

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

Mr. Page Hopps's October Sermons are even better than the very good and nutritive food for thought that we have come to expect from him. Is not this a true thought, and is it not something of a pleasant surprise to get it in this form? Why should I say so? Mr. Hopps, of all our teachers, is least inclined to irreverent depreciation of the great work of social reform that Jesus Christ did amongst men. But it is pleasant to think of a mistaken notion being put right, and of a misused word being fitly applied:—

"It is well worth noticing that healing, of one kind or another, occupied a very considerable place in the life of Jesus. Symbol or fact, it is all the same. It was well said of Him that 'He went about doing good.' He seldom preached, in our sense of that word; but He never seemed to cease His Heavenly work of healing, soothing, saving. In a very real and very practical sense He was the Saviour."

What, again, can a preacher say more true and more necessary, as teaching men the way in which they should go in these troublous times, than this?—

"We live in exciting times, exciting times in business, in politics, in science, in religion. A spirit of daring is abroad to-day, the like of which the world has hardly ever known. When, before, did men think so freely, even to the very summoning of God to their judgment bar? When, before, were men of all classes so resolute in having their own way? When, before, was each man so self-contained, so personal, so independent of his fellows, so entirely engaged in the struggle for life, and for his own hand? When, before, did the spirit of questioning, of self-assertion, of self-reliance, so endanger the spirit of reverence, faith, and trust? Business life, nay, the very struggle to live at all, is, for thousands, all absorbing. Our swollen cities, multiplying on every hand (upon the growth of which we so unwisely congratulate ourselves) are creating new problems and new audacities. Science, men tell us, is going to prove that God never created man, and that man is only like a moth or an autumn leaf,—as destined to death as they.

"Such times are not times for losing our hold of the Unseen Hand—for taking our feet from the true 'Rock of Ages'—for deserting Zion, and for entering no more the chambers where the child may find the Father, and the soul cast anchor in the haven beyond the storm."

"This new fashion of unbelief is often hard to bear; and many a time, while the cold sleet of agnosticism pelts in our faces, we are forced to cry:—

"Come, through the prate of foolish words,
The science with no God behind;—
Through all the pangs of untuned chords,
Speak wisdom to my longing mind.

"Through all the fears that haunt us now,
Of what hath been, or may befall,
Come down and talk with me, for Thou
Canst tell me all about them all,"

It is. But do our teachers and masters sufficiently realise that the age is a transition age: that everything is in a fluidic state: that we are living in the very making of a new order of things? The "cold sleet of agnosticism" has replaced the white heat of dogmatism because men think now, and do not regard thought about what most concerns them as wicked. It is no paradox to say that the frigid zone in which religious thought of the best order now flourishes is one in which the fires of Smithfield and the furnaces of the Inquisition could not conceivably find a place. If the new belief—legitimate and righteous development of the old—is not yet formulated, it is because the time is not ripe. It is in process of making. There is no greater mistake than to regard the present state of things as in any way final or typical of what is to be. Men of science will tell us the same story of themselves. A man with heavy scientific appendages to his name may be, outside of his own subject, less educated than his possibly unknown neighbour. Within his own sphere even he may be a dry recorder of facts which have had for him no real educational value. It is only now and then that a man arises who sheds on the unintelligent but painstaking work of his fellows the illumination that comes from an intellect that can place facts in their setting, and interpret them on a principle that floods them with light and makes them of real value. Material is being gathered on all sides, but the age waits for the men of interpretative mind.

It is much the same with regard to the problems of politics and sociology. We have violent proposals; a seething discontent that every now and then bubbles over, when that great patient ass, the British public, gives a convulsive struggle. But all the problems are in process of solution, and none of us is wise enough to say what special form the solution will take. The world is engaged in guessing at the answers to a series of conundrums, and at the same time of gradually working out the solution of a series of problems. It is not from such an age that anything final is to be expected. The theories of one day are chased by the experience of the next. The wise man is he who knows his own ignorance and is willing to experiment on the ignorance of his neighbour, and see if, perchance, it be not so dense as his own. The fool is the know-all, who is enwrapped in an impermeable fog of self-complacency, "wise in his own conceit." Out of it all will come—*must* come—a tremendous advance in true knowledge. For all this seething and bubbling of the great pot means life, energy, and all that is the reverse of stagnation and mouldiness of thought. It is better that we canvass everything, from the existence and action of a Supreme Being downwards, than that we go to sleep and drowse our soul's life away.

A correspondent sends me the following clipping and letter. He had previously asked a similar question, and I had replied that I did not think it worth while to enter on any discussion of the questions involved.

"The Spiritualists have popped up at last, and are having their say about the murders. A woman stated to the Cardiff police on

Saturday that she had held a séance and summoned the spirit of Elizabeth Stride, which obligingly gave a description of her murderer. The spirit even furnished the name and address of the 'monster.' At some séances at Primrose Hill the spirit of Mrs. Nicholls was induced to give an exhaustive description of the man by whom she was done to death. The inventory has been obviously compiled from the statements that have appeared in the newspapers. The Spiritualists, in common with everybody else who has not seen him, swear by a dark foreigner in a soft hat."

"DEAR MR. EDITOR,—Notwithstanding your reply, I enclose this cutting, and would ask you again whether 'LIGHT' should not give some advice or guidance in this matter.

"If these people are doing wrong from a Spiritualist point of view, ought they not to be told of it?"

I am still of opinion that no good end can be served by the discussion of the hideous crimes which have recently been perpetrated. I do not believe that any of us can throw light on such events from an occult source except under conditions which are not and will not be furnished. I opine that clairvoyance might help, but any clairvoyant who should offer aid to the police would run risk of being locked up. As to the communications made at circles where there is no connection between the occurrences and the people present I regard them as of very dubious value. You cannot "summon the spirit of Elizabeth Stride" or anyone else with whom you are not in close *rapport*. If you are in closest *rapport*, it by no means follows that the evocation will succeed. And the evocation never ought to be made. These communications are on the face of them valueless; and to say so much by no means involves denial of their extra-mundane origin. I do strongly think that the time has come when we should recognise the patent fact that we are dealing with beings who are not omniscient as regards our world; that some of them are less progressed than ourselves; and that the most advanced of them are the last to claim a knowledge of mundane matters. Certainly they would not play the rôle of detective, and would tell us that it was no part of their business to save us from the trouble of using our own brains.

What manner of intelligence is that supposed to be which can give us information as to such events as these murders? By all signs that we can judge from, it is a limited intelligence not long released from the body, and displaying powers of mind considerably less than those of many people still amongst us. By what process of reasoning is it demonstrated that a liberated spirit acquires at death a scope of knowledge which enables him to answer all inquiries and solve all mysteries? I might go on to inquire further how it happens that, having (on that hypothesis) this store of wisdom and knowledge at command, he contrives so often to talk such egregious nonsense. But I do not press that query. It may conceivably be as much the fault of the questioner as of the questioned. A little thought will lead us to the conviction that even if we could certainly come into relations with a first-class detective in the world of spirit, it by no means follows that he would lay his ghostly hands on the Whitechapel murderer. A little more thought will convince us that such an interference with the law and order of this world is neither to be expected nor desired.

These lines, written by "Belle Bush" in the *Banner of Light*, are old, but they bear repeating:—

"I count myself the faithful friend
Of every child of earth;
I dare not say of one who lives,
He hath ignoble birth.
For on the brow of every one,
Though dark that brow may be,
I trace the signet seal of God
In his humanity.

"Few are the hearts that dream as yet,
Of Love's entrancing grace,
For only to the pure in heart
Doth she unveil her face—
Only to such doth she appear,
In her divinity—
An Angel that would shed her light
On all humanity.

"Oh, souls that think, can ye not read
The signs that mark the times?
Can ye not hear from far and near
The mellow, echoing chimes
Of spirit bells, sweet spirit bells,
Rung in the upper air
By unseen hands of angel bands
And loved ones waiting there—

"Waiting for us to catch the strains
Of love's inspiring songs,
That flow in rapturous melodies
From Heaven's harmonious throngs;
Sweet strains which, heard but once, would still
The stormiest waves of strife
That ever woke to strew their wrecks
On the wild shores of life?"

Like everything else in this age of shams, true Love and Purity have suffered adulteration, and we need to be reminded that it is "the pure in heart" who "see God."

KEATS A MEDIUM.

BY MRS. A. J. PENNY.

Writing about him Lord Houghton says: "In Keats the originality in the use of his scanty materials, his expansion of them, and above all, his field of diction and expression, extending so far beyond his knowledge of literature, are quite inexplicable by any of the ordinary processes of mental education. If his classical learning had been deeper, his seizure of the full spirit of Grecian beauty would have been less surprising; if his English reading had been more extensive, his inexhaustible vocabulary of picturesque and mimetic words could more easily be accounted for; but here is a surgeon's apprentice, with the ordinary culture of the middle classes, rivalling in æsthetic perceptions of antique life and thought, the most careful scholars of his time and country, and reproducing these impressions in a phraseology as complete and unconventional as if he had mastered the whole history and the frequent variations of the English tongue, and elaborated a mode of utterance commensurate with his vast ideas."* Long before I read these words I had been convinced that the exceeding beauty of Keats's poetry could only be accounted for by the now well ascertained facts of mediumistic transmission; and a little comment of his own in one of his letters, regarding himself, strengthened the impression. "When I am in a room with people, if I am free from speculating on creations of my own brain, then not myself goes home to myself but the identity of every one in the room begins to press upon me, so that I am in a very little time annihilated." That is to say, he was so open to influx from other spirits—even those in bonds of matter—that he involuntarily took on their conditions. How much more open must such a nature have been to spirits who can approach unperceived and ply the mind with appropriate stimulus for carrying out tastes or wishes of their own! That this is the process going on, more or less, with every one of us, no one who holds Swedenborg to be a reliable witness can question. We are wont to assume that mediumship is *more* when discrepancy between the powers of the transmitter and the product transmitted is most striking, when, for example, untaught men and women utter intricacies of scientific lore; and no doubt vacancy of mind may leave greater freedom of control to the unseen teachers; but with the long-proved law of like to like to reckon upon surely we must believe this to be only one variety of mediumship, and that even those powerful brains which seem least open to influence may owe great gifts to kindred helpers beyond ken. Every will is reduced to passivity by sleep, and while the will is quiescent the mind may be as pervious to thoughts induced, as any one made subject to mesmeric control; its own prevailing tendencies attracting that influence.

In deference to the general reader, I put this supposition hypothetically; but the writings of L. C. de St. Martin† have long

* *Life and Letters of John Keats*, p. 331.

† "L'homme n'ayant pas la pensée à lui il reçoit chaque jour des pensées vives et lumineuses," &c.—St. Martin's *Tableau Naturel*, p. 170, Part I.

"Les mobiles de sa pensée n'étant pas à lui, il ne peut trouver ces mobiles que dans une source intelligente, qui ait des rapports avec son être; sans cela, ces mobiles n'ayant aucune action sur lui, le germe de sa pensée demeurerait sans réaction, et par conséquent sans effet."—*Ibid.*, p. 14, Part I.

