

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

### CHRIST AND CHRISTIANITY.

Miss Elizabeth Stuart Phelps communicates to the *Forum* for May her ideas on this subject. Fallen from its high estate, from the simplicity that was in Christ Jesus, disintegrated by the ten thousand vagaries of its professors, corroded by worldliness, imprisoned in narrowness of intellect, disgraced by a defective humanity—this is the indictment, this the verdict. The attempt to condense within my space the writer's arguments I fear must fail: but what she writes is so instructive, so worthy of attention, and withal so well put, that an attempt of some sort shall be made. For to me, as to the writer, it has long seemed that the Christian misses his way because he has forgotten the imitation of Christ, because he is choked with details, buried in rank undergrowth of dogma that hides from his gaze the light of the world, and condemns him to grope his way in darkness.

#### ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES OF THE CHRIST.

These Miss Phelps sets down as three: viz., personal consecration to right-doing; perfect liberality of mind and thought; the enthusiasm of humanity. Self-devotion, tolerance, love—these are the key-notes.

#### NEED OF PERSONAL CONSECRATION.

"Who was Christ? A carpenter became a rabbi—what we should call a 'self-made,' itinerant preacher. What has He done? Guided the conscience and created the hope of the world. How did He do it? By personal holiness nothing less than awful. To study this highly sensitised nature even as an intellectual exercise, for an hour, is to breathe rarefied air. We descend from it panting, as one does from a great poem or a mountain. What would be the effect of a thorough moral assimilation of this delicate atmosphere? What refinement of the sensibility! What nutrition of the soul! What sacred fire to the brain! What spiritual courtliness to the conduct!

"What do Christian believers undertake? Simply the imitation of the most intense life the world has known. An acute absorption in the process would seem to be logically necessary. Most of us go about it as we go to a *matinee* where the programme is too familiar."

Then comes, in Miss Phelps's illustrative fashion, a very pretty and a very touching story:—

"The city of Detroit may yet remember the case of 'Gertie,' which touched the Press of the country at the time. A passer through Clinton-street one day observed a little Irish boy hiding in a door way and crying. A sympathetic inquiry brought to light one of the most exquisite stories ever recorded of the sick poor. In a wretched cellar a little girl of ten lay ill. The window panes were broken (it was March, by the way) and variously stuffed. For one pane the supply of tenement upholstery had given out. The wind and the boys looked in easily. Just within range of curious eyes the cot of the sick child was stretched. The

gamins of Clinton-street discovered her plight. One little fellow dropped an orange through the broken glass; a plaintive voice thanked the unseen giver gratefully. This touching mercy became the fashion in that poor neighbourhood. Wispes of evergreen, swept out of florists' doors, broken flowers thrown away, offerings of fruit, with the decayed part cut out—every delicacy for the sick that the resources of Clinton-street admitted of went through that broken pane. One little fellow begged a bunch of frozen Malaga grapes from the dealer, to whom he offered his ragged cap in payment. One day the boys said, 'Our Gertie is dead,' and the Christian street boys became the only mourners behind the hearse of the starved and frozen child."

#### CHRISTIANS ARE SO WORLDLY.

Here is the root of selfishness, with its shadow—luxury. The vast sums spent on idle gratification, I need not dwell upon. The evidence is before us in the dresses of our women, in the entertainments of society with their too often vulgar profusion of dainties, fruits, flowers, wines, and meats, in the squandering of money in gaming and racing by our men, in the Jeshurun-like waxing fat and kicking that is slowly paving the way for revolution in our midst. In all this whirl what time is there for self-culture, for spiritual development, for charity, and loving deeds and words to the sorrowful and the suffering:—

"The Bishop of Manchester once read to his congregation the following passage, saying that he had received it from a young lady who wished him to know what time there was in her life for Christian work:—

"We breakfast about ten. Breakfast occupies the best part of an hour, during which we read our letters and pick up the latest news in the papers. After that we have to go and answer our letters, and my mother expects me to write her notes of invitation or to reply to such. Then I have to go into the conservatory and feed the canaries and parrots and cut off the dead leaves and faded flowers from the plants. Then it is time to dress for lunch, and at two o'clock we lunch. At three my mother likes me to go with her when she makes her calls, and we then come home to a five o'clock tea, when some friends drop in. After that we get ready to take our drive in the park, and then we go home to dinner; and after dinner we go to the theatre or the opera; and then when we get home I am so dreadfully tired that I don't know what to do."

Small wonder that those who cannot disport themselves thus lie Lazarus-like at Dives' door and rot and die:—

"It's not the rents I look to," said the undertaker-landlord of a wretched tenement block in London, to Octavia Hill; 'it's the deaths I get out of the houses.'"

The grinding of the poor, the scandalous overcrowding of them in places where a decent life is impossible, the sweating of their wretched doles for work—all this unimagined misery beside all this unbridled luxury, what does it mean? It means that the spirit of the Christ is gone from among us, that the sweet face of Divine pity is hidden, and that man is following his own devices, and lives on the verge of a social volcano that may engulf him at any time. Yet among these poor and, as we say, depraved masses lingers some of that spirit still:—

"In a New England town, the other day, a newsboy, hardly higher than the platform, was run over by a horse-car and fatally hurt. What did this self-supporting baby when writhing in the last agonies of a terrible death? He called piteously for his mother. To shriek upon her breast? That she might clasp him while the surgeon worked? No! But to give her his day's earnings. 'I've saved 'em, mother,' he cried. 'I've saved 'em all. Here

they are.' When this little clenched, dirty hand fell rigid it was found to contain four cents."

Of a truth there shone the spirit of the Christ, with its tender sympathy and its sacrifice of self. But what are we to say of a state of social civilisation which makes it possible for the condition to exist which elicited the sympathy? Is that in harmony with the spirit of the great Social Reformer?

#### CHRIST'S SUPERB LIBERALITY.

"He that is not against us is on our side," said the Master. Excommunicate the heretic "who followeth not after us"; burn him, if you can, but make him uncomfortable, at any rate, says the modern Christian sectary. A difference of opinion, where none can be sure, is elevated to the dignity of a cardinal sin, and fallible man, dressed in a little brief authority, denounces his fellow *ex cathedra*. "Brethren," cried Cromwell, to these gentry, in one of his bursts of common sense, "I beseech you in the bowels of the Lord, believe it possible you may be mistaken." A stranger once strolled into Westminster Abbey when Dean Stanley was preaching. This was his comment afterwards, "I went to learn the way to Heaven; I was told the way to Palestine." That puts epigrammatically the indictment against our modern methods:—

"Many and dreary are the times that we go to the religion of our day to learn the way to Heaven and we are taught the way to a creed. We go panting with spiritual thirst and aching with spiritual hunger; we are fed with theological stones. We go longing for peace; we find a sword. We go in search of a Divine Master; we get the Evangelical Council. We seek the holy and the humble instruction that trains a soul for the sacred diploma of the religious teacher; we find a lawsuit. We seek the Cross of Christ; we find the Supreme Court."

#### CHRIST HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH ECCLESIASTICISM.

"Christ was the come-outer of His day. He was the Protestant; He was the Liberal; He was the victim of spiritual independence. He was the faith that rises

'Just to scorn the consequence,  
And just to do the thing.'

"His teaching was one thrilling protest against ecclesiasticism. His life was one pathetic plea for religious freedom. Love thy God and thy neighbour and follow Me; His command and our duty are in those few and simple words. He cut down doctrinism and dogmatism as a mower cuts down thistles. In His insistence on practical holiness there was no room for chatter about creeds. He gave Himself to God and to miserable men."

With a bold flight of imagination Miss Phelps contrasts the questions usually put to candidates for the Christian ministry with those which Jesus Himself would have been likely to ask of those who now might seek to be His disciples. The difference between the man-made test of fitness and the Christ conception of spiritual suitability is put in a striking passage:—

"One imagines the eloquent silence with which He would sit out the accepted tests of fitness for membership in His visible Church. What does the candidate believe concerning the total depravity of all mankind? Is he aware that he committed the sin of Adam? What are his views upon the eternal damnation of the finally impenitent? Has he faith in the sanctity of immersion? Does he accept the sacrament of infant sprinkling? Test his knowledge of the Trinity. Try his theory of the nature and office of the Holy Ghost. Is he sound upon the doctrine of election? Does he totter upon justification by faith?"

"Now conceive the questions to the candidate from the point of view of Jesus the Christ. One may imagine that the test questions for religious character would now take a surprising turn. Have you a pure heart? Do you love the Lord your God with the whole of it? Explain to us your relation with your neighbours. Are you beloved in your home? Can you control your temper? Do you talk scandal? Are you familiar with the condition of the poor? What are your methods of relieving it? Can you happily give disagreeable service to the sick? How do you bear physical suffering when it falls to your own lot? How many drunkards have you tried to reform? What outcasts have you sought to save? What mourners have you comforted? On what social theory do you invite guests to your house? What proportion of your income do you give to the needs of others? What do you understand by prayer to God? What is your idea of a Christ-like life?"

#### THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN.

When Miss Phelps comes to deal with the Enthusiasm of Humanity, as Professor Seeley has well called it, she uses a term that I have ventured long ago to apply to the human life of Jesus. He was a Reformer and a Socialist. Social rank simply did not exist for Him. Caste He scorned:—

"A fisherman was His most intimate friend. He accepted the hospitality of an ostracised man. He conversed fearlessly and naturally with abandoned women. He did not refuse to penitently outcasts the preciousness of His personal friendship. He was never known to shrink from foul diseases. Vulgar natures He treated with the patience of high refinement. The 'common people' loved Him. He denounced the fashionable shams of His times with the nonchalance of an emperor and the intelligence of an artisan. He scathed the petty pretensions of the leaders of society with that indifference to criticism characteristic of high birth and that sympathy with what we call the 'lower classes' incident to a personal experience of poverty. His social theories held the relentlessness of love. There is no polite way of evading them. There is no well-bred opportunity of ignoring them. The Christianity of Christ must meet them point blank. They are its essential test. They are its first and final demand. Malthus has reminded us that the histories of mankind which we possess are, in general, only histories of the higher classes. Authentic Christianity must be a history of the masses. Socially considered a Christian must be, in a sense, interestingly varied from the old theological one, 'born again.' He has new kin, he makes new neighbours, he incurs new social obligations, he readjusts his position in human society, or he might as well go and call himself a Druid."

