate; and he does this because it has been asserted that Madame Blavatsky got her inspiration from manuscripts left by De Palm, a story which is proved to be absurd. It seems strange that the Founders should have regarded as an illuminator this dreadful old fraud—who must, by their own

theories, have exhaled a powerfully mephitic 'aura'—apparently never suspecting anything wrong until they tried to realise on his fairy bequests; and stranger still, perhaps, is it that our author does not seem to suspect that anyone will find this phenomenal want of 'intuition' on their part a strange thing. Indeed, the naïveté of the Founders is most engaging throughout. 'Old Diary Leaves,' from beginning to end, clearly shows that Colonel Olcott can never have heard of such naughty things as Hocus-pocus and Hinky-panky, or of anyone solemnly 'writing himself down an ass.'

Although Baron de Palm was worth his weight in gold to the Founders as an advertisement, the Society soon subsided again into its former dimensions of a little coterie of brilliant talkers, a description that may perhaps be considered appropriate still, though the brilliancy is now somewhat dimmed. The next event in its career was the publication of 'Isis Unveiled,' the writing of which occupied a couple of years, during which time the members met informally every evening to pay court to Madame Blavatsky under very Bohemian conditions, and wait patiently for phenomena, much as a dog waits waggingly for a bone. But between the account of the Baron and of the Book we find a chapter intercalated on 'The Putative Author of Art Magic,' in which Colonel Olcott makes a rather severe theosophical attack upon Mrs. Hardinge Britten and her alleged inspirer the 'Chevalier Louis.' Mrs. Hardinge Britten, and Dr. Britten, were among the sixteen 'formers' of the Theosophical Society, and Mrs. Britten was one of its original officers; and although Mrs. Britten did not keep up her connection with it long, still 'as late as 1881 or 1882, she calls herself, in a letter introducing Professor J. Smyth, of Sydney, to H.P.B., her unchanged friend for whom she ever feels "the old time affection." We shall leave our readers to judge for themselves when they read the book whether Colonel Olcott's attack is justified—an attack which, no doubt, Mrs. Britten is quite able to meet without our assistance.

'Isis Unveiled' was received with acclamation by the American Press, and the first edition was sold out in ten days. That huge work is claimed by Colonel Olcott to have been phenomenally written. Sometimes one Mahatma dictated it to Madame Blavatsky, sometimes another; occasionally whole pages were written out at night by the Masters themselves, while she slept; sometimes she herself wrote at it laboriously, as ordinary mortals compose, taking her matter from the hundred books of reference that formed her whole library, or from the 'astral counterparts' of rare works, which obliging Mahatmas brought, and held before her eyes, and even on two occasions materialised for Colonel Olcott's benefit. The story of the writing of 'Isis Unveiled' is in itself curious and interesting, but it is made especially so by two circumstances: firstly, because one, at least, of the invisible collaborators was not a 'living adept,' but precisely what we call an earth-bound spirit—a disembodied mortal with all his powers and faculties except the physical. This 'friend,' we are told, is an old Platonist, who lived some centuries ago, and has become belated in Kama Loka through his great love of earthly knowledge, the consequence of a surplus of intellectuality and a deficiency of spirituality; but who, nevertheless, seems to associate on terms of easy familiarity with the Masters of Wisdom themselves. The second point which makes the account of special interest is that the teaching given out by the Mahatmas in 'Isis Unveiled'—dictated or actually written by them—differs in several important respects from that which the same 'exalted beings' subsequently gave out in 'The Secret Doctrine.' For example, Re-incarnation is the backbone of the later Theosophical System, but it does not appear in the earlier theory. We will quote our author's own words, for they supply an excellent example of three of his characteristics: of the honesty which seems to have made him obnoxious to his colleagues; of his naïve faith in Madame Blavatsky and her Mahatmas; and of his inability to put two and two together when the result would conflict with his foregone conclusions:—

Take, for instance, her teachings on Re-incarnation, the strong foundation-stone of the ancient occult philosophy, which was affirmed in 'The Secret Doctrine' and her other later writings. When we worked on 'Isis,' it was neither taught us by the Mahatmas, nor supported by her in literary controversies or private discussions of those early days. She held to and defended the theory that human souls, after death, passed on by a course of purificatory evolution to other and more spiritualised planets. I have notes of a conversation between a Mahatma and myself in which this same theory is affirmed. And this puzzles me most of all; for,

* 'Old Diary Leaves.' The True Story of the Theosophical Society. By HARRY ESTER OLSCOTT, Former Founder of the Society. (Putnam's Sons, London and New York. Price 7s. 6d.)

while it is quite conceivable that, either through imperfect cerebral-psychic training, or otherwise, she, the pupil and psychic agent, might not have known the solid philosophical basis of the Re-incarnation theory, I can scarcely see how the like ignorance could extend to the Adept and Teacher. Is it possible that Re-incarnation was not taught this Adept by his Master, and that he, as well as H. P. B., had to learn it subsequently?

The author thinks this 'not impossible'; but surely this would be a *reductio ad absurdum* of Mahatmic teaching! What would be thought of University education in England if undergraduates were taught the astronomy of Ptolemy, and only when they had taken their degree informed that in reality the earth goes round the sun?

Notwithstanding the success of 'Isis Unveiled,' the fortunes of the Theosophical Society seem to have been at a very low ebb in 1877, for the Founders were glad to pin themselves to the waist-cloth of a Hindu theologian, Swami Dyanand Saraswati, who had founded a reformed Brahminical sect in India called the 'Arya Samaj.' This affiliation was effected through the good offices of a certain Hurrychund Chintamon in Bombay, who, as go-between, seems to have greatly facilitated matters by translating the Founders' letters to the Swami so as to make them agree with his doctrines, and translating the Swami's letters to the Founders so as to make them conform to the teaching in 'Isis.' The Swami and the Founders thereupon interchanged smiles and diplomas, and Universal Brotherhood seemed at last about to be 'nucleated,' when the parties to the alliance suddenly found out that each had been deceived about the other's theories of the universe; and, worse still, they discovered that the obliging and ingenious Hurrychund had pocketed a considerable sum of money, collected by the Founders in New York, and sent through the said Hurrychund to the Swami. The Swami turned out to be merely a bigoted Hindu religionist, and he ended by calling the Founders very bad names; after which he died—an admirable instance of the operation of Karma.

It was at this time that the 'London Lodge of the Theosophical Society' was founded, with which the late Mrs. Anna Kingsford was for some time connected, and which still honourably exists, as an independent institution, under the presidency of Mr. A. P. Sinnett.

Colonel Olcott gave up his profession of lawyer, and his hardly less lucrative connection with the New York Press, in order to devote himself to the regeneration of mankind by the revival of ancient occult wisdom; but mankind so little appreciated this sacrifice of profits and prospects that things looked very blue with the Founders in 1879. What could be more natural, therefore, or more strictly in accordance with Karma (about which, however, they do not seem to have been taught anything at the time) than that the Founders should suddenly desire pastures new? An accommodating 'order' was soon received from Tibet, bidding them pack up and trek to India. So the auctioneer was called in, and the Founders, accompanied by two enthusiastic disciples, set sail for Bombay (old London) on December 18th, 1879. This Hegira is as far as the present output of 'Old Diary Leaves' takes us; but the author mentions incidentally that, after the departure of the Founders, Theosophy went into 'obscuration' for several years in America. There had been much talk of making the Society a Masonic order, and the few Theosophists left behind in the United States believed a Ritual to be necessary for the revival of the Theosophical Society there; hence, frequent and urgent calls were made by New York to Bombay for 'that ritual'; but it never was sent, and the Theosophical Society never became a Masonic body.