"Man not having thought at his own command receives daily vivid and luminous thoughts."

"The springs of his thought not being at his own disposal, he can only find these in an intelligent source which has *rappports* with his own being, for without that, these springs having no action brought to bear upon them, the germ of his thought would remain without reaction and consequently without effect."

trained me to believe that thoughts are given to us: though while accepting his assertions on this point, I have always added to it a commentary of my own, that seeing we are spirits, though still disguised by our "coats of skin," we also must give thoughts to other spirits out of these coats as well as in—not to those from whom we receive our best, for influx from a higher spiritual level, Swedenborg affirms, can be given, while from a lower level it cannot be reflected: the ultimate degree can receive it from the spiritual, and the spiritual from the celestial, but that order can as little be reversed as the flow of a river from its springhead. Though he enlarges most on the constant influence of spirits unseen upon man while in the body, his "Diary" contains many glancing lights upon what man quite unconsciously effects with them. In Vol. I., par. 842, he says: "It can be known both generally and specifically by what spirits another spirit is led, but he cannot know it himself; in like manner, also, a spirit, as such, can be led by man, as I have sometimes abundantly experienced." Again, when speaking (Vol. II., par. 1753) of the illusory visions which spirits produce for men, he adds: "Similar things exist with spirits, inasmuch as they may be induced by spirits from man's imagination," and at par. 1853, "Whatever there is in the phantasy of man comes also into the phantasy of spirits, and they are persuaded that the fact is so and so."

This, however, is a side issue; the point I am hoping to make good is that Keats received from spirits beautiful inspirations, which it was not possible for him then to give. I think no words could better describe the reciprocal influence of spirits in and out of the flesh than these from the same inexhaustible repertory of spirit lore from which I have just quoted. "Being remitted into a proper state it was shown me," Swedenborg writes (No. 4337), "how the case is with the spirits that are with man. They know no otherwise than that they are the man himself, as was abundantly evinced from my experience in regard to the spirits which were with me. Consequently they think no otherwise than the man thinks; but there is thence a sphere of thought and affection, which was shown me, and in which other spirits are. While in this sphere they speak and are affected variously according to their own state and the nature of the sphere; wherefore such spirits flock about a man according to his quality, and remain in his sphere, making it more intense or changing it, and exciting it with the man by correspondence. This is done by the spirits that are with the man; for man cannot live without spirits adjoined to him who would fain be men themselves. Such as the sphere is such are the spirits, whence it appears what kind of spirits are with those who think of nothing else and are affected by nothing else than cupidities, hatreds, and revenges." This, of course, is equally true of those who think habitually of lovely and poetic objects; and a dominant taste must, according to Swedenborg, at once enforce and reinforce itself among and by means of "adjoined" spirits. How often our modes of speech are wiser than our habits of thought, unawares expressing truths not yet perceived. To say a person is in good or bad spirits, using the plural number, is surely apart from this truth a singularly misfitting phrase. And what a master key it is for opening locks at which metaphysicians have fumbled for centuries!

Take, for one, the marvels of sudden conversion in the case of very irreligious people. Swedenborg emphatically assures us that the inmost of any spirit is "inaccessible to every influx and agency but the Lord's, the Life." Let but that secret abyss be opened by Divine love and a strong persuasion induced in the man's mind—the centre magnet of his own spiritual sphere—and all his habitual associates may be displaced by a heat and light intolerable to them; or, short of this, some strong, good inflowing spirits, sometimes even a weariness of old pleasures, may disperse one set and attract another. (Let me commend to any reader interested in this question of influx these passages in the *Spiritual Diary*: No. 720, Vol. I.; Nos. 1776, 1840, and 1841, Vol. II.; Nos. 3332, 4114, 4257, Vol. III.)

If the poetry of Keats had not convinced me that he was a very powerful medium, the following extract from one of his letters to a sister-in-law would have removed any further doubt. Mr. Sidney Colvin, when introducing it last August to the readers of *Macmillan*, calls it "characteristically both strong and weak." But the thoughts here expressed strike me as being so wonderfully in advance of his day that I cannot regard them as the outcome of his own unassisted musings. There is crudeness of expression, no doubt, and one feels that the word

identity as he uses it here is but a makeshift; and if *soul* was not used in such a variety of senses by different thinkers at the present time, one would like to restrict it to a clearer definition (*I*, faithful to Boehme, can only understand it as the focus of the interacting seven spirits of Eternal Nature whereby the spirit attains manifestation), but in a jumble of tentative speculations like this to find so many glints of recondite truth shining out—truth which in the earlier part of this century could hardly have reached him by outer eye or ear—offers, it seems to me, proof positive that Keats was a mouthpiece for intelligence which far outshone his own. If I follow his meaning at all correctly, I think its main stress bears upon a mystery which the late Mrs. Kingsford has worded with the profound lucidity that distinguishes both her doctrine and her style. In Lecture V., p. 125, of *The Perfect Way*, she said: "Spirit is essential and perfect in itself, having neither beginning nor end. Soul is secondary and perfected, being begotten of spirit. . . . The essential principle of personality—that which constitutes personality in its highest sense—is consciousness, is spirit. . . . But this primary principle, being naked essence, could not be separated off into individuals unless contained and limited by a secondary principle," &c., &c.

This idea is surely what Keats was impressed with when he wrote:—

"The common cognomen of the world among the misguided and superstitious is 'A Vale of Tears,' from which we are to be redeemed by a certain arbitrary interposition of God and taken to Heaven. What a little circumscribed straitened notion! Call the world if you please 'the vale of soul-making.' Then you will find out the use of the world. (I am speaking now in the highest terms for human nature, admitting it to be immortal, which I will here take for granted for the purpose of showing a thought which has struck me concerning it.) I say soul-making. Souls are distinguished from an intelligence. There may be intelligences or sparks of the divinity in millions—but they are not souls till they acquire identities, till each one is personally itself. Intelligences are atoms of perception—they know and they see and they are pure, in short, they are God. How, then, are souls to be made? How, then, are these sparks which are God to have identity given them—so as ever to possess a bliss peculiar to each one's existence? How but by the medium of a world like this? This point I sincerely wish to consider because I think it a grander system of salvation than the Christian religion—or rather it is a system of spirit creation.

"This is effected by three grand materials acting the one upon the other for a series of years—these three materials are the *intelligence*, the *human heart* as distinguished from intelligence or mind, and the *world* or *elemental space* suited for the proper action of mind and heart on each other for the purpose of forming the *soul* or *intelligence destined to possess the sense of identity*.

"I can scarcely express what I dimly perceive—and yet I think I perceive it; that you may judge the more clearly I will put it in the most homely form possible. I will call the world a school instituted for the purpose of teaching little children to read. I will call the *human heart* the *horn-book* read in that school, and I will call the child able to read the soul made from that school and its horn-book. Do you not see how necessary a world of pains and troubles is to school an intelligence and make it a soul? a place where the heart must feel and suffer in a thousand divers ways. Not merely is the heart a horn-book, it is the mind's Bible, it is the mind's experience, it is the text from which the mind or intelligence sucks (*sic*) its identity. As various as the lives of men are—so various become their souls, and thus does God make individual beings, souls, identical souls of the sparks of His own essence. This appears to me a faint sketch of a system of salvation which does not offend our reason and humanity. I am convinced that many difficulties which Christians labour under would vanish before it; there is one which even now strikes me—the salvation of children. In them the spark, or intelligence, returns to God without any identity, it having had no time to learn of and be altered by the heart, or seat of the human passions. . . . If what I have said should not be plain enough, as I fear it may not be, I will put you in the place where I began this series of thoughts. I mean I began by seeing how man was formed by circumstances, and what are circumstances but touchstones of the heart? and what are touchstones but provings of his heart, but fortifiers or alterers of his nature, and what is his altered nature but his soul? and what was his soul before it came into the world and had these provings and alterations and perfectionings? An intelligence without identity—and how is this identity to be made? Through the medium of the heart—and how is the heart to become this medium, but in a world of circumstances?"

—Written in 1819.

PROFESSOR BLACKIE'S DEFINITION OF ORTHODOXY.—"Putting into a finite shape everything we know of an infinite—which is nothing."

FLOWERS FROM THE INNER LIFE.

FROM THE PAPERS OF THE LATE MRS. HOWITT WATTS.

"And, 'Oh,' they cried, 'from full hands scatter ye
Unwithering lilies'; and so saying, cast
Flowers overhead, and round them on all sides."

—DANTE'S *Purgatory*.

All beautiful unfoldings of spiritual powers deserve a record. Flowers as amongst the most exquisite creations of God have ever been associated especially with Heaven, possibly because their apparent value is rather to touch the dormant emotion of beauty within the soul of humanity than to minister unto physical needs; to awaken by their beauty and grace the imagination to the contemplation of the Spirit of Beauty and Grace Divine through whom these flowers exist.

"Our outward life requires them not,
Then wherefore had they birth?
To minister delight to man,
To beautify the earth,
To comfort man—to whisper hope
Whene'er his faith is dim;
For Who so careth for the flowers
Will much more care for him,"

says Mary Howitt in her *Use of Flowers*. The sentiment of these lines referring to the flowers of earth may be equally felt with reference to "the use of flowers" by our spirit friends and to the continual floral manifestations from the inner life. The spirits, whose whole language is a language of symbolism, evidently employ flowers as the language of the affections, and the flower-language of the East would, equally with many other Oriental customs, seem to be inspiration from the spiritual spheres. Even as in such nations a nosegay or garland will be deciphered as a "love-letter," each flower and bud and leaf having thus its word, or, combined together, their message to convey love from heart to heart; so would it appear that in like manner do our departed ones still seek continuously to hold visible communication with us by this graceful, fragrant, and, to those who can interpret its meaning, this eloquent, floral language.

In the visions of the clear-seer; in the inspirations of spiritual art—from the merest scribble of the undeveloped message given through the first movement of the hand automatically guided, to the exquisite beauty of a weird "invention" from the pencil of William Blake, or in the completed spiritual splendour of one of the sad, fair, purgatorial women in the pictures of Gabriel Rossetti, crowned and garlanded and smothered as it were with flowers; in the verbal or written communications from the spirits; in their presentments in spirit-photography; in the physical manifestations at séances when flowers—earthly crowns—are brought by spirit power into closed rooms, flowers still wet with dew, and showered down by hands invisible; and in the still more rare and marvellous cases as recorded by Mrs. Hardinge Britten in the words of Mr. Oxley, of flowers growing, budding, and blossoming through spirit power in the midst of the spirit circle,—everywhere may be recognised the employment of this floral language of the spirit-world. "Flowers as symbols of the affections," it was once said by a spirit, "bind together the spheres of spirit-land" (or condition or state). It would even appear as though the expression, "The garden of the soul," might possibly be no mere metaphor, but a spiritual verity; as though the cultivation of varied degrees of love and wisdom virtually produced as their outcome and as their symbols and signs—flowers; the spiritual product of these soul-conditions being these mystical "roses and lilies" so frequently referred to by Böhme, and which Swedenborg tells us are,—with their congeners—according to the law of correspondence, to be classified under the two heads of Love and Wisdom—that is, of affection or intelligence.