#### A GRAND CONCEPTION OF THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST.

"There does not exist outside of the New Testament such a conception of the Christian spirit as the great Frenchman (not distinguished for ecclesiastical views of God, but exiled for his practical love of man) gave us in the greatest work of fiction since Shakespeare. Who forgets the Bishop in *Les Misérables*, immortal because he acted like Christ? His palace converted into a hospital, his income expended for the suffering, out of the luxuries of his highly civilised past, the 'spiritual man of the world' (as Margaret Fuller would put it) had saved an elegant toilet case, six silver plates, and silver candlesticks. 'Knock there,' said the citizen to the ex-galley-slave whom no other roof would shelter.

"The Bishop touched his hand gently, and said:—

"'You need not tell me who you are. This is not my house; it is the house of Christ. It does not ask any comer whether he has a name, but whether he has an affliction.'

"In all uninspired literature what is finer than the scene between the Bishop and Valjean when the *gendarmes* bring the arrested guest and silver back to this threshold of superhuman hospitality.

"'Ah, there you are!' said Monseigneur, 'I am glad to see you. But I gave you the candlesticks also, which are silver like the rest, and would bring you 200 francs. Why did you not take them along with your plate?'

"Left alone with the astounded thief the Christian idealist grew stern and solemn:—

"'Never forget that you have promised me to use this silver to become an honest man. Jean Valjean, my brother, you belong no longer to evil but to good. It is your soul that I am buying for you. I withdraw it from dark thoughts and from the spirit of perdition, and I give it to God!'

"The child of such a spiritual godfather, who wonders that Jean Valjean, the galley-slave, becomes Mayor Madeleine, the saint of a district and the protector of every despised and rejected creature in it? It is thus that the Christianity of Christ ought to be spiritually inherited."

And when all has been said "type, not argument, governs men." All problems resolve themselves into the problem of personal righteousness. "The key to our perplexities lies no further than a devout and dedicated heart." I am not wholly sure of that. Life is more complex now than it was when the Prophet of Galilee laid His finger on the blots of an effete ecclesiastical system, worse than our own. It would be now impossible to go back to that simplicity; but it is not impossible to apply that transparent sincerity to dealing with the complex problems that surround us, and, in doing so, we shall find that personal zeal for truth is the very salt and savour of our life.

I have received, with a flattering inscription, *De Blijde Boodschap*, by Emeritus Predicant S. F. W. Roorda van Eysinga. My deficiency in knowledge of many foreign languages, Dutch included, is a constant source of regret. But none the less, I thank the author for his polite attention and kindly words respecting myself.—[ED. OF "LIGHT."]



## MR. PAGE HOPPS ON CREMATION.

Mr. Page Hopps recently delivered an address at the funeral of Mrs. Clephan, of which the following is an abstract :—

"The Rev. J. Page Hopps read an appropriate portion of Scripture, after which he addressed those assembled, and referring to the exceptional circumstances of the ceremony, said : If I considered only my own feelings and inclinations and the feelings and inclinations of those with whom I am associated to-day, I should end with these few customary impersonal words. But for two reasons I depart from my usual course. Because, for the first time in my life, I have taken part in what is to me a truly blessed relief from the ordinary mode of disposing of the bodies of those whom we call 'the dead,' and also because I feel that those who introduce serious social and other changes owe a duty to society, and should justify those changes, and give to the public their reasons for adopting them. Our friend who has gone from us, in common with many others, held the opinion, which is rapidly gaining ground (especially amongst those who have the best right for forming a judgment on the subject), that the accepted mode of burial is in many ways, extremely undesirable—by no means considerate, even in relation to 'the dead,' and an increasing peril to the living. We have become used to the dreadful act of putting a body in the ground to slowly rot. A variety of illusions and sentiments have grown up about it. We have woven around it all kinds of poetic fancies, and disguised it with decorations, and got used to it in time. But it is, and it must be, dangerous and repulsive in the highest degree. The return—for it is no novelty—the return to the ancient mode of disposing of the body by the purifying action of heat, is, to my mind, an immense relief. Those who shrink from it do so, I am convinced, because, unconsciously, they transfer their own sensations to the poor dead body. They have not quite mastered the fact that it cannot feel. But to it the purifying heat is no more than the sweetest bed of flowers or softest down. The repelling idea is entirely due to an illusion. Once conquer that, and all difficulty disappears. In any case, it is to be remembered that we are shut up to a choice between distressing processes. The alternative is the dreadful slow corruption of the grave, or the pure and speedy dissolution of the furnace—two hours of blessed purifying, or twenty years of hideous and dangerous decay. If the one shocks for a day, consider how the other often distresses for years. When it is once over, what a relief to be left with only a little harmless dust to be reverently put aside ; never, in imagination, to be an object of disgust ; and never, in reality, to be a source of danger, as the rotting body must ever be. Even on the ground of sentiment and feeling, then, our course is clear ; for on that ground alone, if it were not for habit and illusion, we should shrink from burial as much as many now shrink from the better way ; and the time will come when use will so accustom the public imagination and mind to cremation that the wonder will be how the world endured the horrors of burial so long. Instead of those horrors, which one could hardly dare to describe, what have we in the mode we recommend ? The poor body, subjected to heat, is simply resolved into its component parts by the purest process known in nature. These, sent into wholesome air, mingle with kindred atoms there, in the glorious laboratory of nature and of God ; and thence, in due time, descend to earth, not to corrupt and poison it, but to be used up in the sweet grasses, the lovely flowers, the delightful foliage, and the precious grain. They for whom I speak, who have joined in setting so excellent an example to others, need no justification. With a quiet sense of duty they accepted their task, and these few words are spoken, not to justify, but only to explain ; for the sake of others, not for their own. But one more thought remains. To us the body is nothing. The spirit is all. When the body is done with, it is done with for ever. It is no part of the real human being. The wonderful spirit which dwelt in it has departed, never more to return. The earthly body is simply outgrown. The spiritual body is far, far superior to it. The true resurrection-day is the day of the promotion of the spirit into the higher life beyond. As, then, the spirit departs, let the body go. Free it, free it—that it may pass into the sweet and radiant air."

"ALONG with the worship of God, there existed in China, from the earliest historical times, the worship of other spiritual beings specially, and to every individual the worship of departed ancestors."—REV. DR. LEGGE, *Chinese Classics*.

## "THE LIGHT OF EGYPT."

Before reviewing this remarkable book, we offer some introduction to our readers in the shape of the author's reasons for publication, and some indication of the scope and contents of the work :—

"The reasons which have induced the writer to undertake the responsibility of presenting a purely occult treatise to the world are briefly as follows :—

"For nearly twenty years the writer has been deeply engaged in investigating the hidden realms of occult force, and, as the results of these mystical labours were considered to be of great value and real worth by a few personal acquaintances who were also seeking light, he was finally induced to condense, as far as practicable, the general results of these researches into a series of lessons for private occult study. This idea was ultimately carried out and put into external form ; the whole when completed, presenting the dual aspects of occult lore as seen and realised in the soul and the stars, corresponding to the microcosm and the macrocosm of ancient Egypt and Chaldea, and thus giving a brief epitome of Hermetic philosophy. (The term Hermetic is here used in its true sense of sealed or secret.)

"Having served their original purpose, external circumstances have compelled their preparation for a much wider circle of minds. The chief reason urging to this step was the strenuous efforts now being systematically put forth to poison the budding spirituality of the Western mind, and to fasten upon its mediumistic mentality the subtle, delusive dogmas of Karma and Re-incarnation, as taught by the sacerdotalisms of the decaying Orient.

"From the foregoing statement it will be seen that this work is issued with a definite purpose, namely, to explain the true spiritual connection between God and man, the soul and the stars, and to reveal the real truths of both Karma and Re-incarnation as they actually exist in nature, stripped of all priestly interpretation. The definite statements made in regard to these subjects are absolute facts, in so far as embodied man can understand them through the symbolism of human language, and the writer defies contradiction by any living authority who possesses the spiritual right to say, 'I know.'

"During these twenty years of personal intercourse with the exalted minds of those who constitute the brethren of light, the fact was revealed that long ages ago the Orient had lost the use of the true spiritual compass of the soul, as well as the real secrets of its own theosophy. As a race they have been, and still are, travelling the descending arc of their racial cycle, whereas the Western race have been slowly working their way upward through matter upon the ascending arc. Already it has reached the equator of its mental and spiritual development. Therefore the writer does not fear the ultimate results of the occult knowledge put forth in the present work during this, the great mental crisis of the race.

"Having explained the actual causes which impelled the writer to undertake this responsibility, it is also necessary to state most emphatically that he does not wish to convey the impression to the reader's mind that the Orient is destitute of spiritual truth. On the contrary, every genuine student of occult lore is justly proud of the snow white locks of old Hindustan, and thoroughly appreciates the wondrous stores of mystical knowledge concealed within the astral vortices of the Hindu branch of the Aryan race. In India, probably more than in any other country, are the latent forces and mysteries of nature the subject of thought and study. But, alas ! it is not a progressive study. The descending arc of their spiritual force keeps them bound to the dogmas, traditions, and externalisms of the decaying past, whose real secrets they cannot now penetrate. The ever living truths concealed beneath the symbols in the astral light are hidden from their view by the setting sun of their spiritual cycle. Therefore, the writer only desires to impress upon the reader's candid mind the fact that his earnest effort is to expose that particular section of Buddhistic Theosophy (esoteric so-called) that would fasten the cramping shackles of theological dogma upon the rising genius of the Western race. It is the delusive Oriental systems against which his efforts are directed, and not the race nor the mediumistic individuals who uphold and support them ; for *omnia vincit veritas* is the life motto of

THE AUTHOR."

WE have an inquiry for a trustworthy female clairvoyant near Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield, Huddersfield, or Halifax Address L., office of "LIGHT."

## JOTTINGS.

The very geese are getting psychically developed. The *St. James's Gazette* gives currency for the following story of heredity in geese :—

"A correspondent of the *Revue Scientifique* vouches for the following story :—For about twenty years he was in the habit of visiting two or three times each year a farm where was kept a flock of geese, numbering from thirty to thirty-five in the early part of the winter, and in the spring four or five, left for breeding purposes; these also generally being killed a few months later, after the new broods had attained their growth. In the month of July, 1862, on a feast-day, the farmer and his men being absent, the geese were forgotten, and were attacked by dogs, which killed many of them. The next evening at twilight the farmer thought they must have been attacked a second time. He found them flying about in their pen, much frightened, but the dogs were nowhere to be seen. The next day this terror reappeared at the same hour as it did on the following day, and from that time on. The correspondent of the *Revue* had forgotten this fact when, ten years later, he chanced to be on the farm one evening, and heard the cackling of the apparently frightened geese. When he asked for an explanation, he was told that this had been kept up from the time they had been attacked by the dogs, that there had been no repetition of the attack, and that the flock had been renewed in the meantime at least three times. If this story is well authenticated, we have a case of the transmission of terror to the third generation in a family of geese."