In another article we shall consider the interesting and graphic pictures which our author draws of 'The Old Lady.'

It may be a very good thing to build a fortune, a house, or a business, but have you ever taken any steps to build a character that will be worth looking at when it is finished?

The heart of man resembles a secret chamber wherein stands—like the block of white uncut marble set in the studio of a sculptor—a veiled figure. Though the man may not so much as lift the corner of the veil, yet must he forever and in secret work to fashion and to form the figure that lies beneath. And the figure is the Soul of the man, and the unveiling thereof is called death; and until the figure be unveiled, the man scarce knoweth what manner of man he is. —COLEMAN KERNAN. ('A Book of Strange Sins.')

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

On Friday evening, January 24th, a social gathering of members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance was held in the French Drawing Room at St. James's Hall. As indicated by the cards of admission, the meeting was of a purely social nature, being designed to promote friendly relations amongst the members, and to afford an opportunity for an exchange of thoughts on those subjects the investigation of which forms the *raison d'être* of the London Spiritualist Alliance. Most of those present having become known to each other through previous assemblies of the Alliance, the gathering was not long in resolving itself into an harmonious evening party. The 'interfusing power of sympathy,' as the poet has it, was strongly in evidence, and throughout the proceedings there was no sign of any tendency to degenerate into a 'solemn symposium.' Had anything been lacking to promote the genial glow, it would have been amply supplied by the musical programme, which included two brilliantly-executed duets on the pianoforte by the Misses Withall (Overtures to the 'Merry Wives of Windsor' and Norwegian Dances, by Grieg), and a song, 'Stars,' graciously rendered by Miss Florence Moran. After a further period of conversation, the programme, which, of course, was largely of a spontaneous character, developed itself in the direction of clairvoyance, and Miss Rowan Vincent kindly consented to give the friends an opportunity of witnessing some experiments in this direction. Miss Vincent's clairvoyance is, we believe, regarded by her friends as being of a somewhat rare, if not unique, kind. This lady states that she does not directly see, after the fashion of clairvoyants generally, but 'perceives' the things she describes entirely by impression. Although this peculiarity would hardly seem to make for distinctness, the experiments that followed showed that Miss Vincent's 'mediumship' is none the less efficient. Out of eleven minutely-detailed descriptions (displaying considerable power of characterisation) given to as many members of the audience, eight were fully identified, and one partially so. One undoubted peculiarity of Miss Vincent's clairvoyant faculty is the absolute control which she seems to exercise over it. She can wield it at pleasure, without waiting for inspiration or influence from without, a feature which, we believe, has favourably impressed some of our theosophic friends.

At the conclusion of the clairvoyant readings the friends again resolved themselves into conversational groups, and at about half-past ten began to disperse, with the consciousness of having spent an agreeable evening in congenial companionship.

D. G.

MRS. NELLIE TEMPLE BRIGHAM.

I hear, with equal pleasure and hope, that the above-named lady, a renowned speaker of New York, proposes to come to this country, to give a series of trance lectures on Spiritualism. Whether this excellent lady can see her way to meet the expenses of her transit to, and residence in, a foreign land on the chances of the petty remuneration accorded to the spiritually-inspired teachers of this country, I am not prepared to say. All I am justified in doing is to bespeak for her a warm welcome and a candid hearing.

As a noble woman, whom the tongue of slander has been powerless to defame, and as an eloquent and universally admired speaker, Mrs. N. T. Brigham will bring not less, and perhaps more, than a quarter of a century's public experience as a spiritual teacher to aid the cause of Spiritualism in England, and I may confidently claim for her, not only a fraternal welcome and widespread hearing, but a universal effort on the part of her sympathisers to make her visit as much a source of pleasure to herself as of benefit to the cause of progress in England.

The Lindens, Humphrey-street,
Cheetham Hill, Manchester.

EMMA H. BATTEN.

We beg to remind those Subscribers to 'Light' and the London Spiritualist Alliance who have not already renewed their Subscriptions for 1896, that they are now due, and should be forwarded at once to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 7, DUKE STREET, ADELPHI,
LONDON, W.C.
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1st, 1896.

EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS.
Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.—'LIGHT' may be had free by post on the following terms:—Twelve months, 10s. 10d.; six months, 5s. 5d. Payments to be made in advance.

ADVERTISEMENT CHARGES.—Five lines and under, 3s. One inch, 5s. Columns, 22 1/2s. Page, 24. A reduction made for a series of insertions.

Light,

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 7, Duke Street, Adelphi, London, W.C. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and not to the Editor. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and should invariably be crossed '— & Co.'

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MR. GLADSTONE ON A FUTURE LIFE.

A few months ago, Mr. Gladstone rather startled some of us by appearing to treat natural immortality as an open question. We ventured to suggest to him the strong desirability of a fuller presentation of his thoughts on the subject, and we are glad to find that the half promise and half hope we then received from him are finding fulfilment in 'The North American Review,' in the current number of which appears the first part of an Essay on the great subject, 'The Future Life, and the Condition of Man therein.'

The Essay, as far as it has gone, has in it very great promise in the sense of 'coming to the point.' It is all essence, and looks more like full notes for a volume than a finished work. The 'old man eloquent' is here the old man analytic, but retaining all his superb faculty for the right word and phrase. We never believed in the old taunt that Mr. Gladstone was 'verbose.' He was often full and deep and swift, like a river at the flood—and he was in the habit of sweeping things away! but he has run himself perfectly clear, and there is a contemplative placidity in his style now, very beautiful to see.

This first part of the Essay is mainly concerned with his 'bright particular star,' Bishop Butler, and consists of a keenly subtle and beautifully ordered setting-forth of the good Bishop's ideas; but it is quite evident that Mr. Gladstone entirely goes along with them. He is, moreover, curiously enchanted with the fine distinctions, the nice analogies, the delicate glimpses and most sober inferences so dear to the great old master; and, as these are laid before us by this other master's hand, we cannot help feeling that we are looking, at all events, upon a consummate work of art.

What then are these ideas? We are rather sorry to say that they revolve, and only in a very cautious way, round the central belief in, or hope of, a future life which does not carry with it belief in 'the soul's essential immortality,' 'an immortality for the soul inherent in its nature as soul.' Mr. Gladstone says of his great master, 'He makes no assertion of natural immortality.' 'He argues for a future life as hope, as credibility, as likelihood'; but he is not to be drawn farther: and his reticence or hesitation must be taken into account with the fact that in his day the essential immortality of the soul was a standing doctrine of popular and, within limits, of authoritative Theology. For his reserve, then, says Mr. Gladstone, he must have had grave reasons; and 'if he really held himself back from the full adoption of the popular and established opinion, such an abstinence presents to us an instance both of circumspection and of a mental courage founded on solid originality, which may be said to form a landmark in the history of opinion.'