Let us now consider some instances of floral manifestations, ancient and modern.

The author of the *Ladies of the Reformation*, at p. 397, gives the following account of the

Presentation of a Crown of Flowers by an Angel in a Dream to Marguerite de Valois, Queen of France.

"One night in the autumn or winter of 1549, while the Queen was asleep, a beautiful female, clothed in white and bearing in her hand a crown composed of every kind of flowers, appeared to her in a dream. The apparition approached her, and held up before her the crown, uttering at the same time the word 'Quickly.' The Queen was deeply impressed by the vision, as being a supernatural intimation of her speedy removal, and the crown as a symbol of eternal life. She made preparations for her death, which occurred on December 21st,

1549. It should be stated that her health had been for some time failing."

A young French lady was speaking the other day to the writer about the beautiful flowers which upon certain occasions she had beheld in dreams. "Is it not singular," she said, "that upon two occasions of the deaths of persons very dear to me, I have had in a dream presented to me a basket of the most exquisite flowers?" The same lady inquired whether the writer had ever heard of people with *their eyes still closed*, yet fully conscious of external things, upon waking, *seeing the most exquisite flowers*. This was an experience of great delight to her, but filling her with amazement. She had not heard of the faculty of "the inner vision" being developed in many sensitive persons. This young lady was unaware of the existence of a floral spiritual language; neither was she able to associate the vision of these flowers with any event about to happen. There would appear to be a certain analogy between the presentation of the crown to Marguerite de Valois and the basket of flowers in the French lady's dream.

The writer is acquainted with another sensitive, who when occasionally she is brought into contact in the business of life with persons whose spiritual spheres are injurious to her—(she is painfully, even abnormally sensitive to the aura around individuals)—perceives with wide open eyes and in the daylight suddenly a certain flower hovering in the air between herself and the persons with whom she is conversing. This flower always, when thus beheld, appears to ward off the noxious influence.

Spiritual Roses.

The husband of a friend of the writer was accustomed for many years to behold spiritual objects, especially upon first waking in the early morning. Flowers were frequently thus beheld by him. Still in his usual health, although far advanced in life, a short time previously to his decease this gentleman beheld one morning a shower of red roses marvellously beautiful.

This paper shall be concluded with the experiences of a seeress in a far-off age and in a far-off land, nevertheless in entire conformity with the familiar experiences of our modern sensitives. In the vision of this Chinese lady we are instructed to recognise the union which exists between spirits almost disembodied, and spirits still embodied in fleshly forms; also to perceive how flowers in the land of spirit appear in connection with the thoughts of beings, whether in or out of the flesh, ever as the spiritual outcome of thought or affection.

Colonel Yule, in his learned notes to his delightful translation of the *Book of Ser Marco Polo, the Venetian*, gives the following narrative from Schott's essay on "Buddhism in Upper Asia and China." (Berlin: Academy of Sciences, 1846.) Here we have

A Vision of Flowers in the Land of Enlightenment.

"In the years *Yuan-yen* of the Sung (A.D. 1086-1093) a pious matron, with her two servants, lived entirely for the Land of Enlightenment. One of the maids said one day to her companion, 'To-night I shall pass over to the realm of Amita.' The same night a balsamic odour filled the house, and the maid died without any preceding illness. On the following day the surviving maid said to the lady, 'Yesterday, my deceased companion appeared to me in a dream, and said, "Thanks to the persevering exhortations of our mistress, I am become a partaker of Paradise, and my blessedness is past all expression in words."' The matron replied, 'If she will appear to me also, then I will believe what you say.' Next night the deceased appeared to her, and saluted her with respect. The lady asked, 'May I for once visit the Land of Enlightenment?' 'Yes,' answered the blessed soul, 'thou hast only to follow thy handmaiden.' The lady followed her in her dream, and soon beheld a lake of immeasurable expanse, overspread with innumerable red and white lotus flowers of various sizes, some blooming, some fading. She asked what the flowers might signify. The maiden replied, 'These are all connected with human beings on earth whose thoughts are turned to the Land of Enlightenment. The very first longing after the Paradise of Amita produces a flower in the Celestial Lake, and this becomes daily larger and more glorious, as the self-improvement of the person whom it represents advances; in the contrary case, it loses in glory and fades away.' The matron desired to know the name of an enlightened one who reposed on one of the flowers, clad in waving and wondrously glittering raiment. Her whilom maiden answered, 'That is Yang Kee,' Then asked she the name of another and she answered, 'That is Mahn.' When the matron awoke she sent to inquire for Yang Kee and Mahn. The first was already departed; the other still alive and well. And then the lady learned that the soul of one who advances in holiness and never turns back may be already a dweller in the Land of Enlightenment, even though the body still sojourns in this transitory world."

JOTTINGS.

Mr. and Mrs. Morse celebrated on the 2nd the eighteenth anniversary of their wedding. Our good wishes.

The *Financial News* is of opinion that the "existence of a gentleman of the name of Mullins," who divines the presence of water, should be taken note of. Mr. Stears, whose letter to us is interesting, is credited in the same paper with a convincing demonstration of the powers of the rod in the presence of the "North of Ireland Association of Gas Managers." The practical *Financial News* sees money in it. It is inclined to believe that much may be done by means of "the magnetic and other forces of nature." Quite so.

The *Banner of Light* gives the following, which is worth citing as showing, in common with many similar stories, the clear sight that often precedes death. The narrative is signed "A. S. Hayward":—

"A Presbyterian minister was employed to officiate at the funeral of my sister—employed for obvious reasons that the family are conversant with. I said to him before the exercises, 'We are largely Spiritualists in our belief of a future life,' and that minister performed his duties as well as any Spiritualistic medium could have done on the occasion; he cited a case where the mother of a little child passed on in childbirth; afterwards the father married again, and they had a mutual understanding between them that the child should not know but that the latter wife was its mother; the child lived until some ten years of age, and knew not to the contrary, and supposed the last wife was its mother. Just before its departure to spirit life, the child looked up to its heretofore supposed mother and said: 'Are you my real mother?' 'Of course I am,' replied the wife; 'why do you ask me this question?' She replied: 'There is a lady standing by my side who says *she* is my mother.' Comments are unnecessary in this case; coming as they did from a sectarian minister."

The *Soul* (Boston, U.S.A.) recalls to memory Mr. W. S. Rowley, of Cleveland, Ohio, the medium for what has been called spirit-telegraphy. We have not heard of him, nor of the book which the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* announced as nearly ready long ago.

Mr. Rowley got communications with ease on board a yacht at Onset, and Mr. Whitlock states that there can be no question of deception in the matter.

Mr. Whitlock at Onset Camp said some plain words that need saying. Here is a sample: "The time has come for the spirit world, we think, to let us know when they propose to transfigure the medium and bring her out of the cabinet; and if they are going to put her in an unpleasant position, they should at least say what they are doing; this is simple justice to the medium and sitters, and every medium has a right, we hold, to expect that."

Gerald Massey writes in the current number of the *National Review* on "Myth and Totemism," a subject on which he speaks with authority and is entitled to be heard.

We have from the secretary notice of the formation of the Hampshire Psychical Society, the president of which is Lieut.-Colonel G. L. Le M. Taylor, of the Royal Military College, Farnborough. Vice-presidents, Professor W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E., Royal College of Science, Dublin; A. Conan Doyle, M.D., Southsea; and the Hon. Percy Wyndham, Clouds, Salisbury. Hon. treasurer and secretary, the Rev. E. Smith, 7, Portland-place, Southampton. Local secretary for Southsea, A. Conan Doyle, M.D. The objects of the Society are the investigation of various rare and obscure mental phenomena, such as those in which our readers are interested. Communications should be addressed to the secretary, from whom the Society's prospectus may be obtained.

True Philosophy, by S. F. A. Caulfield (Hatchard's), purports to be a reply to *Scientific Religion* from an evangelical and orthodox standpoint. The author is "by no means prepared to deny the assertion that the female element is represented, in some inscrutable way, in the Divine Godhead." Nor is he "prepared to dispute the theory of a dual nature in our own persons." The object of the author is "to vindicate the three distinctive doctrines of the Christian faith, *i.e.*, the Trinity, the Godhead of Christ, and the Atonement." It does not fall within our scope to follow him into discussion of these mysteries. But it seems to us not a little misleading to use Mr. Laurence Oliphant's book as a peg on which to hang remarks

wholly devoid of originality. The arguments have been all stated over and over again, and we fail to see the need for re-stating them.

It seems that the editor of *Blackwood* was not taken in by his contributor, but accepted the sensational story, "Aut Diabolus aut Nihil," "with the full knowledge that the writer had already published an account of the matter in America." Very confiding of the editor of *Blackwood*.

We have received a copy of *Revista de Estudios Psicológicos* (Barcelona), containing an abstract of the first International Congress on Spiritualism held at Barcelona on September 9th and 10th. The attendance reached about 2,000 on each day. The records of the proceedings are to be issued in book form, and a medal, commemorative of the event, is to be struck.

If our *confrère*, the editor of the *Revista*, will kindly send us an early copy of this record we will try to place the results before our readers with as little delay as possible.

The adhesions of Spiritualist societies were large:—Four societies from Madrid, thirteen from Saragossa, four from Barcelona, two from Alicante, one from Seville, five from Granada, and some fifty others from Spain made a goodly muster-roll.

Then we have ten societies from South America and one from North America, sixteen from France, one from Brussels, one from Rome, one from Gibraltar, one from Bucharest, and one from Odessa.

The honorary president of the Conference was Don José Maria Fernandez, one of the most indefatigable exponents of Spiritualism that Spain possesses, and among the acting presidents was our friend M. Leymaire. Among the vice-presidents was Dr. Hoffman, of the International Academy of Rome.

M. Leymaire addressed the Conference in French. His speech was repeatedly interrupted by manifestations of warm interest, appreciation, and applause.

It will be news to some English people, who do not realise the vast ramifications of Spiritualism, that the Spanish societies alone are so numerous. Most desirable would it be if the international scheme proposed by the London Spiritualist Alliance could be carried into effect at the next year's Paris Conference. All this mass of potential energy wants organising.

It is curious to note in this connection, that no attempt was made to approach representatives of English Spiritualism. We are a pile of sticks, and we need binding together. We want a "religion."

Here is a curious instance of our ignorance of all that goes on in Spiritualism, with which we ought to be acquainted. How many of us ever heard of half these papers?