The *International Magazine of Christian Science* devotes a paper to the "Dangers of Hypnotism and its Relation to Christian Science." The risks are emphasised in the former case, and the latter is held to be free from them. It is broadly hinted that the former is diabolic, the latter Divine. This is, of course, nonsense. We know very little as yet of the forces whose operations we witness, but there is no doubt that the Devil, if he be the author of hypnotism, has once more been a public benefactor.

An attempt in the same number to explain and defend the use of the term Christian Science leaves us no wiser than before. We gather, however, that the attribute Christian is derived from the consideration that Jesus Christ was the greatest exponent of the power of Spirit.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* (June 28th) gives the following account of Colonel Olcott's missionary enterprise among the Japanese. It has the merit of presenting an outside estimate which amply confirms the truth of the somewhat scanty accounts furnished by the President and his friends :—

"News from Japan published in the *Glasgow Herald* is to the effect that Colonel Olcott's tour is creating a veritable *furor*. His first reception was of a mixed character, some of the Buddhist priests welcoming him, others giving him the cold shoulder. Then his lectures in the capital began to excite popular interest, which was intensified as he went through the larger provincial towns. The latest news of him is from Nagoya, a large commercial town between Tokio and Kioto. Here he had audiences at each lecture of about four thousand people, and it is said that the wildest applause everywhere greets his declarations that the closest relationship exists between the stable progress of the nation and the maintenance of true Buddhism. At the time the last news left Colonel Olcott, having made a tour in the north, was progressing towards the south, where Buddhism always had a stronger and more earnest hold upon the people. The Buddhists who control Colonel Olcott's tour, seeing the effect he is producing, are hurrying about from place to place, so that he is delivering orations and lectures in three or four different places in the same day, as if he were an octogenarian ex-Prime Minister of Great Britain. The really striking part of the business is that Colonel Olcott does not speak a word of Japanese; his lectures are therefore delivered in English, and translated on the platform by an interpreter sentence by sentence as he goes along. In this way, of course, all the eloquence and verve are taken out of the discourse before it reaches the audience. There is no chance for working the latter up to enthusiasm by mere words; hence the speaker who succeeds as Colonel Olcott has done in arousing public meetings in this way must find a strong sympathy between him and it already existing. No doubt the novel spectacle of an Occidental inculcating the view that there is no religion like that of Buddha has something to do with it. It is not only the common people that gladly hear him, but also the high officials. In many of the large towns through which we passed special meetings were held at times suitable to officials, at which they alone were present. Of the reality of the impression he is creating there is no doubt; how permanent it may be no one can tell. Apropos of this topic, I may mention that for the first time a Unitarian missionary has put in an appearance in Japan. He belongs to the United States, and has already got entangled in a theological discussion in the press. This, indeed, is how his advent became generally known."

Colonel Olcott is to reach England fresh from his Japan tour somewhere in August. In September and October he is to lecture in various places in Great Britain.

*Lucifer* opens with an article "It's the Cat," which is amusing reading for all except those to whom it is dedicated "the members of the Theosophical Society whom the cap may fit."

Mrs. Besant, F.T.S., discourses practically on "Practical Work for Theosophists," in furthering that universal brotherhood of man which they are pledged to advance. First she desiderates a general honest feeling of perfect equality amongst all; then the "cleansing of one's own life in its relations to those by whose labours we are fed and clothed and housed; and next the active service due to our fellows in all its many departments. All excellent and most excellently advocated.

Madame Blavatsky announces a new book, *The Key to Theosophy*, which is to give in concise form a clear statement of the fundamental truths upon which Theosophy is based: an outline of its relation to Religion in general and to various modern movements: and a reply to certain misconceptions now current. The price is 3s. 6d. (5s. after publication), and the publishers are the Theosophical Publishing Company, 7, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C.

From the *Leicester Daily Post* (June 22nd) we learn that Mrs. Clephan, wife of Mr. E. Clephan, J.P., having passed away at Leamington, her remains were cremated at Woking, and the ashes buried at Leicester, the Rev. J. Page Hopps officiating. We give elsewhere some account of his impressive address.

The following interesting fact respecting Ann Lee's Spiritualism is communicated to the *Golden Gate* by A. B. Weymouth :—

"In the *Testimonies of Mother Ann Lee*, founder of the Order of Shakers, it is stated that she arrived at Enfield, Conn., about June 1st, 1781. She remarked to Mary Tiffany, 'I see your deceased kindred all around you. It is all your kindred, both upon your father and mother's side. They are nearer to you than I am.'

"Mother Lee also said to Lydia Matthewson: 'The apostles in their day saw darkly, as through a glass; but now we see clearly, face to face, and see things as they are, and converse with departed spirits, and see their states.'"

*Psychic Studies* is the title of a new monthly published by Albert Morton, of San Francisco, who also edits his new venture. Mr. Morton in his prologue states his intention of publishing essays of an educational character suitable for reading to classes. He will deal with the "Higher Aspects of Spiritualism," which (referring to M.A.(Oxon's.) book bearing that title) he believes with him to "present the only foundation of a religion which can be scientifically demonstrated through patient personal investigation."

The subjects to be dealt with in coming numbers, one each month, are "Physical and Moral Education," "Conservation of Health and Life Forces," "Magnetic, Mental and Spiritual Healing," "Our Relations to the Spiritual World," "Mediumship, in its Uses and Abuses," "Advice to Mediums and Investigators," "Psychometry," "Intuition," "Justice, Charity, Sympathy," "The Power and Proper Exercise of Will." The numbers before us treat of "God: Our Relationship" and "Heredity." Our best wishes.

Dr. Rentoul, of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Plumstead, is preaching a course of sermons on "Heaven and the Future Life," which show that the old Presbyterian faith has been largely leavened by modern Spiritualism.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* gives this as a titled faith-healer's challenge :—

"Baron C. Andreas writes to the *Christian Commonwealth* from Derby :—Having for nearly thirty years practised 'faith-healing' or 'bodily healing by Scriptural means,' in its unadulterated pristine purity, in Great Britain, the Continent of Europe, the United States of America, &c., I have been the instrument in the hands of God in the restoration of some thousands of medically incurable sufferers (without the use of any medical means whatever) in answer to simple child-like believing prayer, after the example of the Apostles of old, sometimes accompanied by laying on of hands (not making circles or rubbing, which are of Satan) and 'anointing with oil in the name of the Lord.' The Baron concludes his article by saying: 'If there can be found a case of leprosy, within 1,000 miles, where a full and minute address with full name can be given, I will take it as a trial case, feeling convinced that a perfect restoration would be secured.'

"The editor of the paper accepts the challenge. Let our correspondent, it says, take the case of the leper Yoxhall, to which the Prince of Wales has recently directed the attention of the public, as a trial case."

WE have to acknowledge with thanks 10s. for Sustentation Fund, from "A Friend."



## A STRANGE STORY.

About fifty years ago there were published two novels. One, though pronounced by Carlyle and Sterling to be one of the most humorous books in the English language, was not a success. The other was the *Robert Elsmere* of the publisher's year. The whirligig of time has brought a revenge unusually complete. The *Great Hogarty Diamond* still diverts thousands of readers. And with regard to *Ten Thousand a Year* we can only now say that it is a curious evidence of the fact that a man entirely destitute of humour can grind out a given number of pages of mechanical jocularity as a dozen shirts are made to emerge from that excellent sewing machine—the "Singer."

But if the overdone foolery of Gammon and Snap is deservedly forgotten, it must be remembered that Samuel Warren had real taste for the grim. *The Diary of a Late Physician* contains a number of strange stories, "founded on fact" as the title page assures us. One of them is a curious chapter of occult experience. We need not say the genius of Samuel Warren, and the occult experience of his age, would have been quite unable to evolve it.

Helen W—— was a young lady of sensitive nerves, residing with the narrating "Physician" and his wife, she was engaged to be married to a young gentleman, Frederick Dallwer; and to quite understand the story, it must be remembered that at its date the great Wesleyan spiritual movement was becoming crystallized and effete. A great Spiritual movement—there is a painful family likeness between them—begins with lean missionaries, poor, persecuted, earnest. It ends with fat shepherds, who still talk of "grace" and "abnegation" as they lap up turtle soup at the tables of comfortable dowagers and bankers, serious but shrewd. Helen W—— had been brought up amongst folks of this sort. She was told that salvation was quite confined to people who talked as they talked. They were the "elect" and the rest of the world the "reprobates." Unfortunately she took these good people at their word.

For the Rev. Frederick Dallwer was not of the "saints" as they called themselves. He had learned at Oxford to look down on their false enthusiasm, and even doubted whether it was quite certain that the end of the world was coming on as early as 1830. The engaged pair had many discussions on these points and they parted in a bit of a tiff. The Rev. Frederick Dallwer went to Oxford where he was curate; and a short time after this an astounding phenomenon burst over London.

"At midday I remarked," says the physician, "that a change was coming over the atmosphere and all nature was silence, stupor, and expectation. Clouds lowered, the electric current massed itself, the heavens grew yellow and seemed to press down upon us. Frightened animals scented the danger. Beforehand they trembled and anticipated the coming explosion. A huge menace was in the sky. The heat was terrific. The long red tongues of the dogs hung down, and the oxen on the way to the slaughter-house refused to stir." Vast crowds were in the street and their terror was kept at the boiling point by preachers at every corner. Plainly the sun was darkened and the powers of the earth were shaken. Plainly the great and terrible day spoken of by Daniel the Prophet had come upon them, The "Physician"—I wish he had a name—went about amongst his patients but found the rich as timorous as the poor. It is quite evident that we have a real scene here depicted.

Then came the thunder and lightning—such thunder and such lightning! One culminating crash burst over the domicile of the nameless "Physician." All thought that hell itself had opened its gates.

But other claps came, and the terror diminished; and by and by folks asked, "Where is Miss W——! She was nowhere to be found. A grim presentiment seized everyone. Her name was called aloud. No answer came; and her bedroom was burst open at last, and an appalling sight was presented.

Helen W—— was erect but she seemed to be changed into marble. Her lips were still parted and every lineament of her face presented a sublime terror. Her arms pointed still as it were at some object of dread. She gave no answer when spoken to. She was as rigid as a corpse. The Physician tried all his professional skill to restore her but all in vain. With difficulty she was placed in her bed.

