

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"WHATEVER DOETH MAN'S MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goths.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

The *Detroit Free Press* prints some reminiscences of E. L. Blanchard, written by "Luke Sharp." They are full of interest. Mr. Blanchard was a self-made man, and like most of his class was well made. He was a hearty, genial, kindly man, and amongst the bricks that he had built into his edifice was Spiritualism. He wrote the Drury Lane pantomime for the last thirty years. He was the dramatic critic of one of the great London dailies. He wrote essays, guide books, stories, newspaper and magazine articles, edited papers and editions of Shakespeare;—in short no department of literature was safe from him, and he adorned them all. He had a way of making people believe that what he did not know about any subject was not worth knowing. He knew absolutely nothing about horses and cared less, but a chance prophecy of his hit the winner in a great race, and he never succeeded in living up to his reputation as an authority on horse-flesh.

An amusing story is told of one of his earliest ventures. He had been with a strolling show, and it had come to an untimely end. So he tramped up from Bristol to London, and found a friend who told him of a wealthy butcher with literary aspirations who had started a scientific periodical. I will not risk spoiling the story by abbreviation:—

"Now," said Blanchard's friend to him, "the editor of that publication which, strangely enough, has been a success, has left in a huff. He can't stand the butcher's domineering way. If you don't mind that I think I can get you the situation."

Blanchard said that he would be only too glad to take all the rebuffs the butcher would give him, if he only got enough to keep him alive.

"Very well, then. Here is the address of the butcher. You go and see him. Pretend that you are up on science and art and everything else that he asks you about. There is one thing that that butcher has seen printed somewhere, and he will very likely ask you the question. He had seen it mentioned somewhere that January 21st has been for the last twenty-five years, on an average, the coldest day of the year. Now, if he asks you any question about that, remember January 21st."

Young Blanchard called on the wealthy butcher and found him a very pretentious individual.

"Well, young man," said the butcher, "you don't look as if you knew very much."

Blanchard admitted that appearances were against him, but made a remark to the effect that sometimes appearances were not all that might be asked for.

"Now, young man," said the butcher, "do you understand science?"

To this comprehensive question, Blanchard modestly admitted that he understood all about it.

"Very well, I will test you," and with that the butcher frowned deeply and seemed to throw his mind back into the misty realms of scientific lore.

"Can you tell me," he said, slowly and impressively, "what day of the year on the average is the coldest?"

"Ah, that," said young Blanchard, "is a very searching question. It is a very great question. It is a question that the famous authorities have differed upon. Some hold that the day occurs in February. Some in March; others again in December, but I believe that the very best opinion of the scientific world coincides in saying that January 21st is, on an average, the coldest day in the year."

"Right you are," cried the butcher warmly, "right you are, sir. You shall have the editorship of the publication."

Mr. Blanchard told some very amusing stories of the appalling scientific mistakes he made in editing this journal. But, nevertheless, the paper was a success, and I can remember that extracts from this scientific miscellany—extracts that Blanchard admitted were written by his own pen on subjects of which he knew absolutely nothing, except what he had gleaned from the encyclopædias—were taken by the Government of Canada, and incorporated in the school books of that country for the education of children in science. Blanchard had written up dense ignorance in such a taking way that he had deluded the professors of science themselves.

This is a toughish story, especially when it recounts the dissipation of the astrologer into space. But it shows the mystical side of Blanchard in working order:—

Mr. Blanchard at one time edited a paper called *The Astrologer*. The idea of the paper was his own, and it arose from a very strange circumstance that happened in the green room of Drury Lane Theatre. There was a sombre fellow who was connected in some way with the theatre who spent most of his time in silence and holding his head in his hands, and made friends and acquaintances with nobody. One night when one of the actors was on the stage news came to him that a son had been born to him. In order to surprise him one of the actors in the green room wrote on the wall with chalk:—

"Youngest child of James Blank, born December 16th, A.D. 18—."

When this had been done the sombre individual rose up and took the chalk and without a word wrote under this sentence:—

"And died February 21st, A.D. 18—."