Revue Spirite (Paris); *Le Spiritisme* (Paris); *La Vie Posthume* (Marseilles); *La Religion Laïque* (Nantes); *Le Messager* (Liege); *Le Moniteur* (Brussels); *Luz* (Rome); *Il Publico* (Turin); *Il Corriere Spiritico* (Florence); *Boletín Paz y Progreso* (Orizaba, Mexico); *La Luz del Alma* (Buenos Ayres); *La Verité* (Buenos Ayres); *El Criterio Espiritista* (Madrid); *Revista de Estudios Psicológicos* (Barcelona); *La Revelación* (Alicante); *La Luz del Porvenir* (Gracia, Barcelona); *El Faro Espiritista* (Tarrasa); *Lumen* (S. Martin de Provencals, Barcelona); *La Solidaridad* (Saragossa); *La Luz del Cristianismo* (Alcalá la Real); *El Iris de Paz* (Huesca); *La Caridad* (Santa Cruz de Tenerife); *La Buena Nueva* (Santi Espiritu, Cuba); *La Nueva Alianza* (Cienfuegos, Cuba); *La Alborada* (Sagua la Grande, Cuba); *El Progreso* (Mayagüez, Puertico Rico).

The plain fact is that this Spiritualism of ours is growing and spreading and permeating thought the world over. And this it is doing in spite of human knavery and folly.

We notice, by-the-way, that the *Revista de Estudios Psicológicos* is hardly posted up to date in the matter of foreign journals.

It considers that the *Medium*, the *Spiritual Magazine*, and the *Psychological Review* (Surrey) represent English Spiritualism. No information could be more curious than this which specifies two magazines of which not even a ghost remains, and a paper which is devoted to sociology and food reform principally, and only incidentally to a fast dying type of Spiritualism.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
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CHARING CROSS, W.C.

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Light :

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

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20th, 1888.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though, in other respects good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

THE CHURCH CONGRESS.

The meeting of the British Association at Bath, the exposure of life as it is in Whitechapel, and the Church Congress at Manchester, form a sequence of events provocative of very serious thought. That between the gatherings of the two rival cults there should have occurred such evidence of unmitigated savagery in our midst is striking when one remembers that each cult, both the scientific and the Christian, claims to have elevated mankind out of the debased state of whose continued existence the East End and other constantly repeated brutalities are the just as constantly-repeated exponents.

That both cults have failed is but too clear, yet as the claim of science to be a great factor of the product called civilisation is of a different and on the whole of a less direct nature than that of the Church, and as the Church is for the moment the more prominent, it may be of some interest to gather, as far as one may from the published reports of the doings at Manchester, how the failure on the Church's part has come about.

After an eloquent discourse on the first day of the Congress, a discourse which courageously upheld the existence of the spiritual part of man, in the face of the results of recent research, the Archbishop of York, referring to the divisions constantly present in the Church, said:—

"It was true that the Church was still divided, was still torn by internal strife; but God had greatly blessed them, and it could not be through their disorder that blessings came, but in spite of that disorder. What, then, was their real strength? It was that men abided in Christ, and He in them, and those who were one with Him received from Him life and courage and love for souls. Men ought to walk even as He walked. They had received Christ, and He was in them as he lived."

"God had greatly blessed them!" Where is the evidence? Let the President of the Congress, the Bishop of Manchester, answer:—

"Another great fact that, owing to its difficulty and urgency, needs careful and repeated consideration—is the present increase of crippling poverty in civilised Europe, side by side with the growth of wealth and luxury. This is said to be a poor man's question, and, no doubt, in one sense it is. The lowest stratum of the poor is the locus of most of the suffering and degradation which this grinding poverty produces. If, however, it be meant that this is exclusively a poor man's question, I must demur to such a statement. Not only does the spread of destitution create and intensify a discontent which threatens the very existence of civilised society, but its effects darken for every sensitive man the whole heaven of social life."

Is this the blessing which the Christian Church has procured from Heaven? The very existence of civilised society is threatened, and the Archbishop talks of blessing, and of the real strength got by abiding in Christ; "Men ought to walk even as He walked." Alas! so they ought, but the very turn of the expression shows that to his Grace of York the words he used were *words* and *words* only. Had not the Church lost its spirituality we should scarcely have had the Bishop of one of the most prosperous dioceses in England talking of the grinding poverty, of which the outcome will probably be the total disruption of society.

That the clergy are in a woeful plight is pretty evident from the same Bishop's remarks on the inspiration question.

"First, there is the question how far it may be wise and right for the clergy to make known the well-established results of Biblical criticism in their ordinary teaching."

So says my lord of Manchester, and though one may admire the scholarly way in which he followed up this weighty observation, one cannot wonder very much at the failure of a Church which dares not face the truth—of a Church where such a query as the foregoing is possible.

But perhaps the culminating point of feebleness was reached by the Rev. Dr. Wace, Principal of King's College, London. Said this divine:—

"There is belief which is founded on the assurances of another person and upon our trust in him. This sort of belief is not opinion, but faith, and it is this which has been the greatest force in creating religions, and through them in moulding civilisations. What made the Mahomedan world? Trust and faith in the declarations and assurances of Mahomed. And what made the Christian world? Trust and faith in the declarations and assurances of Jesus Christ and His Apostles. This is not mere believing about things; it is believing a man and believing in a man. Now the point of importance for the present argument is that the chief articles of the Christian creed are directly dependent on personal assurances and personal declarations, and that our acceptance of them depends on personal trust. Why do we believe that Jesus Christ redeemed all mankind? Because He said so. There is no other ultimate ground for it. The matter is not one open to the observation of our faculties, and, as a matter of science, we are not in a position to know it. . . . Who can dream of knowing, as a matter of science, that He is the Judge of quick and dead? But He speaks Himself, in the Sermon on the Mount, of that day when men will plead before Him, and when He will decide their fate; and Christians include in their creed a belief in that statement respecting the unseen and future world. But if this be so, for a man to urge as an escape from this article of belief that he has no means of a scientific knowledge of the unseen world or of the future is irrelevant."

If this is all the evidence there is of a future state, surely the agnostic—hated of Dr. Wace—is more reasonable than the Church itself. That *miracles*, as Dr. Wace thinks, are a proof of Divinity, shows but limited knowledge on his part.

As if indeed to emphasise this fatuous position, and to show how the Church is in many quarters blind beyond conception, the Rev. Dr. Randall, of Handsworth Rectory, who had quarrelled with Dr. Farrar at the Congress over the question of ultimate restitution, writing to the *Times* anent this quarrel, says:—

"What Dr. Pusey condemns, and what all faithful members of the Catholic Church do and must condemn, is theorising on the future state, and advancing theories and idle speculations as authorised doctrine. In this Dr. Farrar excels. Now I repeat, as I said at the Congress, that of all subjects this allows least room for speculation. We should not, as we cannot, be 'wise above that which is written.' No one but the 'Lord of the dead and of the living' has had it in his power to reveal the secrets of 'the prison house' beyond the grave; and when men presume to do so, or to put their own glosses on the plain words of Christ, we have only 'hazy and malarious exhalations of disordered minds,' or 'crude theories of modern assurance,' as I said at the Congress."

Comment on this is needless.

We have sought, and sought in vain, in the reported sermons and addresses delivered at this Congress, for the

slightest evidence of true spirituality, except perhaps in that of Mr. Balfour. Such language as that of the Primate of the Northern Province sounds well, no doubt, for it is rhythmic, but that is all. Ill at ease as the Church clearly is, inefficacious as it has proved itself to be against the spread of crime and poverty, it still talks of the blessing of God being upon it, and asks for faith on assertion so ill supported that no reasonable jury would receive it.

The spiritual life that goes on concurrently with this life has been ignored by the Church—in the term Church, we would include all the sects of Christians, from the Pope to Mr. Spurgeon,—and while its members have quarrelled over creeds, the enemy who is in our midst has been invisible to its blind eyes.

The unseen is to the Church, especially to the Protestant Church, a thing of the future, not of the present, a certain something to come, after a tremendous ceremonial. That the danger is *now* and real is not understood by it, except as to its surface appearances. A present fight with a present devil is as unintelligible to the Church as a present fight with present poverty would be to Lord Rothschild.

π

THEOSOPHIC TEACHINGS.

Most of the readers of "LIGHT," who may also have paid attention to current Theosophical writings, will have recognised in the allusions of "Eothen" to this subject the misrepresentations of a man who fails to understand what he attacks. But for the benefit of others it may be worth while to explain in a few words the theory of the soul's progress after death, which is really the outcome of those studies the Theosophical Society has been instrumental in promoting.

It has never been supposed by Occultists that "at death the individual becomes practically two individuals," one going to Paradise or Devachan, the other "fitting about for a short time on earth," and then becoming extinct.

Consciousness is not separable, but a human entity may be capable of going through very different phases of consciousness—even in this life. At death the affinities set up in the consciousness of the Ego by its predominant leanings during life will guide its destiny. There comes a struggle between the higher and lower principles of the man's nature, and that struggle—in other words, the automatic assertion of conflicting affinities—may have various results. In a fairly spiritualised nature the affinities with Devachan will soon conquer; in a nature of a very earth-like character, in which, nevertheless, there may be *some* spiritual affinities (*i.e.*, some traces of generous, unselfish emotion, and of love), the spiritual will still conquer, but very much more slowly: a nature, or let us say a personality, almost entirely untouched all through life by the slightest leaven of goodness, may still have a latent spark of potential spirituality brought over from some former incarnation, and will thus eventually, before its next re-birth, just touch the confines of the Devachanic plane or state of consciousness. But how are we to interpret the phrases, "soon" or "much more slowly"? It is impossible to make out a time-table for the progress of a soul through the spheres; but common intelligence ought to show that the phrases are almost infinitely elastic both ways; and the reflection disposes of the absurd notion that the higher principles of every man, good, bad, and indifferent, "go off at once" to Devachan, or are supposed to do so by persons who adopt Theosophic teaching.

So much, I think, "Eothen" might understand, and leave off talking about doctrines being "grotesque or immoral" which are quite free from such attributes until they pass through the refracting medium of his interpretations. But in connection with the conception before us a subtle possibility of nature may be discerned more or less

distinctly by earnest students of the doctrine I have briefly quoted. According to the *Philosophy of the Unconscious* and to the acute inferences of Baron du Prel (as well as to the observations of Occultists), the true Ego of a man even during life may go through experiences or phases of consciousness of which the physical brain retains no traces whatever—of which it remembers nothing in ordinary waking life. This apparent duality of consciousness must, I think, for most of us, at present be a mystery, and "duality of consciousness," which will serve for the moment as a ticket to put upon the mystery and to identify the conception for the purposes of argument and speculation, may be really a bad expression; but, at all events, there is a possibility of nature here that commands attention. Now, it is clear that this possibility, if it applies to the bodily period of life, may apply also to disembodied periods. Therefore there may be a period when one aspect of a man's consciousness (after death) is turned towards the Devachanic state, and another aspect towards the lower conditions of the astral plane that are in contact with earth life. That being so, the Ego, as an individuality, is clearly held back. It cannot progress into higher Devachanic conditions—and within the limits of the Devachanic condition there is scope for immense varieties of condition (though all these, by the hypothesis, are conditions of great beatitude)—until the lower affinities are vanquished by exhaustion. It is only, however, by reasoning faculties that would be better employed with a foot rule or a pair of scales than with metaphysics, that the duality of consciousness can be regarded as a splitting up of one individual into two individuals.