Days passed in this way and a great medical authority, Dr. A——, was called in for a consultation, but his judgment was not consoling. He cited Van Swieten and Dr. Cullen, and announced that it was a case of catalepsy of a rare kind.

"Will she recover?" said the nameless Physician.

"In such cases," replied Dr. A——, "consciousness generally returns, but it precedes death."

Galvanism was tried. Music was tried. The Dean of Winchester came and prayed; and Luther's Hymn was played with skilful hands. The Reverend Frederick Dallwer, summoned post haste from Oxford, burst into the room and the spectacle nearly killed him. But all this time Helen W—— remained unconscious.

" . . . . . Medusa  
Saxifxi vultus."

At length one day, when the Dean was praying by the sick girl's bedside, she moved her lips and said, faintly,

"Is the storm over?"

"Yes, yes——"

"And the world not yet—Oh they were affrighting as they came towards me, hideous, menacing, fearful——"

"Helen, tell us everything," said the doctor, for the old Medusa look had returned.

The young girl gave no answer and seemed to relapse into her old unconsciousness, but by and by she said:

"Bring Frederick here to night. I must speak to him—ere I die."

This speech puzzled the "Physician," who was a little, perhaps, of the Carpenter and Huxley realistic stamp. How did she know that Frederick had come from Oxford?

Then came a striking climax. Frederick that night was introduced to the unconscious girl, and he gazed at her for a few moments in silence.

Suddenly she lifted herself up in the bed and, fixing her eyes on him with a strange look, she said solemnly, "Prepare to meet thy God."

This effort killed her, and Frederick died within the year. Our present psychic knowledge explains many things that puzzled the characters of this little drama. Evidently this is a true story. Helen was a psychic rendered lucid by the excess of electricity; the spirit guides, not very highly developed, frightened her with hobgoblins; and her mind naturally dwelt on the peril of her lover, Frederick, whose death she saw approaching whilst in the lucid state. Hence her last poor effort on the physical plane was to "save" him.

## BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

*Clothed with the Sun: being the Book of the Illuminations of Anna (Bonus) Kingsford.* Edited by EDWARD MAITLAND. (Redway.) [The Editor tells us that the illuminations or, as Spiritualists usually say, communications in this volume are gathered with the purpose of separating Mrs. Kingsford's illuminations from her ordinary writings and from Mr. Maitland's as her collaborator in the *Perfect Way*, and by her direct instruction when she found her departure imminent. The book is full of insight; the teaching is elevated and noble. The form of the book is beautiful to the eye, and is an excellent specimen of the printer's art.]

## LITAIRENE.

Death, come to me!  
Take this pain and striving  
Out of my brain;  
Take this gnawing misery  
Out from my heart;  
With your pale cold fingers  
Lay straight these bones  
That are weary!  
Shut from my sight  
The azure and the green  
And the opaline splendour of nature,  
Ensnaring the soul with hope  
And visions of a life as splendid!  
Benumb my ears that they hear not  
The wail of the thousands  
Who labour with bleeding hands  
Yet may not reap.  
Stop the ebb and the flow of life  
That brings force only for defeat,  
And quickens the heart only  
That it may bear its anguish.  
At least, bring silence and peace,  
O tender and beautiful Death!

—Harper's Magazine.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We have received several letters on Reincarnation which we do not insert, either because they do not advance the discussion, or because they are too long. We must remind our correspondents that there are other subjects of interest beside this, and that a large majority of our readers view with no liking long and intricate disquisitions which teach them nothing. We regret, therefore, to feel compelled to decline several communications.

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

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## Light:

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

SATURDAY, JULY 13th, 1889.

**TO CONTRIBUTORS.**—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects, good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

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

#### THE PARIS CONGRESS.

Referring once more to the forthcoming meeting of Spiritualists at Paris and to the subjects which, we are informed, will occupy a considerable share of attention—

(1) Confederation or Organisation on some definite plan; and (2) Systematic methods of investigation—we deem it desirable to print some remarks made in answer to a widely-circulated address of the President of the London Spiritualist Alliance in the year 1885. The address (copies of which can be had at our offices) is, in view of any new discussion of the subjects with which it deals, fairly exhaustive, and needs no addition. For the present we desire to present to our readers and to the French public some extracts from the correspondence which ensued upon the delivery of the address above referred to, so that the opinion expressed by leading men and organs of opinion may be available for reference.

M. Alphonse Frey, President of the Société Magnétique of Geneva, wrote under date January 28th, 1886, to explain that his Society did not occupy itself at all with the subject of Spiritualism. While expressing his interest in the phenomena and his approval of the proposed confederation of Spiritualistic societies, M. Frey considered that sufficient attention was not paid to the question of the source from which the manifestations emanated. There are good spirits who come in the name of God and Christianity, and evil spirits who prove their dark origin by promulgating doctrines contrary to the Gospel. With communications from the latter he would have nothing to do, as they could not fail to be hurtful and dangerous. "Manifestations which are really attributable to celestial spirits" continued M. Frey, "I accept with joy, but I fear that they are very rare, if indeed they can be said to be found at all in the numberless experiences going on among the many Spiritist societies now in existence."

The *Liège Messenger* of January 15th, 1886, wrote *apropos* of the Presidential Address, "Spiritualism at Home and Abroad," delivered November 13th, 1885, before the London Spiritualist Alliance:—"Our esteemed confrère, in view of an active propaganda, proposes an International Federation of Spiritist Societies, and suggests a system of scientific research adapted to the use of all organisations occupied with the study of psychic phenomena. We hope soon to make known to our readers the basis of the proposed confederation. And while expressing a doubt as to the possibility of realising such a project in this country, we gladly recognise the moral force that would result from such organisation, which would be destined in a future more or less distant to bring about the most desirable results."

The *Moniteur* (Brussels) of February 15th, 1886, contained an appreciative article on the address delivered by the President before the London Spiritualist Alliance, on November 13th, 1885:—"A very strong opinion is expressed that the tendency of the age is steadily towards Atheism, with a consequent lowering of the moral standard, exemplified in the general tone of current literature, and the plea of self-interest as an argument for rectitude of conduct. Against this state of things Spiritualism, offering a scientific basis for belief, is to be the great remedy; and its adherents should use all the means in their power to strengthen their position." The different points in the address are then summed up. The proposed improvements and extensions of methods of research, the regulation of circles, and the remuneration of mediums by fixed salaries, instead of the present "payment-by-result" system, meet with marked approval. Regret is expressed that at present the Societies of Brussels have not sufficient numbers to make investigation by graduated circles possible. It considers that the course should be translated and published in its entirety, when "it would form a complete manual of instruction for organisation among Spiritualists." The *Moniteur* will await with interest the carrying out of the proposed plan of confederation.

The *Revue Spirite* wrote thus:—"In November, 1885, MM. G. Siauue and L. Thibaud wrote to the *Revue Spirite* suggesting a method of affiliation on lines very similar to those laid down by Mr. Stainton Moses in his presidential address (November 13th, 1885). The writers pointed out that the present isolated condition of Spiritualist societies, each working in its own groove, and knowing nothing of the work others were doing save through the mediumship of the Press, tended to narrowness and cliquism, and a general want of activity, definiteness of aim and that moral force that could only come from mutual unity. The plan advocated by MM. Siauue and Thibaud was as follows:—

"(1) That the society founded by M. and Madame Kardec at Paris (5, Rue des Petits Champs), should be regarded as the central Society for France—the heart of a league for spiritual teaching.

"(2) The Society to choose delegates for the different French departments, the said delegates being empowered to found societies on the same lines as the Central Society wherever an opening should occur.

"(3) That the provincial societies should be kept in close intercourse by means of correspondence through its delegates with the Central Society.

"(4) That the Central Society should consist of its own members and the departmental delegates, who should take part in a general reunion each year.

"(5) That an appeal should be made through the Spiritual Press for the first expenses necessary in starting the League, all subscriptions to be sent to the Central Society."

The result of this movement was the foundation of the "Bordeaux Ligue de l'Enseignement Spirite," President, M. Siauue—in union with the Paris Society.

In the *Ere Nouvelle*, February, 1886, M. Siauue published a letter from Mr. Stainton Moses, drawing attention to the striking coincidence of the action taken at Bordeaux and Paris, with that taken about the same time by the London Spiritualist Alliance. He invited the Bordeaux branch to enter into federation with the Central London Society, and briefly recapitulated the plan and method of work of that Society. M. Siauue, as Editor of the *Ere* (the organ of the branch) and on behalf of the Ligue, wrote: "We associate ourselves with the greatest pleasure in the good work undertaken by our brethren in London. They may count on our entire sympathy, and our sincere devotion, in the realisation of a project of federation in which we have ourselves, in our own department, taken the initiative."

*La Vie Posthume*, in January, 1886, contained an article on the subject of federation:—

"There exists in London," says this journal, "a society called the London Spiritualist Alliance, the President of which is Mr. W. Stainton Moses, 'M.A. (Oxon.)', a writer well known to the English public, who to high intellectual culture joins an activity and energy truly extraordinary, and entirely devoted to the advancement and spread of the truths of Spiritualism." After briefly detailing the steps taken by the London Spiritualist



Alliance in the matter of federation, and the appeal made to Spiritualist Societies throughout the world, the writer continues: "The replies received are embodied in a remarkable discourse, 'Spiritualism at Home and Abroad.' Nothing can be more interesting than this review, forming as it does a panorama of the whole Spiritualist world. The opinions expressed are very varied, but the general feeling is in favour of some Universal Spiritual Alliance. . . . One thing comes out very clearly in all these communications, a strong objection to the introduction of compulsory creeds and dogmas into Spiritualism. . . . 'M.A.(Oxon.)' as a common principle on which all may meet, sets forth his own faith as a Spiritualist: a belief in 'a spiritual life the complement of the physical life, not interrupted by death, and in a communion between the material and the spiritual world.' . . . On such a basis he considers it possible to unite in one vast society Spiritualists and Spiritists, and 'all who are occupied in whatsoever fashion with the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism.'"

After summing up the different points touched on by Mr. Stainton Moses in his address, the writer concludes: "We cannot now examine at further length the second part of this address, important as it is. To the question of organisation—a question that is occupying the attention of Spiritists throughout this country—we shall soon have occasion to return again."

The *Société Parisienne des Etudes Spiritistes* thus commented. The President and principal officials of this Society addressed a letter to the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance in February, 1886.