Looking back over the ground traversed or scanned by Butler, Mr. Gladstone notes six 'diversities,' as he calls them, as to the nature of immortality. They can be briefly stated thus:—

1. A vitality surmounting the particular crisis of death is one thing: an existence without end is another.
2. Immortality may be of the disembodied spirit only, or of a surviving or restored body also.
3. The new life may be one of activity, moral and spiritual, or the reverse, partly or wholly.
4. The knowledge of the new life may be projected into the future only, or also into the past, or even into the eternal past.
5. Personal identity is essential. An immortality without identity is of no concern to us; and the transmigration of souls is a virtual denial of the doctrine.
6. We have to distinguish between a condition of deathlessness into which we grow by degrees, and an immortality which, ingrained (so to speak) from birth, is already our absolute possession.

That last 'diversity,' indicating conditional and not natural immortality, is, we are rather sorry to think, the ultimate aim of Mr. Gladstone. He says of it, 'This distinction is a vital one for those who do not accept any dogma of immortality belonging to nature, but who look upon it as a gift resulting from union with Christ and with God.' That is a reference to a tiresome and pedantic doctrine which we should be sorry to see Mr. Gladstone back up. It is really so arbitrary, so unscientific, so cruel, so narrow, so unhuman.

Turning from that, and turning back to Mr. Gladstone's exposition of Butler's argument, we think we see where the poverty of the land is, whence it arises, and what the remedy would be. Very early in the Essay, Mr. Gladstone says of Butler, 'Being precluded (by his argument) from referring to any divine authority, he has no experimental facts to adduce with respect to the condition of the soul after death.' And a little further on he says, in relation to 'substantive likelihoods, drawn from nature or experience, that the soul may survive death,' 'We become sensible how scanty is the supply of material at his command.' Now in both these remarks we see what must be the difficulty of the real Rationalists, who are also anti-Spiritualists, or of the Christian who undertakes to work only with the rationalist's tools. Shut out from the assertions or inferences labelled 'divine revelation,' 'the supply of material' is 'scanty' indeed, unless the workman will go further afield and condescend to use the Spiritualist's tools. What a naive admission,—that the good Bishop had 'no experimental facts to adduce'! But the 'experimental facts,' or the records of them, abound, waiting to enrich that dry and barren ground which Mr. Gladstone surveys with a shiver.

But the cautious old Bishop has his uses. If he has no eggs in his basket, he can at least cite a good many reasons why they should not be broken by the philosophers and the agnostics, if he had them. Mr. Gladstone cites fourteen of these reasons, and sums up thus: 'In sum; there is sufficient proof of independence (of body and spirit) to bar any presumption of simultaneous or allied destruction.' That is uncommonly satisfactory; and we propose a bargain. If Mr. Gladstone will keep going these fourteen reasons for not breaking our eggs, we will direct him to the place where they may be had; we will even present him with some, to eke out his 'scanty supply.' But seriously, we see in this Essay a strong confirmation of our contention that the hope of Religion is the blending of Rationalism and Spiritualism. What if that is 'Revelation, after all!'

£100 FOR A GENUINE SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPH.

A BONA-FIDE OFFER.

We commend to the serious attention of mediums and photographers, who have succeeded in obtaining what are regarded as psychic pictures, the following letter, which has been placed in our hands by a gentleman who is personally known to us, and of whose honourable intentions in the matter we can entertain no shadow of doubt whatever:—

SIR,—In my letter which appeared in your issue of December 14th I mentioned the fact that a friend of mine some time ago offered £100 to Mr. Stead for the production of a genuine spirit photograph under strict test conditions. Nothing came of this offer, probably because it escaped Mr. Stead's attention, through the pressure of his many and multifarious occupations.

The conditions which my friend considers reasonable, as stated in my previous communication to you, are (a) that the so-called spirit photograph shall be produced on a plate procured direct from the manufacturer and duly marked; (b) the use of my friend's own camera and dark slide; (c) the medium to handle camera, dark slide, and, if desired, to be present during the whole course of the experiment, but the dark slide containing the marked plate never to be out of sight of my friend, either in the studio or dark room, until the plate be fully developed and fixed.

As I have before said, I know my friend to be a most sympathetic investigator, who postulates a spiritual world, and is *very willing to believe in the possibility of the production of such photographs*, but the genuineness of the evidence hitherto presented has always appeared to him to be somewhat doubtful.

Owing to an illness I have been prevented from continuing my efforts to get this matter brought to a crisis, but I have now seen my friend again, and he has placed in my hands a letter, herewith enclosed for your perusal, in which he states that the offer is open to any individual who may be in a position to accept it. He wishes thereby to focus attention on this much-disputed subject, and, if possible, concentrate the evidence for the existence of such phenomena.

I shall be very pleased if you will undertake to receive any so-called spirit photographs with a detailed history of their production; and if you consider them worthy of investigation, then arrangements can be made to carry out a series of experiments, by a small committee, under what are to be considered by both parties as reasonable conditions, including those above stated, and not excluding the observance of those psychic conditions which we know are so essential for the production of super-normal phenomena.

January 27th, 1896.

'TRUTH-SEEKER.'

We have read the letter to which our correspondent refers as having been placed in his hands by his friend, and are satisfied that, in the above communication, 'Truth-seeker' has fairly represented his friend's wishes and intentions. It only remains for us to express the hope that the offer will be cheerfully accepted. For our own part we are fully convinced that there are several mediums through whose instrumentality super-normal pictures have been frequently obtained, and we sincerely trust that in their own interests, and in the interests of truth, some of these mediums will readily give their services in the proposed experiments, and avail themselves at the same time of the opportunity of securing the prize which has been so liberally offered.

'Truth-seeker' suggests that specimens of 'spirit photographs' should be sent to us, with a detailed history of their production. This is deemed to be a reasonable precaution against a waste of time with applicants whose successes in securing such pictures have been few and far between. All specimens sent to us will be submitted to 'Truth-seeker,' and it must be for him, and not for us, to determine which offers shall be accepted for investigation. It occurs to us, however, to suggest that the term 'spirit photograph' should be somewhat modified. That expression may be held to mean the photograph of a spirit; but, supposing a super-normal picture to be obtained, whether of a male or a female, how can it for a certainty be shown that such picture is really the photograph of a spirit? 'Truth-seeker' would, no doubt, readily agree to the substitution of a less ambiguous term, for both he and his friend are, we confidently believe, actuated by no other desire than to get at the fact whether pictures of a super-normal character, whatever they may be called, can really

be obtained under satisfactory conditions. They would take no trouble in the matter if they did not believe in the possibility. And the offer is not to be regarded as a challenge, for 'Truth-seeker' has assured us that his friend will, under the circumstances, be not merely content, but really pleased, if he should lose his money.

THE MYSTERIES OF MEDIUMSHIP.

BY OUR SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE.

MRS. VINCENT BLISS.

Mrs. Bliss is a busy lady, and is almost certain to be engaged when you call at her rooms in the West End. She told me on the afternoon when I visited her that she had given her maximum number of six sittings that day, and that the sixth sitter had just left when I rang the street



MRS. VINCENT BLISS.

(From a photograph by A. & G. Taylor.)

bell. Even if you get inside, and are not seventh or eighth in the list of the day's visitors, you may fail of an audience. It depends upon your colour, as you shall presently understand.