Above all things, of course, the teachings of Theosophy constitute the philosophy of cause and effect, and the conservation of energy on all planes of nature. If anyone imagines he has detected in any Theosophic utterance a view of things which seems to involve incoherence or illogicality or injustice, direct or relative, he may rest quite assured that (if the utterance be genuine) he has not understood it aright. A. P. SINNETT.

DEATH OF LORD MOUNT-TEMPLE.

We deeply regret to announce the death, at Broadlands, on the 16th inst., of Lord Mount-Temple, so well known to many of our readers. He was born in 1811, and distinguished himself during a long life by his devotion to philanthropy and the amelioration of the condition of the poor in every form. He had a keen interest in Spiritualism, and at Broadlands, his beautiful seat in Hampshire, were gathered from time to time some of the most remarkable assemblages of literary, scientific, and eminent men of all forms of thought that the present generation has witnessed.

PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, LONDON, OCTOBER 14TH.—On Sunday last, Mr. Dale spoke on the need of co-operative work in the establishment upon earth of the Father's Kingdom. Wednesdays and Sundays at 3.30.—COR.

THE MINOR HALL, VICTORIA HALLS, ARCHER-STREET, BAYSWATER, will be opened on Sunday next for services and lectures for the advancement of the principles of Spiritualism morning at 11.15 a.m., evening at seven, when an address of addresses will be delivered.—W. A. DRAKE.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—We had large and attentive audiences on Sunday last to hear Mr. R. J. Lees, who opened a discussion on "Who was Jesus?" at the morning meeting, and in the evening spoke on "The Gospel according to Spiritualism." Mr. Robert Harper will occupy our platform on Sunday next at eleven and seven.—W. E. LONG.

THE LONDON OCCULT SOCIETY, 357, EDGWARE-ROAD (near Edgware-road Station. Omnibuses pass the door).—Last Sunday evening "1st. M.B. (Lond.)" gave the second of his course of lectures, which is increasing in interest. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m. he will deliver the last of the course on Soul Evolution, entitled "Soul Evolution to its Highest Development in Man," preceded by music, including selection from *Faust*, and inspirational song, "A Dream of a Lost Love." I shall read some interesting cases from *Phantasms of the Living*.—F. W. READ, Hon. Sec., 33, Henry-street, St. John's Wood, N.W.

GHOST STORIES IN "ALL THE YEAR ROUND."

The following article bearing the familiar initials of Mr. Howitt appeared in the *British Spiritual Telegraph* nearly thirty years since, viz., October 15th, 1859. It is interesting enough to merit preservation from its reference to Charles Dickens, if for no other reason

"Ghost Stories in 'All the Year Round.'"

"Our readers have probably noticed some very striking stories of apparitions which have lately appeared in *All the Year Round*, Charles Dickens' new periodical. The appearance of such stories in this vehicle is the more remarkable, because Mr. Dickens, on various occasions, has had a pleasant fling at Spiritualism in that periodical of its predecessor *Household Words*. The writer of these stories has, however, endeavoured to explain the appearance of apparitions by their being merely the 'suggested thoughts' of some person at a distance, especially in the case of such apparitions presenting themselves to persons as intimations of the decease of the individuals represented. The fact of a *thought* being able to assume visible shape, colour, often substance, to act and talk, would be, indeed, a most unexampled psychological phenomenon, if it could be established, as a *fact*. This miracle of miracles, this easy mode of explaining one difficulty by a far greater, seems to have struck our friend, Mr. William Howitt, amusingly, and he addressed the following note to Mr. Dickens:—

"Highgate, September 2nd, 1859.

"MY DEAR SIR,—What interesting but inconclusive papers,—so far as the theorising goes—those are in *All the Year Round*, attempting to account for ghosts by thought-suggesting. What a mess a clever man can make out of a plain subject! For a person dying three or four, or thirteen or fourteen thousand miles off, to present an idea of himself as living, moving, talking, and not imaginary talk, but real; an *inward* idea presented to *outward* senses bodily, is, to my fancy, a thousand times more wonderful and inexplicable than that of the spirit of the person presenting itself to the party concerned. But still more when ghosts appear that nobody knows anything about,—appear again and again, for a long course of years, in the same form and the same place, and to all sorts of people; foretell real events, &c.,—who suggests this extraordinary, permanent, preserving and masterful thought?

"Poor Meux the Brewer has a house at Cheshunt, now, in consequence, shut up, and presenting a most ghostly aspect, out of which every tenant for these twenty years or more, has been driven by one of those queer, rampant, gallivanting thoughts. Mrs. Charles Kean's sister and husband, Mr. and Mrs. Chapman, amongst the rest. What a capital thing for that property it would be if your ingenious theorist could suggest a thought by which this "suggested thought," commonly regarded as a very triumphant ghost, could be just wafted away from it. If the mischievous suggester, wherever he may be in the universe, could be found out, and persuaded to suggest another thought, namely, that there is no ghost there, Mr. Proctor, of Willington, near Newcastle-on-Tyne, whose "haunted house" I once visited, and who has been permanently driven out of it by one of these troublesome thoughts, would be equally obliged to him.

"Some of these stories read to me dreadfully like novels, or as real ghost stories, *adapted*, and buttered with theory, to make them go down with an unbelieving public. But really, what trouble these anti-ghost people put themselves to now-a-days in beating round the bush instead of walking into it in a business-like, common-sense way, and starting the hare.

"Whoever sets himself to resolve all the ghosts that have appeared in this blessed world from Job's apparition which made his hair stand on end, or Brutus' Evil Genius, down to that of Captain Wheatcroft which, the other day, compelled the War Office to correct the date of his death, before Lucknow, in the official Return, into thought-suggestions, will leave Don Quixote and his Windmills amazingly far behind.

"Why should ghosts be allowed to range unquestioned all through the Bible and New Testament, and yet not be allowed to tread on one other spot of all this wide world? If there *were* ghosts in King Saul's or in the Apostle Paul or Peter's times, why not in Charles Dickens' time? A rather tough question methinks.

"Are you aware that there has existed for years a society jocularly called the Ghost Club, consisting of a number of Cambridge men who have taken high honours there, and now hold high posts in this work-a-day world, 'cute fellows and much considered, whose object has been thoroughly to sift this question of apparitions, and to test the cases produced by every test of logical and metaphysical inquiry, by the principles of the severest legal and historical evidence; and that, after examining a vast number of such statements, the conclusion they have come to is, that "the ghosts have it"? That this question is as absolutely proved and settled in the affirmative, as any human question can be? Have you seen their circular? I have; and seen too many of their names: one or more on the episcopal bench; some of them at the head of famous public schools; others clergymen in the Metropolis; and others diplomatists. They could furnish some cases to your theorist of rather gutta-percha digestion.

"In conclusion, I suggest this thought, that, with kind regards to your family circle,—I am, yours faithfully,

"Charles Dickens, Esq.

WILLIAM HOWITT."

"As the correspondence was a merely private and friendly one, we do not feel ourselves at liberty to publish Mr. Dickens' answer, but we may state that he assured Mr. Howitt that the cases given in *All the Year Round*, were the genuine cases, in no degree altered or garnished. That he has heard the narrator relate them for years as perfectly true; and what is more, that the narrator has himself lived in a famous 'Haunted House,' in Kent, which is shut up now, or was the other day. That he himself has always taken a great interest in these matters, but requires evidence such as he has not yet met with; and that when he 'thinks of the amount of misery and injustice that constantly obtains in this world, which a word from the departed dead person in question could set right, he would not believe—could not believe—in the War Office ghost without overwhelming evidence.'

"Such evidence we know exists in this case. The feeling of Mr. Dickens, however, is that which has puzzled many minds before his: but the same feeling carried forward would as fully justify us in denying a deity or a providence, as a ghost. God is Love, yet God leaves millions to suffering and misery in this life, when a word or a sign from Him would set all right! Shall we say, therefore, that God does not exist, or is not good, because He gives not this word, or this sign? The appearance of apparitions to some and not to others, in some cases and not in others which seem far more important, is like God's providence altogether, one of the mysteries of existence. But facts in a thousand directions in this world put the most plausible theories to the rout, and on the subject of apparitions, such a host of facts exist as we cannot get rid of without pulling about our ears all historic evidence whatever. The only *wonder* to those who have gone much into the subject, is to find that there is scarcely a family in any country which has not its ghost sitting in its household circle, or among its memories or experiences, and it is pleasant to find these stubborn facts bursting up to daylight every now and then, even in our most sceptical literature: and clever men, rather than bury them in oblivion, tricking them out with attractive theories, and introducing them at large in that particular attire. Men who are ashamed of *naked* facts, but shake hands with them energetically in a good fashionable suit of their own selection. It is pleasant to see that that bugbear which the atheistic philosophers of the last generation infected men's minds with, that of being weak and imbecile if they believed in spiritual agencies, is, though with difficulty, dying out—that people begin to enfranchise themselves from the slavery of materialistic dogmatism; that they will dare again to follow Bacon, and draw their conclusions from *facts*, however they may be scouted by the theories of the day;—that the rational courage, without which no man can become truly wise, that of placing *fact* above opinion, is gradually growing: for till this is the case, the Christian Church, which has permitted the infidels to wound it through the sides of its faith in the Divine and perpetual life of Christianity, in the eternal unity of Spirit whether in the flesh or out of it, never can resume her full and positive power. Till then, Christianity suffers deadly paralysis, and looks back to the days of the Apostles and the Early Church as a time of miracle and wonder, instead of recognising the fact that such miracle and wonder are the eternal heritage of the Church, and are as much of the present and the future as of the past; that grand development of the laws of the universe through Christ, the Creator, which is essentially Christianity as distinguished from Paganism, or mere Theism; and is inherited and laid hold of by faith.

"W. H."

CORRECTION.—In Mr. Maitland's letter, p. 509, col. 1, line 6 from bottom, for "immergence" read "emergence."

A CONFERENCE OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS will be held on Thursday next, at 8 p.m., at Copenhagen Hall, Copenhagen-street, near King's Cross, to consider, and if possible decide on, a plan for a Federation of London Spiritualists, having for its objects the opening up of new centres of spiritual work; assisting and developing meetings already in existence; and a systematic distribution of explanatory literature throughout the Metropolis. Friends in sympathy with the above, and desirous of assisting the same, are requested to communicate with the Hon. Sec. (*pro tem.*), W. E. LONG, 99, Hill-street, Peckham.

REVENGE is a momentary triumph, of which the satisfaction dies at once, and is succeeded by remorse; whereas forgiveness, which is the noblest of all revenges, entails a perpetual pleasure. It was well said by a Roman Emperor that he wished to put an end to all his enemies by converting them into friends.

CORRESPONDENCE.