All who were in the green room were shocked at this piece of brutality, and Blanchard got a strip of paper and hurrying so as to get it finished before the actor came in, pasted the ends of the paper so that it covered the line underneath the first one. The actor was congratulated when he came off the stage and fortunately did not know anything of what had been written under the line which greeted him when he came into the green room. The subject was forgotten, when one winter night a messenger came for this actor, who was again taking part in the play.

"What do you want him for?" asked Blanchard.

"His child has just died," said the messenger.

Blanchard at once turned to the wall and tore down the strip of paper and found that the date there written by the sombre man was the exact date on which the child had died. This remarkable coincidence struck him at the time and set him to thinking. He found that the queer individual seemed to have the gift of prediction, and he proposed to him that they would start a paper together, to be called *The Astrologer*. The man agreed, and the paper turned out to be a remarkable success.

"We expected," said Blanchard, "that our most frequent inquiries would come from servant girls and that class. But we were astonished shortly after the paper was started to find predictions asked for by dukes and duchesses, and lords and ladies in high rank of life." One day this sombre individual who had never become any particular friend of Blanchard's, proposed that they should take an excursion together. It was Saturday afternoon.

"Where shall we go?" said Blanchard.

"It doesn't matter," said the other. "Let's go to the first—"

railway station we come to and take the first train that goes out and go as far as it goes."

"But," protested Blanchard, "it may take us to the north of Scotland."

"Very well, then, let us take a train that leaves the south of London. It cannot take us further than the Channel."

So they went to the station and got on the first train and that took them to Dover. On Sunday the two climbed up to Shakespeare's Cliff and sat there in silence for some time, looking over the Channel. Suddenly the sombre individual said:

"Blanchard, what a sensation it would make if I was to grasp you around the middle and jump with you off the cliff."

Blanchard looked at the man and saw the light of insanity in his eyes. He quickly sprang back from the edge of the cliff, and said:

"I don't think I care just at present to be the central figure in such a sensation. We will go down to the town if you don't mind."

The astrologer laughed and got up and followed Mr. Blanchard down to Dover.

On Monday morning Blanchard found that his comrade had left for London on the first train. He followed him, and when he got to the London office he found that the astrologer had gone to his room in the fourth story and had locked himself in, with instructions that he was not to be disturbed. As he had frequently done this before, no attention was paid to the matter, but when lunch time passed, and the astrologer did not come out of his room, those in the office began to be alarmed. Finally the door was broken in, and they found the room empty. The door had been locked on the inside and the keys were still hanging there. The windows were closed and there was no chimney up which the man could have escaped. His hat and overcoat and cane were on the table, but not a trace of the astrologer could be found, and up to this day the mystery of his strange disappearance has never been solved. This mysterious departure broke up *The Astrologer*, the paper that Blanchard and the strange man had got out together.

The *Religious Herald* (Hartford, Conn., U.S.A.) has a narrative of a "Recitation of the Charge of the Light Brigade: and what came of it," which, if I can divest it of an unctuous and peculiarly rancid flavour of pseudo-pietism that pervades it, is curious and interesting. One Mr. Hammond, it seems, had been holding a mission at Boston, and at his concluding meeting told this story. In the year 1863 he was conducting a mission at Rochester, N.Y., at a large church, the incumbent of which was one Dr. Shaw. He had had little time for preparation of his sermon on a certain evening, and was rather stumbling about, talking of and illustrating some passages which spoke of Christian boldness. Suddenly it flashed into his mind that he would enforce what he had been saying by reciting the "Charge of the Light Brigade." He did so, to the exceeding wonderment of most of his hearers, who roundly took him to task for introducing such matter into the pulpit. He himself was perplexed, for he had yielded to an uncontrollable impulse of which his calmer reason was ashamed. He passed a restless, unquiet night, and rose early to find a soldierly man inquiring for him. He told him that he was one of the Six Hundred, one of the thirty-six who came back from the Valley of Death. When the American war broke out he had placed his sword at the service of the North. Not till he heard Tennyson's magnificent lines so unexpectedly recited had he realised what cause for thankfulness he had in the preservation of his life while his comrades to right and left of him were cut down. His heart was touched, the veil of forgetfulness was raised, and he was a changed man—touched by a mysterious magnetic thrill that came from that inspired recital.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

[Any acknowledgment of books received in this column neither precludes nor promises further notice.]