Mrs. Bliss confessed to feeling done up. She had been sitting all day, and the last client had required a lot of attention.

'How,' I asked her, 'do so many visitors find you out? You do not advertise?'

'Oh, no. It is solely by recommendation. One tells the other, and the other comes. A large proportion are persons who come over and over again; I have some clients of several years' standing who have regular sittings. A good many come from the Psychical Research Society.'

'Oh, how is that?'

'People inquire of them, and get sent to me. I am recognised by some of them, not, of course, as a medium, but as a clairvoyant, and it is for clairvoyance that these folks come to see me. Many of them would not listen to the suggestion of Spiritualism.'

'It comes to about the same thing in the end, though, does it not? Those Psychical Research people are doing a lot of good in their way.'

'They do good to me, at any rate,' said Mrs. Bliss, with a smile. 'The doctors also—and there are a good many

about here, you know—make considerable use of my clairvoyant faculty in difficult cases of diagnosis.'

'The doctors are getting on, too?'

'Yes, but at present they laugh to scorn the idea of spirits having anything to do with the matter.'

'You find it a little difficult to discriminate between your visitors, of whom many must be total strangers, do you not?'

'Fortunately, not at all. I can tell in a moment with whom I may sit, and with whom not. The characters of all who come are at once revealed to me by their halos.'

'Their halos! I thought those were ornaments peculiar to saints and other superior beings.'

'That is quite a mistake. Everyone has a halo—to me, at any rate. These halos are of different colours and density, and Vigo, my guide, has taught me the significance of the colours. If I see a dark green halo, for instance, or one that is black with brown spots, or a very dark grey

'I hear them speak in different voices, which I recognise. Some I do not know by any names, but only by their voice. I may be in one room, and a visitor waiting for me in the other, and Vigo may say, "Do not sit with her; she only wants you for worldly affairs." And the visitor does not get a sitting. I never give a séance for business matters; though when I am entranced and a spirit friend of the sitter is controlling, of course I cannot prevent them talking of business, as they sometimes will do. I do not hold with the use of mediumistic gifts for money and similar matters, and believe that its constant employment for this purpose leads to the medium being surrounded by a low class of spirits, and may result in her getting into trouble. In fact, more than one case of the sort is within my experience. The very fact of soliciting information with the object of gain may occasion harm by inducing an undeveloped spirit to make mischievous misstatements, for which the medium is blamed, and the real culprit gets off scot free. If such information is, however, given spontaneously, good service may be frequently rendered.'

'But it doesn't appear to make any difference if the information is given by the medium for gain? Somehow I don't seem quite to realise the situation.'

'You don't, my friend, and had better give up trying.'

'I will; but before we get off this halo subject will you please tell me the colour of mine? I am really curious about it.'

'With very much pleasure. Yours is a pale blue.'

'Oh!'

'Don't look so disappointed. Blue is a first-rate colour, you know, high in spiritual rank, and yours should be much darker. I should judge if you were not so tired—in the morning, say—it would probably be found to be a fine electric blue. You are a man very quick in your actions, deep thinking, penetrating anything and reading character at first sight. Wonderfully energetic, too, rather quick in temper, but very forgiving, and not only loving the truth yourself, but, as a rule, recognising at once when a person was not telling the truth.'

'I must try and live up to all that. Very useful qualities in an interviewer, would they not be? Now let's get to business. To begin at the beginning, Mrs. Bliss—'

'Certainly. I was brought up in South Devonshire, and until eight or nine years of age I could nearly always tell by what path my father was coming up to the house, and through what plantations, and how many glowworms were round his hat. He used to pick them up, you know, and bring them home to me. There used to be much fun between my brother and me counting these glowworms, before they came within ordinary sight. Most of my family have been mediumistic; my mother in particular was a remarkable clairvoyant. On coming to London we lived in St. John's Wood, and here my first noticeable experience in clairvoyance occurred. Sitting at breakfast with my mother, I saw suddenly a young man, dressed in sailor's clothes, come along the forecourt of the house, and I told my mother, describing his appearance. She said it was my cousin, whom I had never known; and strange to say, the next morning came this very young man, looking exactly as I had seen him the day before. Not long afterwards he died, and that very evening knocks were heard in my room, and continued for quite an hour, four knocks at a time at regular intervals.'

'As bad as a funeral bell. What uncanny things you mediums treat us to.'

'It is our misfortune,' sighed Mrs. Bliss.

(To be continued.)

WHAT is the use of singing psalms and hymns about the happiness of Heaven, unless you are taking some steps to form such a character as will enable you to enjoy it when you get there?

one, I know that I must not sit with its possessor. These, and other colours, or combinations, show indifferent or bad character. Yet others, such as pale-greens, indicate defective health, which is almost as bad—for me. The purest colours, revealing the best characters, are purple, blue, gold, and, in very rare cases, white.'

'So that if a person does not always carry his true colours pinned to his sleeve he wears them on his head.'

'That is so; and his colour accompanies everything he owns or has touched. For instance, I see the colour of the writer of a letter by pressing it to my forehead, and thus know his character without speaking with or seeing him. I ought to explain, however, that a refusal from me to sit does not necessarily mean an imputation of ill character. More often it is the case that I am obliged to decline because the would-be sitter is so constituted as to draw too heavily on my vitality, and my guides then interpose and forbid a séance. It has even happened that, after making an appointment, I have got to the doorstep, and got my hand on the bell, and then been compelled to give up and go away. My guides take great care of me in this way, and say it is necessary in order to preserve my mediumship.'

'How do you receive their communications and distinguish between them?'

SPIRITUALISM AND ITS CRITICS.

A SURVEY.

It seems to have been established beyond any further need of questioning, by Mr. Richard Harte, in his admirable address recently given before the London Spiritualist Alliance, that there is no need to draw any line whatever where Psychical Research is concerned. We may conclude that a subject of vital import to man is a fit and legitimate subject for man's study, and with this conviction we shall continue to 'prove all things.' A brief survey of the various mental attitudes assumed by the public at the present time towards Psychical Research, and especially towards the spiritualistic interpretation of it, can scarcely fail to be amusing, and may be interesting for reference hereafter. 'The wild dreams of one age become the sober realities of the next,' and we ourselves find it difficult to believe that certain men once looked on a steam-engine as an incarnate devil, whose progress they tried to stop with holy images and relics placed on the line. This is delightfully typical of our own case, and we may be sure that in the struggle we shall play the part of the steam-engine—smash the obstructions and—pass on!

The place of honour among our critics belongs to the newspaper man, who has a better chance of sowing his opinions broadcast than is enjoyed by his fellows. Now the newspaper man knows everything, and, admitting as he does that psychic subjects are beneath his notice and, consequently, beneath his study, he is necessarily in a position to instruct the public mind thereon. In a review of a recent work by Mr. Frank Podmore, the author is spoken of as a 'colossal instance of blind credulity' (Spiritualists will appreciate this fine stroke of humour), and then the reviewer goes on to say that the Psychical Research Society doesn't even understand 'its own stupid subject,' and instances, as a far more wondrous phenomenon than any attacked by its learned members, the fact that intelligent men are found willing to waste their time and energy on subjects which have long since been 'relegated to the dustbin of effete superstition.'