History and Allegory.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—After careful perusal of Mr. Maitland's letter in "LIGHT" of October 13th, I conclude that he does not recognise a true relation—an essential, and, so to speak, objective connection—between the historical element (so far as that is admitted by him) in the Bible "allegories," and the spiritual verities which they represent. The Swedenborgian doctrine of Correspondence, as I conceive it, postulates such a relation, the historical and phenomenal being the "ultimation" of the spiritual, and its natural manifestation; whereas Mr. Maitland seems to regard the former as merely casual coincidence, adapted and accommodated subjectively to allegorical purposes by spiritual teachers. Now (to answer a question of Mr. Maitland's), I should certainly not call any physical event on earth, such as the Crucifixion, an "ultimation" of that part of the drama of the soul to which it may be made to refer, unless it were a connected part of the whole drama, brought into fulfilment and representation on the physical plane or "degree." Mr. Maitland's view, that the Gospel narrative, in its completeness, is unhistoric parable, built about a nucleus of fact, was for a very long time my own,* though I do not think I could ever have agreed with him that recognition of historic truth is loss of spiritual significance. For a mere revelation, indeed, historical truth is not required, and Mr. Maitland regards the whole record exclusively in its aspect as revelation. But the question is, was there not a spiritual process, at once represented or revealed, and "ultimated," in or through the events recorded, and by the Personality concerning which they are alleged? And that brings me to another point. Mr. Maitland says he is not clear as to the value I attach to the expression, "Head of Humanity," in the letter to which his own is a reply. Now I conceive the aim of religion to be the organic integration of mankind, its redemption from chaotic individualism, in a grand body of spiritual consciousness, which the doctrine of Correspondence (much older, really, than Swedenborg's exposition of it) teaches us to represent in analogy with the unity, structure, and functions of the microcosmic individual. An original centre of organic formation and consciousness is thus an—or rather *the*—essential part of this conception; and, in short, if we get our physiology right, we have an unerring clue to spiritual aims and processes. It is, I believe, a physiological fact that the head is the organ first developed in the foetal construction; nor can we, in the spiritual analogue, think otherwise than that the unity of organic consciousness is first represented, and afterwards imparted, by and from a central point, into whose life and consciousness we are all to come, our individuality thenceforth consisting, not in self-centred interest and will, but in functional subordination and participation. It seems to me to be the error of some mystics that they ignore the Christ transcendent in favour of the Christ immanent, as if there were some antagonism between the two conceptions, instead of the latter being beautifully and scientifically dependent on the former. Because Christendom has substituted the earthly and historical manifestation of its Head for that which it revealed and represented, an awakening spirituality, striving for a truer thought, and recognising the latent divinity in every human soul, has confused the divinity of the head with the divinity of the members, and is for the present satisfied to find the spiritual analogue of the Gospel history, or the spiritual interpretation of the Christ-parable, in the nature and process of individual regeneration. But, in truth, we cannot at all conceive the resurrection of consciousness from the mystical death—which is the entire loss of our individual will—except as the replacement of that will by one of universal quality; nor is that possible, except under condition of attachment to an already developed will of that quality. Our divinity is a receptive capacity for divine life—"divine" life being the health of spiritual solidarity in an universal organism. The "Head" of Humanity is thus the first organic product, a mediating agency for life to all the rest, and the Ruler of the whole body.

We have thus, according to this conception, the Christ individualised, in advance of the corporate integration which is Him in us and us in Him, and there is no regeneration for us

without *Recapitulation*, since our regeneration is just the consciousness of that organic unity for which the head, as centre of organic consciousness, is indispensable. But the necessity of an earthly, temporal, historical manifestation, or "ultimation," of this individualised Divine Humanity depends on the nature of the organic process by which our corporate integration has to be established. On this part of the subject, however, I must ask leave to postpone what I may have to offer by way of suggestion, as also some other observations called for by Mr. Maitland's letter, to the next number of "LIGHT."

C. C. M.

Spiritualism the Basis of Religions.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have been a searcher into Spiritualism for more than fifteen years, and have long been convinced of the truth of certain discoveries. They are mainly these: "First, that man continues to live after the death of the body. Secondly, that, under certain conditions (imperfectly at present understood), he can reveal his existence and communicate with his fellow men on earth." Some advanced thinkers may say that there are no great discoveries there. Yet to me they are so: and although I am far from thinking that all else connected with Spiritualism is valueless, yet I fail to find, up to the present time, sufficiently solid ground, beyond these two facts, to build up any permanent theory. Man continues to live after his earth life has ceased, and in certain cases can and does manifest himself to his fellow man left behind. The question arises whether we can rely for certainty on the truthfulness of his communications. I think not. The communications are frequently false and misleading. We cannot always tell for certain who it is that communicates, and we are left to our unaided human reason, to distinguish between the truth and error of what we are told.* The tendency in all mediums, it appears to me, is gradually to put more and more confidence in the wisdom of their controls. One medium may believe that Socrates, another that Moses, a third that Shakespeare or Lord Bacon, controls him, and utters words of incalculable importance. In many cases the ideas so divulged are very common-place—mystic words with nothing in them. Gradually, however, the medium becomes impressed with the infallibility of his spirit-guide. Should the subject-matter be religion, the medium is on the high road to become a spiritual teacher. In our days, two religions, which now count thousands of converts, have sprung from spirit-teachings, namely, Mormonism and Shakerism. It is an open question with me, which I should much like to see discussed in your journal, in a friendly spirit, whether or not most religions do not owe their existence to spiritual communications. It is a fact capable of being corroborated by abundant evidence, that in most religions there can be found Spiritualists who are sustained in their different religious beliefs by communications through mediums with beings of another world. The Roman Catholic, Protestant, Mahomedan, Buddhist, with all their various sects, can find support in their several faiths through communications from the world of spirit. Now these religions are in many points antagonistic. They cannot all be true. But the question which I should like to see thoroughly discussed is: "Have not all known religions a spiritual basis? Have not all sprung originally from spirit communications, suitable to the needs, and accepted by the people to whom they were originally given?" The Bible is full of incidents which occurred through the instrumentality of spirits. The clairaudient mediumship of Samuel; "There was no open vision in these days." Again, Solomon writes: "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Then we have *writing mediumship*. If we turn to 1 Chron. xxviii. 12 we find this mediumship given to David. "All this," said David, "the Lord made me understand *in writing* by His hand upon me." Again, Elijah, four years after he had passed away, writes to Jehoram (2 Chron. xxi. 12): "And there came a writing to him from Elijah the prophet." Once more "*direct spirit writing*," "the tables of stone written with the finger of God." *Materialisation*:—At Belshazzar's feast the writing was accompanied by the "finger of a man's hand." "Jacob wrestled with a man." In Ezek. ii. 29 we find a materialised spirit "hold out a roll of a book" "written within and without." *Levitation of the human body*:—In Ezek. iii. 12-14, Ezekiel is "lifted up," and again, "The Spirit lifted me up, and brought me to the east gate of the Lord's House." *Spirit lights*:—Gen. xv. 17, "A smoking furnace and a burning lamp passed." In Exod. iii. 2

* I put it forward explicitly in a review of Overton's *Life of Law*, in the now extinct periodical *Our Times*, July, 1881.

* Precisely as we are in all things.—ED.

the angel appeared in a "flame of fire." The Israelites are guided by a pillar of fire. *Trances, visions, and direct spirit voices*:—Numerous instances of these may be verified by anyone desirous of so doing, from passages in the Bible. In the New Testament, particularly in the Book of Revelations, we may trace abundant evidence of the existence of Spiritualism. In a word, Spiritualism appears very like the key which unlocks these mysteries, but the same key fits the locks of all religions. May we not rightly conclude that they all, more or less, emanate from the same source?

Now for a long time man imagined that everything which came to him from the other world must be infallibly true. But is this so? We know now that it is not. Many of the communications through mediums are not only vapid, but sometimes are pernicious, and often false. There are few Spiritualists who could deny this. Whatever the reason may be, whether the fault lies in the mediums, his friends, or the control, the fact remains that spiritual communications are often quite unreliable. Should this be a matter of great surprise? Surely not. If spirits are, after all, only mortals passed away from earthly conditions, why should we expect them to be in the possession of all truth? Truth may be as far from their reach as it is from ours. Spiritualism appears an unreliable source of information on subjects apart from our human cognisance. May it not possibly be a law, that it is necessary to be an inhabitant of the spiritual world before we can grasp the information which that world can give us? It seems that we place ourselves at a disadvantage when we seek the highest knowledge from unknown powers. What we really require is guidance in this world. If mankind in the past had studied more closely the laws which regulate this world, instead of searching for the unknowable,* is it not reasonable to suppose that human science would have advanced more rapidly, and human happiness increased? There are to-day, social questions to be answered, where no spirit guidance can help us; they require human knowledge and human sympathy.† There are so many subjects here of interest that the spiritual subjects fade into insignificance. The spirit-world may be not so unlike this one, or it may be vastly different. Is it not wiser to let the mind rest, than to dream with the Mahomedan, who through spirit-guidance looks forward to a heaven of riot and sensualism, or with the Buddhist to a heaven of contemplation, culminating in absorption, or with certain of our own Churches to a heaven of separation, and all the ghastly phases of hell and suffering?

If the spirits who now speak with men, and have done so in the far off ages, do not agree in their accounts, but have suited their words to their hearers, is it not advisable to fall back on human reason, and refuse blindly‡ to accept their teaching? Spiritualism teaches us, and reason confirms the teaching, that life flows on in one continued stream beyond the grave, and that in certain cases the veil is uplifted and communication takes place between the two worlds. What else for certain can we learn?§

Christchurch, New Zealand.
August 13th, 1888.

E. M. CLISSOLD.

Theosophy and Eastern Philosophy.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—It is curious how your correspondent "Eothen" attributes to Theosophists the false deductions he himself has drawn from Eastern Philosophy, and then proceeds to quote Eliphas Lévi in support of his arguments. Indeed his acquaintance with the views of the former appears as superficial as his study of the books of the latter. His supposition that the real self of a man, the light of the Logos, that which neither does nor suffers, can be the perpetrator of murders and other crimes is certainly very curious. It is true that the lower personality remains in Kama Rupa until its gradual disintegration, but the point which "Eothen" has overlooked is the principle of consciousness, Manas, which after death adheres to both the upper and lower man, and is sometimes distinguished as the Higher and Lower Manas. This it is which suffers and enjoys. The state of Devachan is the realisation of such spiritual aspirations as were in life unsatisfied, or a pro-

* Yes. But should we not blame the people who ask foolish questions and are answered accordingly?—ED.

† Quite so: but are not the "spirits" human, and have they not as much sympathy without a body as men have with one?—ED.

‡ No spirit whose guidance should be accepted, demands blind acceptance of his teaching.—ED.