The Society, founded by Allan Kardec, 1858, has weekly circles for the study of Spiritualism; each month are open to investigators and allow first a free discussion and then a séance for phenomena, writing, trance, and table mediums being employed. These séances are free to inquirers. The remaining circles are open only to members, and are for the "study of phenomena under rigorous and scientific condition." Its organ is *La Pensée Libre*. The views of the Society may be briefly summed as follows:—

"We consider there are many difficulties in the way of confederation and that the local federation of France, Belgium, Brazil have produced but poor results. We are willing, however, to do all that in us lies to forward what may result in a better state of things for Spiritualism.

"The idea of graduated circles commends itself to us strongly, as likely to do good service.

"We believe that Spiritualism only finds its true *raison d'être* in the doctrine of Re-incarnation.

"We object to mediumship being made a profession, or to paid mediumships, except under special conditions.

"We pronounce energetically *against* any sort of religious ceremonies, even the use of hymns and prayers in common. In France such things would be the death-blow of Spiritualism, which is by nature anti-clerical and anti-mystical.

"Free discussion by outsiders within reasonable limits is advocated."

The term *Spiritualist* is objected to, as "an old name for an old thing." Our subject is new and should have new names. *Spiritisten* or *Spiritien* are the terms preferred.

"We shall be glad," concludes the letter, "to enter into closer relationship with you."

According to this account there are in Paris three Spiritist societies, and five journals, two magnetic societies, a magnetic hospital, and three journals devoted to the subject, and also a Society for the Study of Physiological Psychology.

#### A GENEROUS DONATION.

We have once more cause for gratitude in having received a second £100 note, which has reached us without any clue being afforded to the identity of the donor. We are reduced, therefore, to a general expression of our cordial thanks. The donation is especially apposite in view of what we have felt impelled to publish recently. The money itself comes in very conveniently, but the more cheering part is the evidence the gift affords of appreciation of our labours. The work has now grown so largely that it claims the undivided attention which we trust in the near future to be able to devote to it. This course, if it can be carried out, will necessitate the revision of some existing arrangements, and the raising of an increased amount of money, to which this generous donation is a welcome addition.

#### A COUPLE OF JULY MAGAZINES.

THE CENTURY ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY.  
THE NEW REVIEW.

*The Century* (Fisher Unwin) maintains the pre-eminence of the American magazines in the matter of illustrations. There are some very beautiful examples in this number, notably those of the careful account of Winchester Cathedral by Mrs. Schuyler van Rensselaer. Not less striking are pictures of a quite different order illustrating the great development of inland navigation in the United States. From them we get some idea of the size and magnificence of the river boats, lake boats, with their three or four stories or tiers of saloons and state-rooms, and especially of the sound steamer *Puritan*, of the Fall River Line. This is in every respect the finest boat of its class ever built; the latest development of engineering skill and decorative art. With a hull 420ft. long, 52ft. wide, 21ft. 6in. deep, her decks at the widest are 91ft., and cover and enclose the paddle-wheels. There are 355 state-rooms, and there is sleeping accommodation for 1,200 passengers. She is decorated in the style of the Italian Renaissance. Seen at night with all her four tiers of windows showing with the ghostly electric light, she must be a wonderful sight. Beautiful, again, are Mr. Fred. Remington's illustrations to a paper of his own on "The Indian Reservations." For vigour and go the picture of an Indian horse-race on p. 404 recalls Rosa Bonheur's most dashing work.

Passing by much that deserves commendation we come to the article which specially concerns ourselves, and which has, no doubt, caused the publishers to send their magazine for notice. This is a paper by Mr. J. M. Buckley, on "Pre-sentiments, Visions, and Apparitions," one of a series the others of which have escaped our notice. *The Century*, for July, 1888, contained, we observe, one on "Dreams, Night-mare, and Somnambulism," and another bore title "Astrology, Divination, and Coincidences." The article is of sufficient importance to induce us to refer to previous papers from the same pen before according it separate notice.

*The New Review* (Longmans) is both in form and matter a remarkable sixpennyworth.

Lord Castletown gives a graphic picture of the Shah at Teheran from personal knowledge evidently. He also brushes away much of the myth that has gathered round that picturesque personality, and has some timely words on the importance that is rightly attached to his Majesty's present visit to this country.

The Lord Chief Justice commences an estimate and reminiscences of one whom, from another point of view, we may also call a picturesque personality, Matthew Arnold, poet (first of all), critic (of rare insight), philosopher, essayist, educationalist, and much besides, and through all warm-hearted and gentle, simple and sincere in life and habit. Very interesting it is to read the estimate of Arnold by Coleridge. There is a certain similarity in taste and diction, both refined and highly-cultured, that makes such estimate more than usually fitting.

"It is to his poems we must look to secure him a place among the immortals"; for the reason that, powerful as was his criticism, each Age has its own critics, its own tone and spirit, and the succeeding Ages hardly catch the evanescent flavour of the past. "The imaginative insight of the great spirits of one generation becomes the indolent and accepted belief of the commonplace men of another." Not so with poetry. "Good poetry appeals to the imagination, and like the imagination, it never dies. . . . it seems certain that Matthew Arnold's poems will live, i.e., will be read and re-read, and learned by heart, while Englishmen are capable of feeling refinement of thought and perfection of expression."

His poems of meditation and introspection "give clear and perfect utterance to the pathetic doubt, the unrest, the

sadness of the time. All our greatest poets, except Wordsworth, are poets of melancholy and fear. . . . Arnold feels their influence. Resignation, endurance, courage to face what there is no escaping, not hope, not faith, is what he bids men strive for. Keep innocency and take heed to the thing that is right, because it is right and your conscience bids you, is his moral creed." We must wait for the conclusion of the article for a final deliverance on Matthew Arnold's claims to fame; but of the vast effect that he has had on his generation there can be as little doubt as that it will be far-reaching on generations yet to come.

Mr. Bradlaugh on "The Eight Hours Movement"; M. Eiffel on his tower; "The South African Problem"; Lady Cork on "Three Types of Womanhood"; make up a rich number without the two articles which we reserve for a few final words. The first is "Talk and Talkers," chiefly remarkable for a vivid and graphic picture of Mr. Gladstone's torrential gift, with its rapidity, volume, splash and dash, its frequent beauty, its striking effects, the amount of varied matter which it brings with it, the hopelessness of trying to resist it, the unexpectedness of its onrush, the subdued but fertilised condition of the subjected area which it leaves behind." The last article to which we desire to direct attention is Mr. St. George Mivart's on the Greyfriars, which contains a brief account of the great Franciscan, St. Francis of Assisi.

Altogether an excellent number of real value in matter, and most attractively printed and turned out, and all for sixpence!

### CORRESPONDENCE.

#### Re-incarnation.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—One cannot but admire Mr. Newton Crosland for so bravely standing to his guns and marshalling his forlorn hope against the serried ranks of the believers in Re-incarnation, both of the past and present, led by a host of the grandest intellects and most spiritual minds of the world.

What he means by the statement that Re-incarnation is "the latest product of the philosophy of its advocates" is best known to himself, for every student of philosophy and religion knows that it was a belief held by the whole of antiquity and by the Early Christians and Church Fathers, and is still entertained by the majority of the human race.

The "special attention and analysis" that your correspondent proposes to give to this world-wide and time-honoured belief results in two objections, the second of which is afterwards expanded into a theory which he claims to be a "simple, lucid, reasonable, and acceptable faith."

The objections urged are, firstly, "that it (Re-incarnation) is unsupported by a single fact to justify its existence"; secondly, "it resorts to a complicated and mysterious attempt to explain phenomena, which admit of a far simpler solution." This simpler solution is the theory he propounds.

The present argument is kept clear of evidence or facts, such as the appearance of extraordinary genius in the young, and the testimony of the great teachers of the past who have progressed sufficiently to have knowledge of all (their) material experiences by expanding their souls so as to embrace such united experience. The question merely is whether Mr. Crosland's theory explains the facts more satisfactorily than the theory of Re-incarnation, and whether he has a single "fact," using the word in the sense of material proof and in terms of his own objection to the theory of re-births, to adduce in favour of his proposition. For if the supporters of Mr. Crosland's theory, hereafter to be discussed, fly to Spiritualistic communications for support, there is an equal amount of Spiritualistic evidence in favour of Re-incarnation. That there is no material method of proof within the reach of the majority is evident by the present controversy.

In answer, therefore, to the first objection, the facts which make the theory of Re-incarnation the most necessary working hypothesis, or, in other words, the right faith, of so many millions, are, amongst others: The universality of the law of cause and effect. A law proved beyond the shadow of a doubt, in its material aspects at least, by science, and claimed by the believers in Re-incarnation to hold good for spiritual and psychic causes and effects as well. Secondly, the belief in eternal jus-

tice, a belief which cannot be otherwise logically supported. These two beliefs, or rather innate ideas, in the face of the apparently awful inequalities and injustice of life, can only escape violation by some theory of reconciliation. Mr. Crosland professes to give such a theory in his second objection. Let us, therefore, analyse this important doctrine.

It is briefly as follows:—"That an infant is the result of an act, both spiritual and physical, on the part of the parents. . . . If there is any responsibility in the case, the parents are thus responsible for the souls as well as the bodies of the children." And so on, we must suppose, throwing back responsibility from child to parent, until we get where? To Adam and Eve and original sin? And who was the responsible parent of Adam and Eve? Whatever answer is made, the fact still remains that responsibility is pushed back into the dim and distant past, and thus the crown of our manhood abdicated.

Moreover, if the cause of which the soul is an effect is the act of parents, this act has a beginning, and, therefore, souls must have an end, and are not eternal or immortal; for that only is immortal which knows not death in the past, present, or future.

The theory goes on to state that "when the body dies the soul wings its flight to those regions where what we are pleased to call the wickedness and injustice of this world are rectified; where each individual gets his deserts; where he is placed in a state of eternal progress; and where he is enabled to assist and influence those who remain on earth."

To a certain extent this is the teaching of the Eastern "philosophy," with some important extensions and exceptions, however. The word "region," being a relative term in any particular state of consciousness, is not applied to the evolution of states of consciousness *per se*. Moreover, no point is more insisted on in the Eastern teaching than the law of eternal progress, acting, to use a clumsy enough figure, along spiral curves, so that the entity, as a whole or individuality, progresses; though during one cycle or curve he may develop one portion of his nature at the expense of the rest; when the middle point of balance, however, arrives, man then begins to develop his principles or qualities more harmoniously.

Of course, it is easy to take such a symbol literally, and by the device of setting up a straw figure, beat it to pieces, but it should be remembered that the figure merely bodies forth the eternal idea or type of evolution which is of spiritual pattern, and, therefore, in the nature of things *arupa*, or formless, to finite consciousness.