Then we have the man in the street, who is nothing if not 'practical,' and who regards any domain beyond that of beer and skittles as visionary and unprofitable. A chance allusion to an unseen universe rouses his righteous anger. 'Nonsense, my good fellow,' he will say, 'it's all confounded rot, I tell you. We live in a practical age, sir;' (here he becomes Johnsonian and ponderous) 'an age of science, not of delusion. Your belief is only a worn-out bugbear, invented by a crafty priesthood to keep their hold over the ignorant. Believe me,' (here he waxes sweetly tolerant, as befitting one who surveys from lofty heights the crawling atoms below) 'believe me, we have gone beyond all that. The carcase of that dog in the gutter is the end—final and complete—of that dog, and so will your carcase be the final and complete end of you, when your time comes.' And our 'practical' friend is honestly without the faintest suspicion that he is the visionary, who passes his whole life 'grasping at shadows as if they were substances,' and in a perpetual trance which he calls worldly wisdom.

Next, we meet the man and woman of the world, whose acquaintance with psychology has probably been confined to a drawing-room entertainment, when a little 'willing' or thought-reading has been proposed. This amusement forms an agreeable interlude between the weighty considerations of feathers, furbelows, and high living. It is difficult to conceive what interest the spiritual life can possess for people whose aspirations are realised by a well-fitting gown or a good dinner, and we might almost think of them as the Moslem has been falsely said to believe of women—viz., that they have no souls—were it not that we share the poet's faith and can exclaim with him:—

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
The fountain light of all our day,
A master light of all our seeing.

Yes; a light dim it may be, and obscured by the 'mists and vapours amid these earthly damps,' but divine and eternal as the source from which it springs. Surely, only through great tribulation will such as these awake to a sense of the life beyond. I recall the expression of languid astonishment on the face of a society woman who had been listening to an account of phenomena which a friend had witnessed. 'No, really,' she exclaimed, 'you don't say so! But, my dear boy, why go to

amateurs for this sort of thing? You'll find them so much better done at the Egyptian Hall, where they have all the necessary appliances for first-rate conjuring!' For my part—and I confess it with shame—I can never think of an aggravated specimen of the society man and woman, without having a vision of the monkey house at the Zoo rise before me. It is true our hirsute ancestor does not manifest his worship of, and care for, the body in any refined or attractive fashion, but he has, at least, the excuse of captivity and the limited sphere of action inseparable from it, and his aim and object in life is every bit as noble as that which actuates the envied society slave. The comparison suggests the unwelcome inquiry, are we still only one quarter human and three-quarters monkey?

Among the scientists, there have been some noble exceptions to the majority, who generally assume what Mr. Stead aptly calls, 'a fatal air of sniffishness' towards all psychic phenomena. These truly great men have braved the ridicule of their order, the risk of a tarnished reputation, the falling-off of friends, and the damning verdict, 'much learning hath made them mad.' In spite of all, they hold fast to the truth, and one of the most honoured among them has staked his reputation on the publicly expressed conviction that no earnest man of science will ever honestly investigate our phenomena without becoming convinced that much of it is genuine. Others have candidly confessed that the matter has no interest for them and, as a man has surely a right to choose his own subjects for research, it would be illogical to blame him if he finds the dissection of a beetle, let us say, *par exemple*, of more import than the life to come. An honest worker in any groove, who adds to the sum of human knowledge, is worthy of our respect and gratitude, and we can await the hand-grasp of science; not shrinking from, but courting, her fierce light, in the sure and certain hope that truth will prevail.

As for the religionists, their types are so numerous, and their attitude towards psychical study so diverse and contradictory, even among those who build their creeds on the same 'inspired revelation,' that it would be impossible to do more than glance at a few of them. A Protestant will probably declare that, since all 'miracle' ceased with the time of the Apostles, such things cannot possibly occur now. Asked if he has investigated them, he will reply, 'No; because if God had intended them to be known, He would have revealed them, and any such investigation would be unlawful.' This individual conveniently forgets that for many centuries mankind, including those to whom God was supposed to have vouchsafed a so-called 'final revelation,' were allowed to grovel in the darkness of a belief that (what Stainton Moses called) this little 'back corner of God's universe,' was the centre of celestial spheres, and that the human race would still be in that condition of blind ignorance, had it not been for the glorious work of one who was opposed and persecuted by the Church in his pursuit of truth. Evidently God intended man to find out something for himself, on that occasion, not to name many others, when facts have been discovered, not included in, and sometimes at variance with, the 'final revelation.' A Roman Catholic will admit the reality of the phenomena which, in his hands, he states, are of divine origin, but when in the hands of heretics clearly originate with the devil. The boast of the Roman Catholic Church being an unbroken record of 'miracle,' from the time of Jesus, and their claim to be the only true Church being founded on this record, it can easily be understood with what impotent fury they regard any trespassers on their preserves, and that his Satanic Majesty has necessarily to be dragged in as a last resource. In the theological mind the devil ever holds a power equal to that of the Source of Good; nay, more, he has generally succeeded in worsting the Divine Spirit, even up to the present time, to say nothing of his anticipated triumph at the 'end,' when ninety per cent. of God's creatures will fall under his dominion. What a conception of infinite power!

However, in this connection we are not left comfortless, for the reflection that a person may be burned as a devil-inspired witch in one century and canonised in another, may surely cause us to take heart of grace. Who knows what ecclesiastical distinctions may not be in store for us? 'Saint Stead' would have a pleasing ring about it! Among other objections to psychical study advanced by the religionists, is the danger in it to oneself and others, but this objection has been fully met by Mr. Harte. He pointed out that the evil to others lay, not in the subject investigated, but in the nature of the investigator, which, if evil, would work for bad purposes. And as to the evil to one-

self, he again showed that the fault lies in the man and not in the subject. 'Weak-minded, "half-baked" people,' he says, 'cannot control themselves when they take up anything that greatly interests them. Such people neglect their duties for gambling, for music, for games and sport of all kinds; they "go to pieces" on politics or on Socialism . . . to say nothing of the prophecies of Daniel or the Book of Revelation.'

There is another body of thinkers who claim that their system is 'not a religion, but all religion; not a science, but all science; not a philosophy, but all philosophy'—a claim which cannot be objected to on the score of limitation. The followers of this system, known as the 'Theosophical Society,' are at the present moment chiefly occupied in violating their own leading principle; viz., a belief in human brotherhood, and the air is full of charges and counter charges of fraud, brought by certain leading members against others. This society has always maintained an attitude of supercilious scorn towards Spiritualists, whom they regard as easy-going, credulous folk, rather weak in intellect, but on the whole, harmless. Mr. Herbert Burrows once stated in a lecture that it would be necessary to study Theosophy for seven years before one could even begin to know anything about it, and it is to be feared that the example of its exponents will not swell the number of pupils in so intricate a school. Some, at least, of the uninitiated will be content to wait until the superstructure of theory is supported by a few facts—not interpretable by fraud—before they scale such sublime heights.