§ A great deal. But not by the method of asking foolish questions, that has too much obtained.—ED.

portionate enjoyment to balance the *undeserved* suffering of the last incarnation and so regain equilibrium; in fact, Devachan is as necessary to the individuality as sleep is to the personality. When these wants have been satisfied the individuality returns again to earth-life, to use a much-abused term, led by the insatiable Tanhas or desire for life, and finds by the natural law of attraction a body and environment, registering its past individual Karma, and affording generally all the features of the unbalanced Karma of its past personalities. "What can be more immoral than such a doctrine?" exclaims "Eothen." "Man is restrained from a wrong action by a dread of its consequences. . . . 'Theosophy' proposes to sweep away this one restraint." And yet the key-note of every ethical attempt, and, I may even say, of all the literature which has been published by members of the Theosophical Society, has ever been, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Or perhaps it is that "Eothen" has a weakness for the hell of Orthodoxy, and objects to Theosophists believing that the earth is the nearest approximation to that unknown quantity.

If "Eothen" had read Eliphas Lévi carefully, he would have discovered the *raison d'être* of such phenomena as the evocation of Apollonius, and that the Abbé himself distinctly shows in several places that the "shadow" was *not* the famous Apollonius himself. The instructions to the intending evocator to meditate long and earnestly on the life of the person to be called up, to study his biography and times, his clothing, habits, &c., would surely suggest to "Eothen" the real nature of such manifestations. Shells are undoubtedly dangerous things to meddle with, and one does not care to disturb the rest of a corpse; but to assume that the theory of shells professes to cover the whole ground of such phenomena, and then to saddle such an insufficient hypothesis on Theosophists as an article of belief, is a rash assumption.

October 13th, 1888.

Eos, F.T.S.

The Seance in the House of Carlyle. To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Your article of 22nd ult., dealing with the manifestations in Thomas Carlyle's old house before the representatives of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, should have been published in that journal as a counteractive to the influence which their article is likely to have had upon the public mind.

I think it would be to the advantage of the cause were an able pen to review articles such as these in the journals where they appear, and to state in language understandable by the average mind what is noteworthy in such manifestations and what is the explanation of so much that is unworthy of credence being mixed up with them.

The ridiculousness of minds like Carlyle and Beaconsfield, and others of note, shaping and expressing the drivel so often ascribed to them, is apt to obscure the fact that some organised beings have been present communicating, and thus the main point is quite missed by the public, and often by the sitters themselves. Hence I think it would serve a good purpose to enlighten the public mind as to how the false and the true come to be so mixed up. I think, too, that the sitters themselves are mostly to blame for the unseen intelligences making the false claims and statements they so often do.

Investigators who have the good of the science at heart should be above this kind of thing, and should sternly discourage what is so transparently false, rather waiting patiently for communications with friends if these find themselves favourably situated for granting such.

Glasgow, October 8th.

J. G. B.

A New Light of Mysticism.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I should like to assure Mr. Waite and your correspondent who has been so fortunate as to find truth by the intervention of his writings, that my recent remarks were actuated by no spirit of hostility to a writer whose uncompromising candour really calls for admiration, but whose position I had considered paradoxical.

I am glad to have elicited his explanation, for I have been by no means single in my opinion, and, as one of his readers, I shall now be better able to understand him. I must also ask leave to thank him for the numerous references he has kindly furnished on the significance of the term *Aeth.*

A TRUTHSEEKER.

Altruism.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Mrs. Oliphant has mentioned me; but I am only one of a number of persons in whose name I wish to say a few words.

She says that, hereafter, our life will be one of entire altruism. I say, with Nicholas Boulanger, that it is "idolatry" to try to live here as if we were already in the hereafter. And that "idolatry" is "witchcraft," i.e., wrong mesmeric relation.

According to Mrs. Oliphant's view (if I understand it), self-abnegation may be, not only *absolute and entire* (with which I agree) but *continuous*. She has a right to her opinion; but that is where I differ from her.

The magnetising organs (as I long ago pointed out in *The Message of Psychic Science*) are purely organs of self-sacrifice. Utter self-abnegation is the condition for receiving force from on high. Self-abnegation is the lungs and heart of the magnetic life. Now how do our lungs and heart act? By *rhythmic alternation of contrary motions*. The force given to us comes from the Eternal; but the recipient, man, is subject to time-al conditions; and the law of every time-al, or physical, organ is one of rhythmic sequence of opposite actions.

If Mrs. Oliphant will add to her studies a few months' experience in nursing the insane, she will know what I mean, perhaps. At present, I do not want to convince her; but only to make clear what our standpoint is. It is that utter self-abnegation is the expansion act of the moral lungs; and should be followed by a commensurate contraction act. Self-abnegation, not so compensated, has been described by Farrar (I think) as "Self-sacrifice gone mad in self-conceit." I understood him to allude specially to James Hinton; who, for years, preached exactly Mrs. Oliphant's doctrine. I was his secretary; and therefore know what can be said on his side. I know also that he lived to experience bitter self-condemnation for having led young people into the path of *continuous* altruism.

When *Sympneumata* first appeared I pointed out that this lack of the principle of steady rhythmic alternation is the lacuna which divides Mr. Oliphant from true Mosaism. Grady lays great stress on it, as the condition for sound inspiration. All the great teaching of the Odin-myths is saturated with the perception that a steady *pumping* action, a crisp resolute reversal of mental action, is the mark of the true prophet.

I do not wish to suggest anything disrespectful to Mr. Oliphant. Personally I have immense respect for his heroism. But truth is truth; and if it be true that God has made man a creature whose life-law is one of rhythmic reversal of action, those who have seen that truth will be guilty if they neglect to call attention to it.

MARY BOOLE.

The Divining Rod.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In your issue of the 6th is an article on the divining rod, by "M.A. (Oxon.)." After nineteen years' experience with the rod I can vouch for the truth of the power of divining, not only for finding water, but also for locating the exact position of gas-pipes under the roads. In your quotations from Dr. Raymond's lecture, part 7, it is said, "The application of the rod to the discovery of metals, coal, buried treasures, &c., has been proved to be chimerical." On this point I do not agree, as I have proved so often that metal can be found by the rod. I do not find any movement over coal, and have not tried for petroleum.

In the *Journal of Gas Lighting* for September 25th is an account of my showing the working of the divining-rod, at a meeting of the North of Ireland Gas Managers, held at Lisburn.

The power I believe to be animal electricity, as it does not last. Should any of your readers desire to know more on the subject I shall be glad to answer any questions. I think it was a pity the Government did not try the experiment in Egypt, when water was scarce.

125, Coltman-street, Hull.

JOHN STEARS.

October 11th, 1888.

[What is "animal electricity"?—ED.]

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Every time that I see attention drawn to the wonder of water springs being detected by the hazel fork of a "dowser" and mention is made of it in newspapers about as frequently as is the appearance of a sea-serpent—my thought recurs to

three entries in an old note-book which, ever since I made them in 1864, have served to pacify my own craving for the *reason* of the fact, by supplying hints of possible causation. On the chance of these notes serving other people equally inquisitive on this point, I give them here, just as they were copied, with no immediate context. Such inference as a reader's mind can take from them will, I think, be found without further comment.

"Justinian Kerner tried many experiments with (Christiana Kapplinger) one of his most sensitive patients, by placing in her hand twigs of different shrubs whilst she was in magnetic sleep. When she had held a twig of hazel-nut, she said, 'This shrub is the strongest means for relaxing magnetic connection; it has quite a peculiar susceptibility for magical forces. While you magnetised me as I held the little twig of it in my hand your current of electricity was very strong; it drew out all your power to itself.' . . . The nut tree does not attract magnetic power so strongly as the hazel-nut does." (From *Justinian Kerner's Geschichte*.)

"Susan L., a highly sensitive person, exclaimed while in a sleep-waking state that 'a shower of fine small sparks of fire' came from a hazel-wand which happened to be in my hand. She did not see this from ash or from fir, but invariably saw it from every piece of hazel or from whitethorn that was brought near her. Subsequently eight other individuals were separately examined as to their susceptibilities to different kinds of wood. Each gave the same results, and saw the sparks of fire." . . . "The phenomena offered by certain somnambules are highly illustrative of the effects of water in certain diseased or susceptible states of the human system. Running water—a constantly changing series of crystalline molecules—perpetually discharges positive or negative odic force." (*Dr. Ashburner's Notes on Reichenbach's Researches*. No page or chapter noted in my extract book.)

Now assuming that the shower of sparks seen about the hazel-wand indicates positive electricity, or such polarisation of atoms as offers least resistance to the positive electricity of the hand, would not the constantly changing discharge of electricity in running water betray itself by its released negative odic force strongly attracting the positive above it? Very likely the question betrays my ignorance of such matters. I do but offer a guess.

October 10th, 1888.

A. J. PENNY.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Editor begs respectfully to intimate that he cannot undertake to return rejected MSS. If accompanied by stamps to pay postage in case of its being deemed unsuitable for publication, he will use reasonable care in re-posting any MS.

It will ensure despatch if all matter offered for publication is addressed to the Editor of "LIGHT," 16, Craven-street, Charing Cross, and not to any other name or address. Communications for the Manager should be sent separately.

Letters for publication should be as brief as is consistent with clearness, and be written on one side of the paper only. Those over a column in length are in danger of being crowded out by their length.

SEVERAL communications are unavoidably held over.

J. M. T.—Next week, if possible.

F. M. (Sutton).—We are afraid that both the style of your correspondent and his matter are more curious than anything else. We do not advise you to give much time to writing such communications.

MR. J. ROBINSON (88, High-street, Lee, S.E.) requests us to say that he will be glad to hear from "A Church of England Clergyman" in relation to his proposal recently made in "LIGHT." We beg to decline the other communication made in Mr. Robinson's letter.

A PAGAN EPITAPH.

In this marble buried lies
Beauty may enrich the skies,
And add light to Phœbus' eyes;
Sweeter than Aurora's air,
When she paints the lilies fair,
And gilds cowslips with her hair;
Chaster than the virgin spring,
Ere her blossoms she doth bring,
Or cause Philomel to sing.

If such goodness live 'mongst men,
Tell me it: I shall know then
She is come from Heaven again.—ANON.

THE best thing to give to your enemy is forgiveness; to an opponent, tolerance; to a friend, your heart; to your child, a good example; to a father, deference; to your mother, conduct that will make her proud of you; to yourself, respect; to all men, charity.—MRS. BALFOUR.

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

The following is a list of some eminent persons who, after personal investigation, have satisfied themselves of the reality of some of the phenomena generally known as Psychical or Spiritualistic.

N.B.—An asterisk is prefixed to those who have exchanged belief for knowledge.

SCIENCE.—The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President R.A.S.; W. Crookes, Fellow and Gold Medallist of the Royal Society; C. Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; A. R. Wallace, the eminent Naturalist; W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E., Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin; Dr. Lockhart Robertson; *Dr. J. Elliotson, F.R.S., sometime President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgial Society of London; *Professor de Morgan, sometime President of the Mathematical Society of London; *Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., sometime Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; *Dr. Ashburner *Mr. Rutter; *Dr. Herber* Mayo, F.R.S., &c., &c.