The Psychic Life of Micro-organisms. By ALFRED BINET. (Longmans. Pp. 115. Price 5s.)

THOUGH all earth be carved all over with letters of Divine knowledge, he who does not pause to comprehend them and acquire the language will find them valueless.

AN EXPOSITION OF THEOSOPHY: BY AUTHORITY.*

By authority, for who should speak more authoritatively than the inventor? An exposition, for in this catechetical text-book the outside world gets the first prolonged declaration in intelligible form of principles and purposes which govern the Theosophical Society. We must not lay too much stress on the title of the Society, for there were Theosophists before the members of the Theosophical Society, and it is an open secret that the name finally adopted on its foundation was an accident and not in any way of the essence of the intentions in the minds of the founders. But we need not split hairs. The Theosophical Society it is: and we turn to an authoritative exponent to learn what of Theosophy there is in it.

The Wisdom Religion, which our author sets out to explain and expound, is that which is to be known to us by the old title of Theosophy. There can be no harm in this use of words, for they frequently acquire, as all philologists know, a second intention, and this use of the word, employed in a different sense among our English mystics, is not in any way strained. The Wisdom Religion may well be an exposition of the wisdom of God.

The volume under notice professes on the part of the author "some care in disentangling some part of what is true from what is false in Spiritualistic teachings as to the post-mortem life, and to showing the true nature of Spiritualistic phenomena." The author, we are sorry to find, considers herself "the target for every poisoned arrow of Spiritualism." We demur, and mildly protest. There is, no doubt, considerable divergence of opinion in the interpretation of phenomena among Spiritualists and Theosophists, and we earnestly desire that these various theories may be discussed without acrimony. "Poisoned Arrows" may be dismissed as mere rhetoric. If we are to go into questions of poison and arrows and targets, we might recall days not so long gone by when every cherished belief of the Spiritualist was flouted, giped, and sneered at in no measured language by those who now complain of much more measured terms of disagreement. Those days are past, we hope for ever. If we may not see eye to eye, we may at least hope to understand each other without flying into a passion, and obscuring our reason by intemperance.

To this understanding Madame Blavatsky has made a very considerable contribution in her present volume. It is within the capacity of the average man. She is by no means an average woman, and her ponderous volumes—monuments of erudition as they are—have passed over the heads of common folk. There have been wise men—wise (perhaps) in their own conceit—who have given us to understand that they understood them. But they have failed to convey *their* understanding to *our* understanding. We have found ourselves, when all is over, still holding out dumb hands and mutely questioning.

It will be no longer possible for any reader to peruse this *Key to Theosophy* and complain that he cannot understand, without stultifying himself. It is the frankest, most outspoken utterance that ever threw light on an obscure subject. It will, indeed, be open to an adverse critic to say that the pretensions put forward rest on no trustworthy basis. He may say that there is no foundation of demonstrated proof on which the superstructure is reared. But he can no longer affect to misunderstand what is so clearly stated. The book in every page is full of clear, precise statement which will traverse the opinion of the orthodox Spiritualist nearly over its whole area.

Into all these points it would be obviously impossible for us to go. The function of a reviewer is, it seems to us, often

* *The Key to Theosophy: A clear Exposition of Ethics, Science, and Philosophy, for the study of which the Theosophical Society has been Founded.* By H. P. BLAVATSKY. (London: The Theosophical Publishing Company. Price 5s.)

misapprehended. In a journal such as this the most that can be done is to indicate to readers the sort of food that is spread for them, and to leave them to taste at pleasure. In the pages of a *Quarterly* or *Nineteenth Century Review* a writer may deal less with form and more with matter; aspiring even to such permanent literary work as Macaulay and his successors have given to our literature. We shall discharge our duty best by telling our readers what in this book there is to read, and advising them to study it and form their own opinion upon its contents.