And last, but by no means least, we are confronted with the Psychical Research Society, who compass heaven and earth to discover a theory which will explain the army of facts before them, and, having succeeded—to their own satisfaction—go on multiplying facts, *ad infinitum*. That they rarely, if ever, get the most valuable evidence is certain, and may, perhaps, be accounted for by Mr. Stead's assertion in the October number of 'Borderland.' 'They have,' he declares, 'utterly failed to command the sympathy and secure the support of those . . . who ought to be their best friends.' Surely Carlyle must have had them in his prophetic eye, an eye doubtless in a fine frenzy rolling, when he said that certain men thought they had explained everything under heaven when they had stuck a label on it. Now, the Society for Psychical Research label, for the present, is 'subliminal consciousness.'

What changes will the next twenty years show in the attitude maintained towards our gospel by these various types? All things come to him who knows how to wait, and—we can wait.

As I end this incomplete survey, certain pregnant words of a great master come back to me. They related to a man who had been changed by spiritual influences from a hard, cold, selfish life to one of love and self-sacrifice, but they bear a keen significance for us and our opponents. The words are these: 'Some people laughed to see the alteration in him, but he let them laugh and little heeded them; for he was wise enough to know that nothing ever happened on this globe for good, at which some people did not have their fill of laughter at the outset; and, knowing that such as these would be blind anyway, he thought it just as well that they should wrinkle up their eyes in grins as have the malady in less attractive forms. His own heart laughed, and that was quite enough for him.'

Shall it not also be 'quite enough' for us? M. C. P.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

- 'The Palmist and Chiromantic Review,' for January. Price 6d.
- 'Modern Astrology,' for February. London: 1 and 2, Bouverie-street, E.C. Price 6d.
- 'The Senate,' for January. London: The Roxburghe Press, 3, Victoria-street, S.W. Price 6d.
- 'The Mystical World,' for February. London: H. A. Copley, publisher, Canning Town, E. Price 14d.
- 'The Photogram,' for February. London: Dawbarn and Ward, Limited, 6, Farringdon-avenue, E.C. Price 3d.
- 'The Theosophist,' for January. London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 7, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C. Price 2s.
- 'The Religious Training of Children.' By ABNEY MORTON DIAZ. Reprinted from the 'Metaphysical Magazine' by special request. New York, U.S.A.: The Metaphysical Publishing Company, 503, Fifth-avenue. Price 14d.
- 'Earth to Earth Burial; Burial in Deep Sea; Cremation by Fire. The only means for the prevention of the most horrible of deaths, the waking to life in a closed coffin. With directions for preventing burial alive.' By L. O. M. A. Second edition. London: Nichols and Co., 23, Oxford-street, W. Price 3d.

REMARKABLE CASE OF ALTERNATING CONSCIOUSNESS.

(FROM 'THE MEDICAL PRESS AND CIRCULAR'.)

At last week's meeting of the Clinical Society, a distinguished suburban practitioner showed a girl, twelve years of age, who exhibited in the most complete and indubitable form the condition known as 'dual existence,' or 'double consciousness.' Last year, after a severe illness which was diagnosed to be meningitis, she became subject to temporary attacks of unconsciousness, on awakening from which she appeared in an entirely different character. In her normal condition she could read and write and speak fluently, and with comparative correctness. In the altered mental condition following the attack she loses all memory for ordinary events, though she can recall things that have taken place during previous attacks. So complete is this alteration of memory that at first she was unable to remember even her own name, or to identify herself or her parents. By patient training in the abnormal condition she has been enabled to give things their names, though she still preserves a baby fashion of pronouncing. She sometimes remains in the abnormal condition for days together, and the change to her real self takes place suddenly, without exciting surprise or dismay, and she forthwith resumes possession of her memory for events of her ordinary life to the exclusion of those which have transpired during the abnormal state. During the last month or so she appears to have entered on a new phase, for, after a mental blank of a fortnight's duration, she awakened completely oblivious of all that has happened since June, 1895, and she alludes to events which took place just anterior to that date, as though they were of quite recent occurrence; in fact, she is living mentally in July, 1895.

DECEASE OF MADAME DE MORSIER.

We regret to learn of the decease of Madame de Morsier, in Paris, who for many years worked with the Countess of Caithness as her right hand in spiritualistic propagandism. Madame de Morsier organised and managed the weekly lectures given in the Countess's lecture hall for the last two years, and in which so many eminent speakers took part. She was Vice-President of the Paris Theosophical Society in 1884, having joined it with Mr. Ed. Schuré and Madame de Barraud, but resigned in 1885, in consequence of certain facts which came to her knowledge, which convinced her of inconsistency between facts and teachings. Her withdrawal under those associated circumstances led to the collapse of the society in Paris, from which it has never recovered. Mr. Solovioff, who was in Paris at the time, has referred to these incidents in his 'Modern Priestess of Isis.' In 1886 she undertook the editorship of the 'Aurore,' which paper the Countess of Caithness decided to start to represent Spiritualism of an esoteric Christian colour. Madame de Morsier also translated about this time Mrs. Anna Kingsford's and Mr. Maitland's 'Perfect Way' and Miss Phelps's 'Gates Ajar'; also Madame Venturi's 'Biography of Mazzini,' with whose ideas, as well as with the socialistic ideas of Benoist Malot, she had strong sympathy.

Madame de Morsier was one of the most prominent leaders in all progressive movements pertaining to women in France. She was one of the organisers and main supporters of the Rescue Society for liberated women prisoners, in which work she was associated with Mrs. Samuel Butler, Mr. Stansfeld, and Professor Stuart. She organised the International Congress of Women Workers, held in Paris in 1889, under the chairmanship of Jules Simon, and, with the support of Yves Guyot, the then Minister of the Interior, she afterwards assisted to organise, and was one of the chief supporters of, the Annual Congress of Workers for the Emancipation of Women, held at Versailles; and prior to her last illness she was actively engaged in advocating the promotion of a Congress of Religions, to be held in Paris in 1900.

Madame de Morsier was a descendant of the Swiss philosopher, Ernest Naville, and was descended maternally from the Todds, of Berwick.

BACK NUMBERS OF 'LIGHT.'—Wanted, Nos. 9 and 11 of 'LIGHT,' Vol. I, 1881. Reply, stating price and condition, to Office of 'LIGHT.'

GOD'S best gifts are the commonest—the air, the light, the beauty of the world, the blue of heaven, the winds, and stars, and sunset, the mother's tenderness, the sweet affection of sister, and child, and wife.—DR. FARRAR.

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.]

Type-Writing by Spirit People.

SIR,—The excellent report of the type-writing phenomena given by 'Quæstor Vitæ' in your last issue renders it most desirable that the suggestion made by your correspondent should be followed up. Mechanical or electrical contrivances for operating the keys at a distance are out of the question and need not be considered. What has to be established is the impossibility of the type-written messages being prepared beforehand and surreptitiously introduced at the séance—the working of the keys being a mere blind. The fact that the sheets were initiated at the moment by your correspondent is so far evidence against this assumption. The more probable hypothesis, if fraud comes in at all, arises from the facility with which the medium may be able to operate the keys in the dark. I know a lady, perfectly blind, who works an ordinary typewriter with the speed and accuracy of an expert. There is no difficulty at all, after proper training, in using a typewriter in the dark. I admit that this hypothesis also seems out of court in the present instance; but the wrists of every sitter should be linked in an endless chain of properly tied 'filoselle,' if absolute darkness is essential.