*Professor F. Zöllner, of Leipzig, author of *Transcendental Physics*, &c.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig; Professor W. E. Weber, of Göttingen; Professor Hoffman of Würzburg; *Professor Perty, of Berne; Professors Wagner and *Butlerof, of Petersburg; *Professors Hare and Mapes, of U.S.A.; Dr. Robert Friese, of Breslau; M. Camille Flammarion, Astronomer, &c., &c.

LITERATURE.—The Earl of Dunraven; T. A. Trollope; S. C. Hall; Gerald Massey; Sir R. Burton; *Professor Cassal, LL.D.; *Lord Brougham; *Lord Lytton; *Lord Lyndhurst; *Archbishop Whately; *Dr. R. Chambers, F.R.S.E.; *W. M. Thackeray; *Nassau Senior; *George Thompson; *W. Howitt; *Serjeant Cox; *Mrs. Browning; Hon. Roden Noel, &c., &c.

Bishop Clarke, Rhode Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, U.S.A.; Professor W. Denton; Professor Alex. Wilder; Professor Hiram Corson; Professor George Bush; and twenty-four Judges and ex-Judges of the U.S. Courts; *Victor Hugo; Baron and Baroness Von Vay; *W. Lloyd Garrison, U.S.A.; *Hon. R. Dale Owen, U.S.A.; *Hon. J. W. Edmonds, U.S.A.; *Epes Sargent; *Baron du Potet; *Count A. de Gasparin; *Baron L. de Guldenstübbe, &c., &c.

SOCIAL POSITION.—H. I. H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H. R. H. the Prince of Solms; H. S. H. Prince Albrecht of Solms; *H. S. H. Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia; the Countess of Caithness and Duchesse de Pomar; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; M. Favre-Clavairoz, late Consul-General of France at Trieste; the late Emperors of *Russia and *France; Presidents *Thiers and *Lincoln, &c., &c.

WHAT IS SAID OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

J. H. FICHTE, THE GERMAN PHILOSOPHER AND AUTHOR.—“Notwithstanding my age (83) and my exemption from the controversies of the day, I feel it my duty to bear testimony to the great fact of Spiritualism. No one should keep silent.”

PROFESSOR DE MORGAN, PRESIDENT OF THE MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.—“I am perfectly convinced that I have both seen and heard, in a manner which should make unbelief impossible, things called spiritual, which cannot be taken by a rational being to be capable of explanation by imposture, coincidence, or mistake. So far I feel the ground firm under me.”

DR. ROBERT CHAMBERS.—“I have for many years known that these phenomena are real, as distinguished from impostures; and it is not of yesterday that I concluded they were calculated to explain much that has been doubtful in the past; and when fully accepted, revolutionise the whole frame of human opinion on many important matters.”—*Extract from a Letter to A. Russel Wallace.*

PROFESSOR HARE, EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.—“Far from abating my confidence in the inferences respecting the agencies of the spirits of deceased mortals, in the manifestations of which I have given an account in my work, I have, within the last nine months” (this was written in 1858), “had more striking evidences of that agency than those given in the work in question.”

PROFESSOR CHALLIS, THE LATE PLUMERIAN PROFESSOR OF ASTRONOMY AT CAMBRIDGE.—“I have been unable to resist the large amount of testimony to such facts, which has come from many independent sources, and from a vast number of witnesses. . . . In short, the testimony has been so abundant and contemporaneous, that either the facts must be admitted to be such as are reported, or the possibility of certifying facts by human testimony must be given up.”—*Clerical Journal*, June, 1862.

PROFESSORS TORNEBOM AND EDLAND, THE SWEDISH PHYSICISTS.—“Only those deny the reality of spirit phenomena who have never examined them, but profound study alone can explain them. We do not know where we may be led by the discovery of the cause of these, as it seems, trivial occurrences, or to what new spheres of Nature's kingdom they may open the way; but that they will bring forward important results is already made clear to us by the revelations of natural history in all ages.”—*Aftonblad* (Stockholm), October 30th, 1879.

PROFESSOR GREGORY, F.R.S.E.—“The essential question is this: What are the proofs of the agency of departed spirits? Although I cannot say that I yet feel the sure and firm conviction on this point which I feel on some others, I am bound to say that the higher phenomena, recorded by so many truthful and honourable men, appear to me to render the spiritual hypothesis almost certain. . . . I believe that if I could myself see the higher phenomena alluded to I should be satisfied, as are all those who have had the best means of judging the truth of the spiritual theory.”

LORD BROUGHAM.—“There is but one question I would ask the author, Is the Spiritualism of this work foreign to our materialistic, manufacturing age? No; for amidst the varieties of mind which divers circumstances produce are found those who cultivate man's highest faculties; to these the author addresses himself. But even in the most cloudless skies of scepticism I see a rain-cloud, if it be no bigger than a man's hand; it is modern Spiritualism.”—*Preface by Lord Brougham in "The Book of Nature."* By C. O. Groom Napier, F.C.S.

THE LONDON DIALECTICAL COMMITTEE reported: “1. That sounds of a very varied character, apparently proceeding from articles of furniture, the floor and walls of the room—the vibrations accompanying which sounds are often distinctly perceptible to the touch—occur, without being produced by muscular action or mechanical contrivance. 2. That movements of heavy bodies take place without mechanical

contrivance of any kind, or adequate exertion of muscular force on those present, and frequently without contact or connection with any person. 3. That these sounds and movements often occur at the time and in the manner asked for by persons present, and, by means of a simple code of signals, answer questions and spell out coherent communications.”

CROMWELL F. VARLEY, F.R.S.—“Twenty-five years ago I was a hard-headed unbeliever. . . . Spiritual phenomena, however, suddenly and quite unexpectedly, were soon after developed in my own family. . . . This led me to inquire and to try numerous experiments in such a way as to preclude, as much as circumstances would permit, the possibility of trickery and self-deception.” . . . He then details various phases of the phenomena which had come within the range of his personal experience, and continues: “Other and numerous phenomena have occurred, proving the existence (a) of forces unknown to science; (b) the power of instantly reading my thoughts; (c) the presence of some intelligence or intelligences controlling those powers. . . . That the phenomena occur there is overwhelming evidence, and it is too late to deny their existence.”

CAMILLE FLAMMARION, THE FRENCH ASTRONOMER, AND MEMBER OF THE ACADEMIE FRANCAISE.—“I do not hesitate to affirm my conviction, based on personal examination of the subject, that any scientific man who declares the phenomena denominated ‘magnetic,’ ‘somnambule,’ ‘mediumic,’ and others not yet explained by science to be ‘impossible,’ is one who speaks without knowing what he is talking about; and also any man accustomed, by his professional avocations, to scientific observation—provided that his mind be not biased by pre-conceived opinions, nor his mental vision blinded by that opposite kind of illusion, unhappily too common in the learned world, which consists in imagining that the laws of Nature are already known to us, and that everything which appears to overstep the limit of our present formulas is impossible—may acquire a radical and absolute certainty of the reality of the facts alluded to.”

ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE, F.G.S.—“My position, therefore, is that the phenomena of Spiritualism in their entirety do not require further confirmation. They are proved, quite as well as any facts are proved in other sciences, and it is not denial or quibbling that can disprove any of them, but only fresh facts and accurate deductions from those facts. When the opponents of Spiritualism can give a record of their researches approaching in duration and completeness to those of its advocates; and when they can discover and show in detail, either how the phenomena are produced or how the many sane and able men here referred to have been deluded into a coincident belief that they have witnessed them; and when they can prove the correctness of their theory by producing a like belief in a body of equally sane and able unbelievers—then, and not till then, will it be necessary for Spiritualists to produce fresh confirmation of facts which are, and always have been, sufficiently real and indisputable to satisfy any honest and persevering inquirer.”—*Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*

DR. LOCKHART ROBERTSON.—“The writer” (i.e., Dr. L. Robertson) “can now no more doubt the physical manifestations of so-called Spiritualism than he would any other fact, as, for example, the fall of the apple to the ground, of which his senses informed him. As stated above, there was no place or chance of any legerdemain, or fraud, in these physical manifestations. He is aware, even from recent experience, of the impossibility of convincing anyone, by a mere narrative of events apparently so out of harmony with all our knowledge of the laws which govern the physical world, and he places these facts on record rather as an act of justice due to those whose similar statements he had elsewhere doubted and denied, than with either the desire or hope of convincing others. Yet he cannot doubt the ultimate recognition of facts of the truth of which he is so thoroughly convinced. Admit these physical manifestations, and a strange and wide world of research is opened to our inquiry. This field is new to the materialist mind of the last two centuries, which even in the writings of divines of the English Church, doubts and denies all spiritual manifestations and agencies, be they good or evil.”—From a letter by Dr. Lockhart Robertson, published in the *Dialectical Society's Report on Spiritualism*, p. 24.

NASSAU WILLIAM SENIOR.—“No one can doubt that phenomena like these (Phrenology, Homœopathy, and Mesmerism) deserve to be observed, recorded, and arranged; and whether we call by the name of mesmerism, or by any other name, the science which proposes to do this, is a mere question of nomenclature. Among those who profess this science there may be careless observers, prejudiced recorders, and rash systematisers; their errors and defects may impede the progress of knowledge, but they will not stop it. And we have no doubt that, before the end of this century, the wonders which perplex almost equally those who accept and those who reject modern mesmerism will be distributed into defined classes, and found subject to ascertained laws—in other words, will become the subjects of a science.” These views will prepare us for the following statement, made in the *Spiritual Magazine*, 1864, p. 336: “We have only to add, as a further tribute to the attainments and honours of Mr. Senior, that he was by long inquiry and experience a firm believer in spiritual power and manifestations. Mr. Home was his frequent guest, and Mr. Senior made no secret of his belief among his friends. He it was who recommended the publication of Mr. Home's recent work by Messrs. Longmans, and he authorised the publication, under initials, of one of the striking incidents there given, which happened to a near and dear member of his family.”

BARON CARL DU PREL (Munich) in *Nord und Sud*.—“One thing is clear; that is, that psychography must be ascribed to a transcendental origin. We shall find: (1) That the hypothesis of prepared slates is inadmissible. (2) The place on which the writing is found is quite inaccessible to the hands of the medium. In some cases the double slate is securely locked, leaving only room inside for the tiny morsel of slate-pencil. (3) That the writing is actually done at the time. (4) That the medium is not writing. (5) The writing must be actually done with the morsel of slate or lead-pencil. (6) The writing is done by an intelligent being, since the answers are exactly pertinent to the questions. (7) This being can read, write, and understand the language of human beings, frequently such as is unknown to the medium. (8) It strongly resembles a human being, as well in the degree of its intelligence as in the mistakes sometimes made. These beings are therefore, although invisible, of human nature or species. It is no use whatever to fight against this proposition. (9) If these beings speak, they do so in human language. (10) If they are asked who they are, they answer that they are beings who have left this world. (11) When these appearances become partly visible, perhaps only their hands, the hands seen are of human form. (12) When these things become entirely visible, they show the human form and countenance. . . . Spiritualism must be investigated by science. I should look upon myself as a coward if I did not openly express my convictions.”