It might have been called a *Catechism of Theosophy*, and in that aspect is far ahead of most handbooks. Its fourteen sections discuss, in the form of question and answer, various points on which we crave enlightenment, and (of course) omit several which seem to us important. They deal with Theosophy and the aim of the Theosophical Society: Exoteric and Esoteric Theosophy (a very marked distinction): the teaching of Theosophy as regards nature and man; on the *post-mortem* states; on Re-incarnation (a cardinal dogma of the faith): and on the state of the Soul in Kama-Loka and Devachan. We have further some dissertations on the various "principles" that go to make up ourselves: on the practical bearings of Theosophy on daily life: and, lastly, an academic disquisition on Mahatmas.

Into these high matters we do not enter. If we did, we should be compelled to say that we have much to be thankful for and yet much to desire in the way of information. But we shall be expected to say how far the professed "disentangling some part of what is true from what is false in Spiritualistic teachings" has yielded any appreciable result. Frankly, very little. The method of the author is the method of dogmatism, unsupported by anything beyond the mere assertion. "We assert that the spirits of the dead cannot return to earth: save in rare and exceptional cases." We, on the contrary, assert that they do return, so far as we are able to judge, and we require something more than an *ex cathedra non possumus* to dispose of our conviction. With the common beliefs that occupied the ground of Spiritualism in earlier days, we have no concern. They are dying or dead, and we do not defend them. We should be content that a sponge of oblivion were passed over those old bad days, whether on our side of the slate or on that of our opponents. We are very sure that it is only by the cultivation of a candid and open mind that we can hope to learn, and to tolerate our teachers. This is a counsel of perfection. For experience forbids us to hope that many Spiritualists will so far assume the attitude of true scientific inquirers as to investigate a position against which their prejudices are erect, "as quills upon the fretful porpentine." But the condition of true progress is that they do thus subordinate preconception. They may— they should—defend their position: they must not shut their ears to what they do not like, merely because they do not like it. "I find" (said an eminent foreign Spiritualist to us once upon a time) "these theories so repulsive." "But why, and in what way?" we ventured. "Oh! I don't like them." Candid, but not conclusive. The question is, Are they true? Can they be supported by such evidence as to compel conviction in an open mind? Are they a reasonable explanation of the problems that perplex us? These are the questions that press for answer. And, though we may recur to some of them hereafter and discuss them in more detail, our impression is that a careful analysis would show that the crucial points in the divergence between Spiritualists and Theosophists still need light.

A word of warning may fitly be given to any who imagine that a complex system of Eastern Philosophy, involving the presentation of unfamiliar ideas and the use of strange terms, can be so minced as to be assimilated by a Western mind without trouble. Madame Blavatsky

has gone a long way towards this end in her *Key*, but a perusal of some parts or sections of the work will soon convince a reader that the subject is not to be grasped in an armchair after a day's work. If any of our readers desire to prove this let him turn to Section VII. on "The Various *Post-mortem* States," and try his hand on its contents. The subtleties of Eastern thought are hardly translatable into our Western language, and can never be grasped without serious and prolonged effort.

A word of cordial praise must be given to the printer and binder. The book is admirably got up. Paper and type are excellent, and the whole result is a marvel of cheapness.

MY LYRICAL LIFE.*

(FIRST NOTICE.)

Of the individual who has never read these poems of Gerald Massey's it may be said, in the phrase of Martin Chuzzlewit's Yankee, that he has "much toe learn, and much toe enjoy." This, at least, has been the experience of the present Reviewer, to whom they were quite new, and who has no hesitation in advising others to give themselves the pleasure of making acquaintance with them.