My object in writing is to ask your correspondent what possibility there is of Miss Banks coming to England? I, for one, will promise her a 'sympathetic investigation,' and be glad to contribute towards the expense of her visit, provided that a satisfactory answer is previously given to the two hypotheses I have suggested.

W. F. BARRETT.

Kingstown, Co. Dublin.

January 27th, 1896.

The Fallibility of Science.

SIR,—In looking over some back numbers of 'The New Science Review,' I happened upon the following passage in an article by Grant Allen, on 'The Amateur in Science.' It may be that Grant Allen is not a Spiritualist—at any rate, he does not refer to the subject in his article, and, so far as I know, he has not dealt with it elsewhere. Nevertheless, his remarks are so helpful in making clear and emphasising the position of the modern Spiritualist, as compared with that of the orthodox scientist, that I have no hesitation in asking you to bring them to the notice of the readers of 'LIGHT.'

We have arrived at a point where the existing beliefs of scientific men are wholly unsatisfactory, even to those of themselves who have the courage to say so, and who can see a little way beyond their own cloud of facile verbiage. The current ideas of force and energy, in particular, are formless and meaningless, full of contradictions, and purely anthropocentric in conception and expression. They are the ideas of an intelligent but unphilosophic mechanic, and they are couched in terms of a working man's vocabulary. When you get to their core, they insist upon going round and round for ever and ever in a vicious circle. Certain physicists of our day, indeed, of the orthodox type, but possessed of some originality and vividness of imagination, like Crookes and Tesla, are trembling on the verge of immense discoveries. But outsiders, as I believe, have already seen further than those orthodox explorers. Approaching the subject without preconceptions, and finding by pure logical faculty the weakest points, the *petitions principii* and circular arguments of our Balfour Stewarts, and our Taits, they have arrived at newer and more consistent conclusions as to the nature and relations of forces and energies than our recognised teachers.

Is not this so? What greater 'outsider' than the Spiritualist of to-day? and yet who has progressed so far in the search for truth? Take some of our mediums for instance, men and women in humble life, ignorant of science, scarcely able to express themselves intelligently, and yet able to see, and having a well-attested knowledge of, facts at the bare mention of which science recoils or seeks refuge in ridicule. When will science learn that it is not infallible, that its very methods sometimes tell against its advance? Time after time it has had to discard beliefs that were supposed to be firmly established. Perhaps the time is not far distant when it will be necessary to do so again, but the new foundation will be deeper and broader than any that has preceded it.

ARTHUR BUTCHER.

The Munich Congress.

SIR,—Allow me to endorse Mr. J. Fraser Hewes' protest against any alliance between Spiritualists and vivisectors.

Those who attend the Munich Congress with a view to joining in discussion with the very men whose opinions are based on the cruellest vivisectional experiments, are themselves most surely partakers in their crime—a crime which dyes the soul with blood. Not to the Spiritualist, surely, is the body of so much importance that to preserve it from harm, or to seek to learn its uses, he will sacrifice his higher nature; not to the Spiritualist should the animal be a 'thing' for him to use as he pleases, regardless of the purpose (to him yet unknown) of its creation. We can conjecture, concerning the animals, and concerning our whole entourage, but we know little more than that these things are, and that we cannot produce them; all we can do is to preserve or destroy what God has created. The vivisector is the arch-destroyer; from him no spiritual truth can be gained. Only one lesson he teaches us, and teaches it well—to turn from him as from one who is blind to the oneness of created things; as from one who is a slave to self, who would teach men, not to live aright and reap the splendid harvest which would result from doing so, but to live wrong lives, and, with the coward's hand, seek to wring what is not their due from those helpless ones who have not erred, but are innocent.

In supporting the entire withdrawal of the Spiritualist from dealings of any kind or sort with the vivisector, I am prepared to be called 'narrow.' I am well content that this should be, for this is a case to which the words may be applied, 'Narrow is the way that leadeth unto life,' and 'broad is the way that leadeth to destruction.' Every divergence from the strict straight line of moral and spiritual Truth—which is the Right—'leadeth to destruction,' and, while abhorring the motives, acts, and spiritual status of the vivisector, I am aware that he is, in fact, more to be pitied than abhorred, even more to be pitied than his victim. For, while the victim is injured, the vivisector injures, and not only injures his victim but mankind, for he lowers the moral atmosphere, and in ever placing material before spiritual welfare he degrades all human nature. I would ask, how can we expect to instruct ourselves in the psychical from those who have in them 'no provision for understanding it'?

ELEANOR M. BEEBY.

Precognitions.

SIR,—The communication by 'C.C.M.' appearing in 'LIGHT' of January 18th under the head of 'Astrology,' and your article appearing under the head 'Deep Sea Soundings' in 'LIGHT' of to-day's date, suggest to me that Mrs. Sidgwick's paper on the evidence for premonitions, to which you refer, may not include in the collection of cases it contains the important evidence afforded by the book, 'Papacy—Its Rise and Fall,' by the Rev. Robert Fleming, printed in 1701. But even should I be mistaken in this, the predictions the book contains relative to the destruction of the Turkish Empire may be of interest to your readers.

Mr. Fleming, who died in 1703, in the book mentioned gives his interpretation of the events predicted in the Apocalypse, and in his interpretation of the events foretold in chap. xvi. of Revelation he came to the conclusion that the fourth vial mentioned in that chapter would be poured out upon the Bourbon family and the French Monarchy, and would be completed by the year 1794—a year after the beheading of Louis XVI.

This coincidence occasioned the republication of Fleming's book both in this country and America.

The next vial, the fifth, he says in his book, will be completed about the year 1848, and he fixes on the Pope and the Papal States as the sufferers from the pouring out of this vial.

The coincidence of this forecast or guess, for Fleming puts it no higher than a guess, occasioned a republication of the book in 1849 by the Rev. Thomas Thomson; the alienation of the Pope's subjects from his government, as a temporal power, being then complete.

The sixth vial, Mr. Fleming's book says, will be poured out on the Turkish Empire, and is to commence on the expiry of the previous one; but he does not speak so definitely as to the conclusion of the infliction, for he says the next vial, the seventh, runs into the sixth and completes it, but the following quotation from p. 72 of the 1849 edition of the book clearly indicates his estimate of the time when the Turkish Empire is

to be destroyed: 'Supposing, then, that the Turkish Monarchy should be totally destroyed between 1848 and 1900, &c.'; and many persons, as well as the Duke of Argyll, may think that any attempt to rehabilitate the Turkish Monarchy is useless.

Edinburgh, January 25th.

A CONSTANT READER.

Great Britain and the United States.

SIR.—I praise your moderation, and that of your Press generally, in treating of our war scare. It was sprung upon us by a *coup d'état* forced upon our President by his political enemies. They talked war, trusting to his good offices to keep their talk from setting fire to anything. He but tossed back the ball they flung, not knowing it was a bomb-shell, perhaps, or, if he did, trusting in the power he held to avert the consequences.

Let us have a permanent Council of Conciliation now, to keep the peace, which it is so important to the whole world should be kept, between Britain and America. Meanwhile, let us trust in Cleveland, who is the only tiger-tamer we have.