The main objection of the supporters of Mr. Crosland's views appears to be a strong desire to become angelic beings and ministers of mercy to those who remain on earth, all at once, or to use a Sanscrit term, to become *Nirmāṇkayas*, that is to say, adepts who have abandoned their physical and energise in their subtle bodies. This hope is presumably the child of Christian theology, which makes constant endeavour to destroy the law that "nature never leaps." Re-incarnation, on the contrary, establishes this law of justice, that we cannot be free from material existence until we have struck the balance of material good and evil, and, as far as each individual is concerned, paid every debt to mundane nature. They should also remember that, according to their theory, seeing the huge disproportion of the dead to the living, each living soul must have an army at least of souls watching over it.

Mr. Crosland goes on to say that "the trouble and injustice we experience here are principally of our own creating, and that religion has provided an infallible antidote to, and escape from, our sufferings if we choose to avail ourselves of its offers of rescue and salvation." What! Even of the child born scrofulous to unnatural parents who starve and torment it into an untimely grave? What religion? again I ask. Rescue and salvation of what from what? Of a soul produced by parents, which, *volens volens*, is hurried into this world as the result of animality or unbridled lust? Such a soul as this can have no responsibility for the circumstances in which it finds itself placed; nay, rather, can never be so placed on any principle of justice.

Yes. Re-incarnation does "deprive parents of the paternity of the souls of their children," and most justly so; that it deprives them "of their individuality and identity in their state of spiritual existence" is not true; for the individuality is spiritual, not material, and as long as a man clings frantically to his miserable material personality, so long will he cling to that which is earthly, sensual, and devilish. With regard to the passages in the Bible touching on this subject, Mr. Crosland says: "These instances evidently point to the belief in the



possible spiritual manifestations of the great departed prophets and saints, a very, very different thing from the doctrine of Re-incarnation. But I ask—Was the man born blind a spiritual manifestation of a great departed prophet or saint?

If Mr. Crosland would read some of the early fathers and the fragments of the gospels and writings of the so-called Heresiarchs, he would find that the majority of the Early Christians believed in this doctrine, and presumably they had more evidence and teachings before them than we unfortunately possess. To give one instance, however, out of many. In the Gnostic gospel of Pistis Sophia, Jesus explains at great length the re-incarnation of Elias in John the Baptist, and also that of Himself and twelve disciples.

Mr. Crosland may "deeply deplore the introduction of 'Oriental Philosophy' into our Western ideas," but this same "philosophy" has already rescued thousands from the selfishness of materialism, and enlisted them in the ranks of true responsibility and brotherly love.

JANMANTRA, F.T.S.

*To the Editor of "LIGHT."*

SIR,—Will you allow me to criticise Mr. N. Crosland's article on Re-incarnation in "LIGHT"? If the parents beget the soul of the infant, this soul must be the combination of the two parents and be like the two in that which constitutes the soul. But do we not find children who are quite different in psychical or soul powers from both parents? Do we not see offspring who might have been the offspring of quite different parents? In intellect, temper, and aspirations children do not follow their parents, as must be the case if the *soul-stuff* belonged to their parents.

If soul is anything, it must have size; and, if the soul comes from the parents, then it either grows with time, or is full sized when clothed with matter. If soul grows, where does it get the soul-stuff from for its growth? We know the body gets its increased growth from outside, or surrounding matter. If, on the contrary, the soul is full-sized, then the parents part with at least half their own *soul-stuff* every time a child is begotten, and if parents part with half their soul-matter, say, twelve times in a lifetime, what is left?

Mr. Crosland says that "The troubles of life and injustice which we experience are principally of our own creating." Has the street arab, born of drunken parents, kicked from pillar to post, taught to live by pilfering, brought his own troubles on his own head? Has the child of luxury, reared in the midst of care and love, been the cause of his condition?

Though the sensualist may be blamed for the troubles he experiences, there are numberless cases where misery is felt through no fault on this side the grave. Religion can be no antidote where it is not known; where it has not been carried, and where it is not believed in; and if religion has provided an infallible antidote to our sufferings, which of the religions does Mr. Crosland refer to? If the Divine architect deemed it necessary that the spirit, or soul, should be clothed with matter on this earth, His plans are frustrated, where an infant dies, before he can have any of earth's experience. Mr. Crosland thinks that eternal progress can go on in the spirit spheres; but the soul cannot progress in spirit planes as on earth to the same advantage—else, why clothe spirit with matter? Why not keep spirit in spirit realms? The earth is necessary for the education of soul; and across the river is a poor substitute for the keen, practical experiences and lessons of earth, so necessary for the perfection of the *Ego*. If Re-incarnation does deprive parents of the paternity of their children's souls, it only asserts what the Bible says (Eccles. xii. 7): "Then shall the dust return, &c., and the spirit unto God Who gave it." Man is not the parent of the spirit. Mr. Crosland must have misread the subject of Re-incarnation, because it does not, as he asserts, "deprive human beings of individuality and identity in their state of spiritual existence." It distinctly teaches the continued existence of the *individuality*. It denies that of the *personality*. It does to a great extent deprive beings of their past consciousness, or memory; and upon this point much can be said in support of its denial. My letter has, however, already become too long. Mr. Crosland should not deplore the introduction of any philosophy which will take a man out of the dead soulless rut of so-called Christianity—a system which, in my opinion, is responsible for the sad state of affairs so much deplored by the Bishop of Liverpool; when he says that "the state of society and its wickedness is worse than ever it was." As a Spiritualist, I hail all avenues to truth, and as the East had a science, and art, and philosophy, while the West

was in dense darkness, it is quite possible that we may learn from the Orientals—unless we are so egotistic as to think that we have in our Western civilisation reached the *ne plus ultra*.

63, Manchester-road,  
Bradford.

JOSEPH CLAYTON.

*To the Editor of "LIGHT."*

SIR,—In continuing my comments on Mr. Sinnett's lecture, I must commence by dissenting from your opinion that the subject has been already "threshed out."

It appears to me that its controversial treatment has only just properly commenced; and although you may, of course, suppress the discussion in your columns, it must go on somewhere until the doctrine of Re-incarnation is triumphant, or crushed under the iron heel, triply shod, of philosophy, common-sense, and religion.

I know no better refutation of this doctrine than a statement and an analysis of Mr. Sinnett's arguments in its favour.

Mr. Maitland has conclusively disposed of the argument drawn from the career of Elijah; but he might have spared himself the trouble. St. John has anticipated him. In chap. i. verse 21 of St. John's Gospel, we read in reference to John the Baptist:

"And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No."

If our metaphysicians would study the Christian Scriptures more, and Oriental philosophy less, they would find their difficulties respecting the nature and destiny of man effectually dispelled.

Mr. Sinnett tells us that "in the kingdom of nature there are occasional abnormal exceptions to the standing rules of natural growth. It is a rule, for instance, that men of our race live for about threescore years and ten, but there are many examples in which that rule is violated." I know of no such rule as that mentioned by Mr. Sinnett. The average duration of human life is something like half what he represents it to be; and a mundane existence of seventy years is the exception, not the rule.

Again, "People sometimes die prematurely from the spiritual planes of nature and return before their time to the earth life. Nor in venturing that guess need we assume that accidents like those which terminate life abruptly sometimes amongst us are liable to befall the released souls of the higher levels. Premature returns to earth life in the rare cases where they occur may be due to Karmic complications too elaborate to inquire into now."

This statement of the case is completely upset in the next page, where we are informed that "there is no accident in the supreme act of Divine justice guiding human evolution."

Nor can there be any premature return to earth life; if the destiny of man is governed by laws which "operate with an exactitude that no chemical reaction can eclipse."

The principal difficulty in this argument is shirked by the phrase that the "Karmic complications are too elaborate to be inquired into now." I should think so indeed. But it appears that under the "all-sufficient government of the discernment of nature," the suffering and injustice to which a human soul has been subjected in its earth life are not rectified, and no attempt is even made at their rectification, which is postponed until that soul has been kept in its separate state for a prodigious period, say, 1,000 years, and it is not re-incarnated until all its past consciousness, its memories, its experiences, its acquisitions have been "vibrated" out of it—whatever that may mean—and then it is returned to its earth life as an empty soul to recommence a career without any conscious illumination from its past existence! The reason why mankind progress in this world is simple and obvious enough. They are guided by the knowledge and experience of their predecessors, whose achievements can be witnessed and appealed to; but the re-incarnated soul is not to be allowed this advantage to be derived from its past mistakes or successes. Fortunately this curious condition is attributed to the discernment of nature. An All-wise and Almighty God is very properly not made responsible for such a miserable and unrighteous result. It is almost equivalent to saying that the majority of human souls have been born in vain. What a clumsy and uneconomical provision on the part of the ruler of the universe; but we may congratulate ourselves that we are under the care and government of God and not of a metaphysician.

Mr. Sinnett disputes the general opinion that an "extraordinary genius" for music, acquiring languages and such like accomplishments, is a gift or inborn faculty. This simple belief

is thrust complacently aside, and we are given instead the explanation that "there is no gift in the matter—there is acquirement faithfully preserved in the Karmic affinities of the Ego and in its true individuality."

But how did the first soul who possessed a genius for music, or the acquisition of languages, develop its faculty unless that faculty was innate? And here I may pertinently ask, How did the first children who were born in this world acquire their souls when there were no disembodied souls to be re-incarnated?

Mr. Sinnett glides over one difficulty which he notices in passing: "that some rarely organised persons have maintained revelations of a former life of no very remote period," although his main contention is that all recollections of a former life are "distilled" out of our souls before they are qualified to re-incarnate.

The only cases I know of in this category are of persons who, under certain circumstances, have been under the impression that they have previously witnessed scenes and occurrences which they are experiencing. This phenomenon admits of a very simple explanation. It appertains to the prophetic faculty in some natures, and is allied to Second Sight. Living over again the same incidents under the same conditions is not likely or even possible.

I should like to go through every paragraph of Mr. Sinnett's lecture, and subject it to careful examination, as there is scarcely a sentence in it which does not contain a fallacy; but space is limited and I forbear.

You must not be surprised that there is so little hearty co-operation among Spiritualists when doctrines like Mr. Sinnett's are circulated under the auspices of our society. The Spiritualist Alliance was, I imagine, hardly founded for the purpose of propagating a kind of Anglicised Buddhism.\*

If our Lord, when He said that "the poor ye have always with you," had added, "but some day their souls shall be re-incarnated in the rich, prosperous, good, and happy bodies of Mr. Smith and Mr. Brown," He would have vulgarised His gospel beyond all hope or possibility of its acceptance.