For the man of spiritual apprehension, reading the poetry of many writers of this time, though he may find in it much that delights, yet feels too often conscious of a something lacking, even in the parts where the verse is smoothest and the thought most original. Something which is very real and of transcendent interest to him seems to be altogether omitted. Earth is painted in all the aspects and with all the colours that can be conceived; Heaven is referred to in language of exalted aspiration and fervent desire; but usually Earth and Heaven are so very distinct and distant; few writers discerning, what most readers of this periodical know to be true, that Earth and Heaven are the one within the other; and that the separation between them is not nearly so hard and fast as is usually assumed.

Surely the poet, of all people, should be at home in the transcendent region; the region of the anti—or as is perhaps better—the super-prosaic, where a vision which is more than of the eye, and a hearing which is more than of the ear, are the only conditions of entrance.

In this region our author seems to be, if not quite at home, at least a familiar guest. He has evidently touched it experimentally, and it is the conscious source of much of his inspiration. And while his poems are by no means all attuned to this theme, some of the most interesting of them deal with it directly; and it is of these that in this notice we design to treat.

"The Haunted Hurst: a tale of Eternity" is certainly the one of principal importance of the poems of this class. It is of some seventy pages in extent. It describes most graphically a spiritual experience, and is full of most interesting and suggestive ideas upon the deepest problems of spiritual philosophy.

After a brief introduction, we enter upon the first part; which describes the gradual awakening of the consciousness of the narrator to the conviction that a Being from the unseen is trying to find and open the door in the wall, or veil, which separates the living from the dead. The dramatic power displayed in the picturing of this is most admirable, for our poet has found means so to tell his tale that we not merely read what he has written, but seem to pass into, and partake of, the experience he is describing:—

Night after night I awakened with a start
That tore the curtain-cloud of sleep apart,

The silence looked so ominous, the gloom
Just losing shape and feature in the room:

* *My Lyrical Life: Poems Old and New.* By GERALD MASSEY. (Kegan Paul, Trench, and Co. 1889.)

Had I but wakened sooner, without doubt
I should have found some dreadful secret out!

Some shadow of the unapparent stole
Over me, with a shiver of the soul.

At times I seemed to waken at a call,
And rose up listening for the next footfall
Which never came, as though it could not keep
The step with that my spirit caught in sleep;
For I, in waking, must have crossed the line
Bounding the range of spirit-life from mine.
I felt the Presence on the other side
Grove where some secret door might open wide.
I knew the brain might strike the electric spark
Which should make live this phantom of the dark.
Once as I woke I could have sworn I saw
A white face from the window-pane withdraw!
But softly in its place the curtain slid,
Even with the uplifting of the swift eyelid.

And so on. Considerations of space forbid us to quote all that we should wish. The same theme is worked out at great length, and with wondrous fertility of detail; and the part concludes with a fine expression of belief that whatever strange and dreadful things may present themselves to us they cannot come without the will of the Heavenly Father, who will never suffer the soul to be submerged and extinguished in the horror of the experience.

In the second part we are told how at length—

One night, as I lay musing on my bed
The veil was rent which shows the Dead not dead.

And two Presences were seen; the one:—

A human face in hideous eclipse,
No lustre on the hair, nor life i' the lips;
The faintest gleam of corpse-light, lurid, wan,
Showed me the lying likeness of a man!
The old soiled lining of some mortal dress,
A spirit sorely stained with earthliness.
But almost ere I could have time to fear,
I saw what seemed an angel standing near,
And on her face a smile for my relief;
A dream of glory in my night of grief.

The rest of this, and all the third part of the poem, is occupied with the story of the crime for which the spirit was suffering, told partly by himself, partly by the angel; a story which we prefer not to mar by attempting to epitomise it in prose. In itself the story is quite an ordinary one, but it is told with most vivid and dramatic power, and interspersed with interesting and suggestive reflections on points of spiritual philosophy.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth parts are philosophical; answers which the angel made to questions mentally put by the narrator. First the causes which bind spirits to this sphere after death, and as to the relationship which exists between the dead and the living. Then as to how souls of different quality passing to the world of Spirit are affected by the change. These matters are treated of in Part IV. Part V. discusses the conflict of good and evil in man, how he stands midway, and open to the influences of both Heaven and hell; how evil seeks to inflow and drag him downwards. There is a fine passage in which the poet expresses his confidence that evil seems to triumph only to fail utterly in the end:—

But do not think the devil hath his will;
Whate'er he doth he is God's servant still.
And in the larger light of day divine
The sparks of his hell-fire shall cease to shine.
God maketh use of him; what he intends
For evil, Heaven will turn to its own ends.
With subtle wile he tries to circumvent
The Lord, and works just what the Master meant.