It wouldn't be amiss, however, to buy up one of the Venezuelan Governments, and settle the boundary to suit yourselves.

I confess that the explosion which followed Cleveland's Message surprised me. I was not aware how far our four years of civil war had flung us back into barbarism. One or two generations more may be required to get us forward to the point where the rebellion found us. Please bear with us if you can. Private warfare in Britain did not cease until one or more British gentlemen put up with insults and refused to challenge. Some one nation must do likewise if public wars are to cease. Who could better afford to set the example than your great people?

But I am not very sure that it would have much effect on our 'jingoes,' of whom the best that can be said is that they don't know enough to behave themselves, and that they can most easily be taught that war is an evil to be shunned, not courted, by undergoing its horrors as they have never done before, save those of the South, in the holy war against slavery.

I submit the above simply as a hint. If the evil thing does happen, I will pray that the beating we shall probably get in our unprepared condition may be sanctified to our spiritual welfare.

89, Madison-avenue, New York

W. J. FLAGG.

[We cordially reciprocate the kindly sentiments of our correspondent. There must be no thought of war. Any reasonable concession on our part, or on the part of the United States, or on the part of both, should be made cheerfully, so as to cement friendship, make war impossible, and thus disappoint the Devil.—ED. 'LIGHT.']

Mr. Oxley and 'Lucifer.'

SIR.—In the absence of Mr. Mead, I should like to correct, or rather to supplement, a statement made by Mr. Oxley in your last issue. He states, in his letter relating to a remark about himself published in 'Lucifer,' that he wrote to Mr. Mead, but received no reply. This is not quite correct. A note was sent to him, stating that Mr. Mead was away, and that the letter would be handed to him on his return. Mr. Oxley has omitted to mention this fact, so that his remarks are somewhat out of place.

A. M. GLASS.

SOCIETY WORK.

NORTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WELLINGTON HALL, UPPER-STREET.—Last Sunday evening Mrs. Stanley gave an eloquent address, which was listened to by a full and attentive audience. Next Sunday Mr. Ballantine, at 6.45 p.m. Discussion and questions every Wednesday evening, at 8 o'clock: Mr. Jones, conductor.—A. M. R.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—On Sunday last our greatly-respected president, Dr. Reynolds, delivered a deeply interesting lecture on mediumship to a full hall. His remarks were greatly appreciated, and the lecture throughout was highly instructive. Mrs. Findley, a trance medium, also kindly gave us a charming address from her controls; so that altogether we had a very pleasant evening. Mr. W. E. Long will occupy our platform next Sunday, and Mr. and Mrs. Blanchett will be the mediums for next Friday, at 8 p.m.—THOS. MCCALLUM.

WELCOME HALL, 218, JUBILEE-STREET, MILLS END, E.—On Sunday last Miss Marsh, the gifted medium, was once more the means of drawing a large crowd to our hall, which was packed by people anxious to know something of Spiritualism. After a short introductory address by the chairman, Miss Marsh's

control described friends and relations of those present. Names were given in most instances and were all recognised. Miss Marsh was heartily congratulated on the success of her great labour in the cause. Our first collection was taken in aid of the library, and was liberally responded to. Sunday, February 2nd, Mr. Ronald Brailey, trance medium. Thursday, February 6th, public meeting. Mr. Marsh earnestly appeals for books on behalf of the library.—E. FLINT, Secretary.

CARDIFF PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, ST. JOHN'S HALL.—On the 26th inst., Mr. E. G. Sadler gave an able address upon 'The World's Theologies, and their Points of Sympathy.' Alluding to the too common error of confounding religion, which is universal and old as creation, with theology, which is merely its outward expression, and is limited to certain peoples and epochs in the world's history, the speaker very lucidly showed that all religious systems which have had any power in shaping the religious life of mankind are in sympathy upon certain fundamental points, as the existence of God; the immortality of the soul; happiness or misery as the result of good or evil deeds, &c. So far as these are concerned, most of the great theologies may be said to be in practical agreement; but to these principles of natural religion each of the world's theologies has added certain individual and localised tenets for the observance of its followers; as the deification of its own especial founder, the exclusive possession of the truth in its own sacred writings, &c., &c.; and it is just these latter tenets which are responsible for the religious conflict and persecution of the past. Spiritualism, by its consistent reliance upon the phenomena of life and being, and the unvarying operation of natural laws as being the only true revelation of Nature's God, combines more harmoniously than has any other system the elements of universal religion. Speaker next Sunday evening, Mr. W. J. Williams.—E. A.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday last Mrs. Green, of Heywood, received a hearty welcome from a large audience. The address, entitled, 'Do Spirits Live after the Change called Death?' was full of deep earnestness and feeling, and the lady's remarks carried great weight by reason of their manifest sincerity and truthfulness. Mrs. Green gave eleven clairvoyant descriptions most lucidly and with that due regard to detail which enabled most of those to whom they were addressed at once to call to mind the spirit friend described. Eight descriptions were pronounced quite correct, and the three which were not recognised were given with such vividness and decision that, should memory serve, we feel sure they will also be recognised. We think it only just to our mediumistic friends to say that it is quite a common thing for people to call to mind clairvoyant descriptions a week, and sometimes a fortnight, after they have been given. The chairman and officers of the Marylebone Association can bear witness to this fact, which might be said to add to the evidential value of the descriptions thus recognised, as the inability to remember on the part of the recipient of the description precludes, to a large extent, the possibility of these clairvoyant descriptions being but mind-reading on the part of the sensitive. Next Sunday, February 2nd, second meeting with Mrs. Green, address and clairvoyance.—L. H.

SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL.—The celebration of our anniversary last Sunday was all that could be desired. We had quite a gathering of the clans. Friends came from all parts of London to bid us God-speed. In the morning Mrs. Weedemeyer's guides gave clairvoyance and medical advice, and also practical assistance by magnetising, with good results. The guides of Mrs. Bliss gave consolation and delight to a crowded audience in the afternoon. All the spirit people who were described were recognised and messages were given which brought more than conviction to the friends who had been anxiously longing to know that they still have the same loving interest in their welfare. The conditions of the hall were exceptionally good and success came as a natural result. After an invocation by Mr. Brenchley, Mr. Long opened the evening meeting by giving a brief *resumé* of the year's work. Mr. Brenchley then gave normal clairvoyance very successfully. Our old friend Mr. Veitch, who was one of the first Peckham pioneers, then addressed us in his usual earnest way. His remarks were pithy and encouraging to all, showing that the worth of Spiritualism rests upon the comfort it brings to each individual. Mr. Cooper, from the Marylebone Society, favoured us with cheerful and encouraging words. Mrs. Bliss and Mr. Brenchley followed. Mrs. Banks in her usual effective way sang 'The Gift.' Mr. Brown sang 'The Holy City,' which was thoroughly appreciated. The hall was overcrowded, everyone was pleased with the day's doings, and our collection amounted to £5 7s. 6d. We heartily thank all who assisted. Next Sunday, Mr. Vango, psychometry.—A. E. B.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

SEVERAL letters are necessarily held over till next week.

'POETRY.'—Will our poetic friends in mercy spare us? They are showering upon us their rhymed effusions—some good, some bad, and some indifferent—in such bewildering profusion that we can print none of them, because we dare not undertake the very invidious task of selection.