London.

NEWTON CROSLAND.

July 1st, 1889.

\*[Mr. Crosland is hardly fair in his criticism. That our Alliance listens to the views of all who are good enough to address its meetings assuredly does not commit it to the views of any particular speaker. We hoped that we had got sufficiently broad in mind to feel able to listen with interest, even if without approval, to any competent student of our subject. If not, so much the worse for us.—ED. OF "LIGHT."]

#### To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I was this morning (June 29th), before the post came in, reading an old letter I had written in the *Spiritualist* of December 31st, 1881, which says: "We can hardly doubt, I think, that the New Testament teaches *progress* by Re-incarnation; for surely John the Baptist was a nobler character than Elijah, for the Baptist was a grand, self-denying teacher of righteousness, while Elijah, with many powerful qualities, was chiefly noteworthy as being a very remarkable physical medium (and consequently, as such, an 'astral man,' according to Colonel Olcott), who proved himself bloodthirsty to a degree in the hour of his greatest success, and the reverse of brave when he fled away from the angry woman who would have avenged his indiscriminate slaughterings. . . . The avengement was left till Elijah's next coming to earth, when he was himself slain through the revenge of a woman." I confess I considered this as but moral retribution, and that being the case, of course I believed and still believe that his and John the Baptist's were the same soul. Half-an-hour after, I was reading Mr. Maitland's letter that had just come by the post.

Mr. Maitland says "John was but a medium." I had always thought that he was "more than a prophet." Mr. Maitland says: "Instead of being a re-incarnation of Elijah, John was simply overshadowed by the angel or perfected spirit of Elias." Jesus, speaking of John the Baptist, says: "This is Elijah which was to come." I can hardly think, after this, that Mr. Maitland has ground for saying that when Elijah had left the earth in a conveyance of fire "he had transmuted physical body and soul into spirit, so that no trace of him could afterwards be found." If Jesus had not found traces of His astral body and soul, I could have agreed with Mr. Maitland. How about his apparition at the Transfiguration if He was all spirit and no trace of His soul could be found? But Mr. Maitland will see

no realism in the Bible, or perhaps anywhere else. To him (I write from knowledge) the words of Jesus: "Before Abraham was I am" convey no idea of His pre-existence, but merely mean that "He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," a figurative lamb doubtless. To Mr. Maitland the spirit who spoke to the unfortunate murderer Lefroy, when he said there were three persons in the carriage, while the guard said there were but two, was simply his own astral body. Here, again, I disagree with Mr. Maitland. With regard to Mr. Sinnett, I think he rather oversteps his own doctrines when he assumes that John the Baptist was Elijah. For surely Elijah was a physical medium, and in that case how could he have re-incarnated? For in the first part of *this same letter* of December 31st, 1881, I find myself writing: "Colonel Olcott, the president of the Theosophical Society, alleges that 'the whole range of mediumistic physical phenomena is produced by souls embodied or disembodied, whether in the flesh or out of it, who have lost their immortal spirit, from whom the Divine immortal spirit has shrunk in horror.'" So we see that mediums as well as controls are included in this sad category.

Colonel Olcott further says (I quote from my own letter): "Elementaries are either *men still in the flesh*, merely souls who have lost their *nous* or immortal spirit, and are no longer trinities but only dualities; or if they are *not the spiritless souls of men in the flesh*, they are beings already in the next world, who have been formerly men, but who, having lost their *nous* or spirit, *generally before death*, and their bodies of flesh also by death, are reduced to a single principle, that of soul only, spiritless souls, which must soon be annihilated." So we see the Theosophists are, if judged by their leader, not so large-hearted, or so comprehensive, or so long-suffering as the God and the writers of the Old and New Testament, who take not the Holy Spirit from suffering humanity so easily, or we should never read so often there of evil spirits, deaf and dumb spirits, lying spirits, unclean spirits, foul spirits. T. W.

#### To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—As Re-incarnation is again to the fore, perhaps the extract which I enclose may be of use. I cannot profess to understand either the great length and vigour, not to say bitterness, with which some of your correspondents attack the matter, nor the objection which some feel to any discussion of it at all. The only objection I see to its discussion, is that there is nothing to discuss, and no basis for argument. Yet your correspondents seem never to tire of the subject. I hope, sir, you will not carry out your threat of stopping the correspondence. There must be great interest somewhere to cause so much discussion.

"There is some Russian theory, which is an argument in favour of immortality, in this wise: Suppose a number of grains of sand were put in a pan. They would have a certain form. Shake the pan and that form would be lost. But the mathematical law of permutations and combinations demonstrates that eventually each moving grain will be again right where it was at first. In the interval the mass will have been very nearly produced many times. Time is of no consequence. Shaken long enough, the mass of sand will be itself again. The same law applies through all things. A man is made up of certain atoms arranged in a particular way. In the shifts and changes of this world's atoms each human being will recur again. That is demonstrable mathematically. His brain, heart, all there is to him, will be identical with what they are. Such human being would have the same mind, the same soul, since the arrangement of the atoms makes the brain, the individuality. It will be literally the same man or the same woman. But, before the identical human being is reproduced, there will have been many near reproductions; there will be groupings of atoms forming parts of the old brain; and to these groups so arranged together again will come flashes—mere flashes—of memory, because they will have the same adjusted invisible tracings upon them. This is what makes us sometimes have a dim recollection that we have seen somewhere before something we encounter now. With succeeding groupings of atoms this memory will be more distinct. The finally readjusted man will know all, remember all. Each subsequent change to him will be but a reproduction of what he has at some stage seen before, and, meanwhile, he will have been a part of everybody else. There will be universal memory, universal knowledge. The world is not yet old enough to allow of more than glimmerings of this to be perceived. But time does not matter. The mathematical law cannot be gainsaid. Mankind is immortal to a certainty. Immortal from a law even of physics."—(*Chambers' Journal*.)

NO REINCARNTIONIST.

Christian Kingdom Society.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In your issue of June 29th, Mr. W. Oakley French accuses me of sneering at the Christian Kingdom Society. He might, at least, have taken the trouble to ascertain what words



I actually used before making such a charge. He puts in inverted commas as a quotation from me the words, "supposed to be interested." Those words are not to be found in my letter of June 17th. I spoke of "questions which are said to interest the Christian Kingdom Society." I do not think this can be called a sneer, but the words attributed to me by Mr. French certainly would be.

33, Henry-street,  
St. John's Wood, N.W.  
July 1st, 1889.

F. W. READ.

#### Spiritualism and Physical Phenomena.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In his "Notes by the Way" this week, "M. A. (Oxon.)," corrects a verbal mistake of the President of the Society for Psychical Research, in stating that Spiritualists "attribute the physical phenomena to the agency of intelligences *other than human*."

Professor Sidgwick, of course, meant other than physically embodied human intelligences. But I wish to take more substantial exception to his statement. Certainly I do not pretend to be a representative Spiritualist, but I believe there are many who, like myself, do not disclaim the appellation, and who would nevertheless greatly object to be committed to the belief in question. I have myself often and strenuously argued in favour of an alternative hypothesis, that is to say, extra-organic and sub-consciously motivated action by the medium.

Do not Spiritualists admit the projection of the human "double," and, if so, how can they fail to recognise the cognate but minor phenomenon of action at a distance by the same force? I remember, indeed, the time when the idea of "psychic" or "nerve" force was ignorantly denounced and ridiculed by some Spiritualists, who seemed never to have asked themselves why a "medium" should be necessary at all in the case of physical phenomena, or why hands should be placed on or over a table in order that it should be moved. But we have surely got beyond that stage now. One of the most genuine and best known of Spiritualists, your occasional correspondent "S. E. de M.," has put forward the highly probable theory that all extra-organic action is a development and projection of automatic action of the same character—psychography of automatic writing, the "direct voice" of automatic speaking, &c. And even as to the intelligence Spiritualists are to some extent divided in opinion, and certainly I am not alone among them in holding that psychology must be much more deeply explored, before we can venture to deny the subconscious motivation of actions. I should rather say that this has been already established.

At all events, the President of the Society for Psychical Research should be informed that these questions had been keenly discussed among Spiritualists for years before the Psychical Society was thought of.

C. C. M.

#### A Personal Experience.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Perhaps the following incident may interest your readers. Doubtless each will have his (or her) own interpretation. It has, however, the value of being a totally unsolicited experience, like many others with which I have been made familiar.

Four days since I had been occupied in tending my husband, who has been ailing with a chronic attack of bronchitis, which had debilitated him to some extent, though not seriously. About 2 p.m. I had gone to an adjoining room to rest awhile and had taken up a volume of Hawthorne. No feeling of sleepiness had evinced itself until I found myself, as it seemed, awakening from total unconsciousness. My hands lightly folded across my book, which lay face downwards on my lap as I half reclined upon a couch.

My sensations as I gradually became aware of my own identity, were those of the complete peace and restfulness which at such times seem to transcend any power of words to describe. It appeared as though hours might have elapsed, but the clock before me told I had been little more than fifteen minutes unconscious. Going softly into the next chamber I found my invalid in a sweet slumber, lying back among the pillows, and so he remained for over half an hour. When he awoke I expressed my satisfaction at the good nap he had enjoyed.

"Yes," said, he, "I did as the young man told me."

Then, in answer to my natural inquiry, he went on to say that, while reading, a voice said to him very gently, but quite distinctly, "Now you must sleep, go to sleep!" and a young man appeared at the bedside and put out his hand. I surmised he might have dreamed it.

"No, I was not asleep," was his reply, "I saw him as plainly as I ever saw anyone in my life, and I laid my books down over there, and leaned back at once."

"Did you see his face?" I asked, "was he like anyone you ever knew?"

"No, not his face, I saw his hand, and I thought it very good advice, so I took it."

Certainly my invalid mended from that hour. Now I am aware this sounds but trivial as I write. Yet, taken with the fact that my husband is quite sceptical in the matter of spiritual manifestations, and would most certainly rather assign any so-called natural cause to an occurrence, I have ventured to relate the incident exactly as it happened.

Doubtless such may be familiar to some of your readers, and most sincerely do I hope that to them may also have been granted the restful peace and comfort which the impression left with myself.

F. O.

#### The Franklin Mystery.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Permit me some remarks on the above.

In my busy and varied life—particularly since that Arctic voyage in 1850—I have rarely had time to connect myself with associations of inquirers into those unseen influences which act upon man. But the midnight watch at sea, or the bush camp in some wild forest solitude, gives to thoughtful minds much opportunity for deep reflection. Rarely, however, can one be more impressed than when viewing from the look-out called a "Crow's nest," in exploring or other vessels at the far north or south, the wondrous, magnificent, soul-inspiring scene around during the middle hours of a calm night.