Then follows a speculation as to what Satan is; or, in other words, whether evil ever attains personality. The third chapter of Genesis is explained mystically; there was

no external Tempter; but the selfhood of man asserted itself in the recognition of individual desires in itself, and in the acting upon them independently of any consideration save its own whim. Not that there is ever a deliberate choice of sin as against righteousness, both being seen fully in all the differences of their issues, but rather that the soul, thinking only of its delight, brings to birth the little act of sin, and thereby initiates itself into a spirit of action which, becoming more and more strongly habitual, will develop at last into consequences which were far from being realised by that soul at first. Part VI. shows how by its ministers Heaven ever surrounds and protects man against the influx of evil, because all Being in God is one. We give some extracts culled here and there from this section.

God, the Creator, doth not sit aloof,
As in a picture painted on the roof,
Occasionally looking down from thence.
He is all presence, and all providence.

He doth not sit at one end of the chain
Of Being, thrilling it now and again;
He Who is Being, and doth bound and bind
Its particles in the eternal mind.
Outside His providence we cannot stand.

As the babe's life within the mother's, dim
And deaf, you dwell in God, a dream of Him.

All life, down to the worm beneath the sod,
Hath spiritual relationships to God—
The Life of Life, the love of all in all;
Lord of the large, and infinitely small.

The veriest atoms, even as worlds above,
Are bridal chambers of creative love;
Quick with the motion that suspends the whole
Of matter spiral-spinning towards the soul.

Man hath not fall'n from Heaven, not been cast
Out of some golden age lived in the past!
His fall is from the possible life before ye;
His fall is from the crown of life held o'er ye;
The falling short from an impending glory.

With labours infinite your science seeks
Footing on inaccessible cloud-peaks.
Yet must the climbers know that there are things
Only attainable at last with wings.

In Part VII. the night has passed; and he who had therein held such close converse with Spirit now reflects over all he has gone through, and tells us the impression it has made upon him. Very strong and true are these reflections, and will find responsive assent in the heart of every true man who reads them. Space forbids our quoting further, save this one last extract with which we will conclude this article:—

I think Heaven will not shut for evermore,
Without a knocker left upon the door,
Lest some belated wanderer should come
Heart-broken, asking just to die at home;
So that the Father will at last forgive,
And looking on His face that soul shall live.
I think there will be watchmen through the night,
Lest any, afar off, turn them to the light;
That He Who loved us into life must be
A Father infinitely fatherly,
And, groping for Him, these shall find their way
From outer dark, through twilight into day.

(To be continued.)

THE infliction of pain is only justified when the inflictor is certain, or as nearly certain as he can be, that the pain will be productive of good.—EDNA LYALL.

BEAR AND FORBEAR.—We need each other's forbearance as well as encouragement in order to do our best. We do not all see alike; we cannot all work in the same way.

PSYCHIC TELEGRAMS.

PART II.

(Continued from page 553.)

NOTES FOR THE INQUIRER.

(GIVEN AT A SEANCE WITH THE FOUR SISTERS ROUND THE TABLE BY TILTS TO ALPHABET.)

[Answer to questions sent by a friend just learning spiritual facts.]

Can you grasp fire? Can you see the wind? By which sense do you perceive electricity? Thus, even in the material world, there are forces about which your Reason cannot give you logical evidence. How many more facts in the world of Mind which you must begin by receiving on Faith, before Reason cements the loose stones? Still more, how much is it the case in Psychical matters? How difficult is it to convince a purblind person that there are spots on the sun? And how hard to convince you of the presence of those persons of whose very existence you want proof! You have no sense yet alive (or awake) whereby to perceive us; yet we have to prove to you our existence by our presence. That which is spiritual can be discerned by a spiritual eye alone; just as much as a logical deduction requires an intellectual sense to apprehend it.

Now, you are aware of two great vitalities in the world; material and intellectual vitality. They are both unending! through death to life; the fallen leaf of to-day is the manure for next year's fruit; "the husk of corn predestined to decay covers the germ of future harvests,"—the thought fruits of a past age are the seeds which you perceive and reproduce in your present civilisation. Is this all? Have we described your whole being? One thing yet remains unnoticed, most dear, least visible, most precious, least describable—*affection*! Here we open to you the great law of life—God is Love.

Think of this, oh mortal, and look for Him especially in all that concerns your affections! What electricity is in the Material World, love is in the Spiritual World. If ever you learn the vast extent of the one, you may begin dimly to apprehend the other. His most subtle laws are the least perceptible. He is the rose-leaf, He is its bloom, He is its odour, He is the dry land, the unstable water, the invisible air. Triune in perfection, His all pervading, least perceptible law is Love.

Seek thou, oh true-hearted soul! for outer proofs, but desire yet more earnestly that inward conviction of Spiritual Life the assurance of which is your own vitality. Pray for it.

(SEANCE WITH THE FOUR SISTERS. FOUR DAYS LATER: SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.)

But how shall I describe light to the blind? So I find it difficult to explain the extent and power of Love, a law to which all others are subservient.

Look where sometimes the veil has been drawn aside and the inner arcana for a moment appear, as when St. Paul said of the departed ones, "that they without us cannot be made perfect." Such the power of Love that death and hell cannot prevail against it. The Love-anointed One came to this world across a far greater abyss than death puts between you and your dear ones, and by the force of their love (which constitutes their union with Him) they can follow Him across space. Oh, learn then the power of Love, and pray that your soul, lighted by love, may shine on its fellows, though far apart as Sun-star is from Sun-star.

SPIRIT COMPARED WITH MATTER.

(ANSWER SPOKEN IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS FROM THE TWO SISTERS, ON JANUARY 21ST, 1870, BY A FRIEND.)

QUESTION.—How is Spirit divided from Matter?

ANSWER.—Spirit is not in reality divided from matter. It is really only divided in appearance. The definition "Matter" is applied to such things as are visible to the human eye, and touch, and according to their range or capacity; so what is called matter actually varies. To the hearing and the scent, many things are palpable, which are not actually termed matter; and to the inner senses many things are palpable which are not termed "matter."

There is a shading off from hard material objects to more subtle substances, and again a shading off until we reach that which is termed spirit. From what is termed spirit there is again a shading off, and so on, and thus it is that there is endless

progression, because there is endless refinement, and the further principles are carried to refinement the more powerful are they; and the more everlasting, because imperishable! Material eyes see only material objects, which are usually those the least imbued with spirit, and these material objects require the most vivifying in order to bring them under the influence of more subtle spiritual powers. From the beginning of the world such agencies have been at work.

Animals have altered by their own vitality immense masses of inert matter. The higher the vitalities in the animal the more have they vitalised inert matter! Man is now vitalising the very atmosphere of the earth, and as creatures formerly rendered the earth fitted for Man, so Man is now fitting the earth for men of higher organisation. The earth with its small atmosphere was, millions of years ago, comparatively material, whereas now it is more spiritual, and yet there has been no marked line of division in this gradual development.

Thus matter and spirit are palpably separated only as regards your touch and your sight, and you define without actually knowing what matter is.

As things develop and become more rarified or spiritualised they become capable of occupying the same space as more material objects do. Thus, a disembodied spirit can stand in the same block of space as you physically stand in; his spirit permeating your materiality; and so an immensely advanced spirit-world could occupy the same space as our earth does. But two spirits of equal development cannot occupy the same space at the same time.