With broad daylight and the sun shining in mellowed lustre at a time when, elsewhere, darkness ordinarily reigns, few minds can resist the attraction which carries the soul away to loftier and better feelings than what our commonplace existence produces. Thus, through something unexplainable, but which has dominated me from earliest boyhood, I have always had a desire for what was higher than the necessities of a hard-working life surrounded me with. Such desires, however, were a great drawback to me, not only because they led me to a distaste for grosser things, but also because they led to an isolation among others. Unfortunately, in one sense—though it was a solace to myself—I suffered materially by following a more pleasing occupation than the mere seeking after worldly wealth.

Now, the point I would dwell upon at present is this, as I said at an Exeter Hall missionary meeting not long ago: There are far higher, nobler, more Divine things than the manipulation of gold, or even the catching of uncivilised souls. We have yet to educate one another and bring about a superior intelligence among us. In this work, I have, though much alone in it, been engaged, more or less, for many years. In America, during that Civil War, I had numerous friends of advanced reasoning powers, and I witnessed much that was extraordinary and beyond my ready comprehension, though I can understand what is termed by me "Magnetic thought currents." Had I been able to purchase other works than those necessary for my vocation when at sea, perhaps I might be better informed. As it was, however, I made and still possess a vast classified collection of printed matter on abstruse and metaphysical subjects. But a hard-working man—whether by manual toil or the pen—has to grapple with a material and tangible world, not an ideal one, however interesting certain studies may be to himself. Moreover, all I possess of any sort of knowledge is wholly *self-taught*; for my sole education was purely nautical at that noble institution, the Royal Hospital School, Greenwich, where I was from 1827 to 1831. My love for science and progress, even then, soon made me prominent; and, under the kind teaching of my ever revered master, the late Edward Riddle, F.R.A.S., I became a skilful astronomer and theoretical navigator in my thirteenth year. I was also well up in past history, ancient writers, and translations of learned men whose minds seemed as if also belonging to me. Several curious incidents which in after years the late Mr. Serjeant Cox explained to me occurred in connection with my mental powers. Some strange

coincidences of my later years I now send you to illustrate what I say. But at no time have I ever been what is termed scholastically educated; nor to this day do I rightly understand much that is considered essential to literary men or those who handle the pen.

My brave father—a Trafalgar officer under Nelson—died from numerous wounds at an early age, leaving a widow and children with naught but the heritage of his heroic fame. In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for June, 1827, will be found a short memoir of him and mention of me. Afterwards my family went to France, leaving me to the care of another well-known Trafalgar officer who had shot the man who killed Nelson.

Then followed my presentation to the school, before I was ten years old; and ere I left it, in April, 1831, for sea, I was one of the three coequal head monitors over the whole school.

My holidays were passed in France, going to and fro by myself, the first journey before I was eleven, and the third in 1830, when I witnessed the French Revolution of that period.

Thus my varied experiences go far back, and I merely refer to them now to show that I have never received any instruction save what came to me by my own mental desire and grasping. Looking to the years I have gone through, and the many extraordinary events—some even now seeming to me most marvellous—I perceive a more than common power singling me out for certain purposes, and propelling me forward. That, however, is my belief, and I never presume to push it forward, or to speak of strange experiences befalling me, except when called upon or obliged to relate certain facts. Even my ever having been able to speak so much and before learned assemblies, also my numerous writings—books, pamphlets, essays, articles in journals, &c., besides lectures on many varied subjects—have often been a wonder to me. In youth, and long afterwards, I was a stutterer; yet when I began addressing audiences on the Arctic question or other subjects, I was, as frequently reported, clear, distinct, and logical. As for literary composition, I have never pretended to any; and all I attempt is to utter plain common-sense in telling what there is to say.

Pardon these personal observations; but I have an immense respect for right intellectualism and advanced thought, while I can calmly look with a kindly feeling upon opinions clashing with my own. Indeed, what I deemed to be the pervading sentiment of all truth-seekers—unity of desire—was mine; but, latterly, I perceive so much of apparent contention and division among believers in unseen influences, that I rarely appear outside my own humble sphere. This late revival of the Franklin Mystery calls me forward. Personally, I remain strong in the belief expressed by me, even years ago, as you may see by the titles of some of the papers I have read at various periods here and in America.

I note your remark about my being “amusing in my comments,” and this the more leads me to suspect that I still need some better knowledge than I yet possess. Were I able, it would be a pleasure now to attend the meetings of your Alliance, also others where the glorious mind of man is brought out; but, as it is, my purse barely suffices for the most economical needs of myself and old wife.

Bexley Heath.

W. PARKER SNOW.

July 1st, 1889.

[We thank our aged correspondent for his interesting letter. He has evidently been and is a man of great activity both of mind and body, with marked individuality. He encloses a list of twenty-two subjects on which he used to lecture between 1860 and 1875. Besides his own special subject they include his adventures among Fuegians and among the Myals or aborigines of Australia:—Adventures during forty-five years' wanderings at home and abroad:—Ocean Island Colonisation:—The Wind in its circuits and the Waters in their Courses:—Crime and Poverty:—Temperance:—Labour:—Women in various parts of the World:—Heroic Deeds, or the Divine Essence in Man:—Man as he is: Animal, Mental, Spiritual:—Second Life: Physical, Moral, Spiritual. “We never die.” The man, self-taught and self-made who can cover so wide a range, has reason to be content with a well-spent life and well-used opportunities. We trust that Captain Parker Snow may yet be able to carry out his desire to leave us some complete account of his varied and remarkable experiences. We have returned his extracts, which are interesting but too long to print.—ED. OF “LIGHT”.]

## SOCIETY WORK.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S.E.—On Sunday last Mr. Veitch lectured upon the subject of “Spiritualism, Divine or Demoniacal?” Questions asked and answered satisfactorily. Sunday next Mr. R. J. Lees.—M. GIFFORD, Sec.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION.—A combined open-air meeting will be held on Peckham Rye on Sunday, July 21st, at 3 p.m., Messrs. Rodgers, Lees, and others will speak. July 28th, at 3 p.m., in Battersea Park, near the band stand. Messrs. Goddard, Lees, Rodgers, Hopcroft, and Long will be present. August 14th, the annual trip to Epping Forest.—J. VEITCH, Sec.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—Mrs. Yeeles at both meetings, her clairvoyance was remarkable and very convincing to sceptics present. A goodly number of adults and children went to our summer outing to Ashted Woods, where a very enjoyable day was spent. On Sunday next, Mr. Humphries, at 11 a.m., “Spiritual Conversion”; at 6.30, Mr. T. L. Henly, “The Religion of the Future”.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

CLAPHAM JUNCTION, 295, LAVENDER HILL, S.W.—Mr. Ernest E. Barker read an excellent paper on “Spiritualism and Investigators.” The lecture consisted of an exhaustive and trenchant examination of various classes of investigators, and the manner in which they approach the subject. Wise admonition was given which, it is hoped, was taken to heart. Next Sunday Mr. Vango will give a séance on behalf of Mrs. Harvey, at 7 p.m.—F.D.S.

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, MARYLEBONE-ROAD, W.—Attendance is given at the above rooms every Friday, 10.30 a.m. to 9.30 p.m., and Saturday 10.30 to four, Sunday morning eleven to 12.45, the latter for pure Spiritual intercourse or devotional exercises, the former for answering questions on Psychical and Social Problems; there will be a variety of useful articles on sale Friday and Saturday to defray expenses, rent, &c., also with a view of showing how a system of trading may be instituted to secure fair dealing.—J. M. DALE.

ZEPHYR HALL, 9, BEDFORD GARDENS, SILVER STREET, NOTTING HILL GATE.—Last Sunday evening, in the absence of Mr. Lees, Mr. W. W. Goddard read a paper on “Internal Harmony,” which was greatly appreciated by an attentive audience and afterwards answered several questions. Next Sunday at seven, Lecture, after which the secretary will give a statement in reference to the continuation of these lectures. All friends interested in the above please attend. No séance at 16, Dartmoor-street, until further notice. Open-air meeting next Sunday at three, near the Marble Arch, speakers: Mr. A.M. Rodger and Drake.—W. O. DRAKE, Hon. Sec.

KING'S CROSS, 148, COPENHAGEN-STREET.—Last Sunday morning Mr. Battell read a suggestive paper, “The Best Means of Spreading Spiritualism.” It was followed by a discussion. Mr. Battell is likely to prove a good speaker and worker. After being warmly complimented on his excellent advice the business of selecting delegates for the Confederation was gone into. Messrs. Daly, Rodgers, and Battell were elected. Mr. J. S. Cowderoy was elected treasurer for the ensuing year. The secretary stated that he placed the proposal of the society before the London Spiritualist Alliance with the view of getting the loan of books. It was received by the librarian and referred to council. Mr. Cowderoy suggested that the nucleus of a library should be formed, and generously promised to contribute towards it. This was unanimously adopted. Mr. Yater conducted the open-air meeting in Regent's Park, the speakers who supported him were Messrs. Towns, Eagle, Rodgers, and Battell. Any books or subscription towards Library Fund will be gratefully received by the Hon. Sec., J. BOWLES DALY, 53, Hartham-road, Holloway, N.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THE writer of a postcard (Portugal), with an illegible signature should address his inquiries to head-quarters. They partake of the nature of a conundrum.

DR. HÜBBE-SCHLEIDEN.—We have made inquiries as to *Happiness*, but have not yet heard from our contributor. We will try to get the book or pamphlet for you.

*Higher Aspects of Spiritualism* is not out of print; copies can be had at our offices. *Spirit Identity* is not procurable, and there is no immediate prospect of its being reprinted, as its enlargement and recasting involve much time and labour.

E.C.—Thanks for your letter. We are impartially awaiting the solution of events, not a little amused at the course they have hitherto taken. The text of your address (long since promised) has never come to hand, though you spoke of its having been mailed.

MAY we ask some friends to read and heed the standing notices to correspondents? Much trouble will be saved if it is borne in mind that these notices must be taken literally. In the press of work that now comes to us we are forced to ask for matter that is ready for the press, and of moderate length. We fear that some correspondents have not time to write a short letter.

TO THE DEAF.—A Person cured of Deafness and noises in the head of 23 years' standing by a simple remedy, will send a description of it FREE to any Person who applies to NICHOLSON, 21, Bedford Square, London, W.C.