A bar of iron that has been heated in a fire is permeated with a more rarified substance, which occupies the same space as the iron, viz., heat.

Just as one planet's atmosphere may rest on that of another, may amalgamate more or less with it, and even may envelop and spread in and beyond it; so may it be with two spiritual beings. Power is always invisible. You can see the human hand move and execute great things, but you cannot see the volition or power. You can see the magnetic needle vibrate, but not the force which moved it. You can watch the earth's movements round the sun, but you cannot see the power that causes it to rotate in its orbit. You can see massive machinery in motion, but you can't see the power in heat which is exerted, for when steam appears, the force has escaped!

MATTER AND SPIRIT.

(BY WRITING WITH THE SISTERS 1ST AND 2ND.)

Matter is the deposit left by the fusion of spirit. We can get no further than this; but matter is as impossible for you to create as spirit is. Matter has no life in itself, spirit has. We want you to consider and let us teach your thoughts, how opposite is your world and ours, as, for instance, Night and Day. What is a great help to you blinds us. (Between now and Whitsuntide you are to learn this; not that you must expect to be able to put what you learn into words; we have no words for it, and doubt if you will find any.) Your daytime oppresses us; we can't see your souls so well as at night. And low spirits have most power to walk at night, and hence cats have one faculty more spiritually developed than other animals, that they see the animal magnetism surrounding things.

[Here Sister 1st said she saw a wavering magnetic light or atmosphere shown to her, around the chairs and tables, in the kitchen, downstairs, where the beetles crawl about at night, and saw the cat jumping at them, attracted by this magnetic light.]

Looking at a human being, you judge of his strength by his spine and muscles, but to us the backbone is Love of Truth, and the muscles are the power of exercising truth and of withstanding deceit, but the object against whom these muscles are exercised is not deceit in others, but in himself, and as you know a person's figure despite the clothes, so we through all his socially assumed characteristics know his real stature.

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Light :

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

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23rd, 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.

ASSEMBLY OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

The second Assembly of the London Spiritualist Alliance for the present season was held at 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, on the evening of Tuesday, November 12th.

Amongst those present were : Miss Anwyl, Dr. Pullen Burry, Miss Bainbridge, Mr. A. Cole, the Misses Corner, Miss Dixon, Miss Marie Gifford, Mrs. E. M. James, Mr. W. Stainton-Moses, M.A., Mr. J. H. Mitchiner, Mrs. Maltby, Mr. Paul Preyss, Miss Leslie Powell, Mr. C. Pearson, Mr. A. Pritchard, Mrs. Quelch, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Miss Rogers, Miss Rogers (Blackheath), Mrs. Sainsbury, Miss Sainsbury, Mr. Thos. Shorter, Mr. Henry Shorter, Miss Shorter, Mr. Morell Theobald, Miss F. J. Theobald, Mr. A. A. Watts, Mr. H. Withall, Miss H. Withall, Miss Williamson, Mrs. Western, Mrs. Barton Wright, &c., &c.

RE-INCARNATION AND THE PROBLEM OF MORAL EVIL.

Mr. Thomas Shorter delivered an address on "The Argument for Re-incarnation from the Problem of Moral Evil." Mr. Shorter said :—

I hold it to be a sound principle in the discussion of any controverted doctrine that its exposition should be left to those who affirm, not to those who question or deny it. In dealing with Re-incarnation I have never deviated from this rule. I shall not do so now ; there is no need for it. Such an exposition was recently given to this Alliance by one of its most moderate and able apostles. Indeed its advocates seem determined that so far as they can help it we shall not be left to perish in invincible ignorance. They are instant in season and out of season, ever ready to seize or make occasion for its discussion. No sooner is one controversy ended than another is sprung upon us, and when at length the war of words is over and the combatants have retired to their respective tents, ready like the heroes of Valhalla to come up smiling the morrow morn to renew the fray, they at the end appear to be just where they were at the beginning, and exactly where we know they will be when the next tournament is concluded. No wonder that the amused, though, perhaps, jaded, onlookers inquire what all this pother has been about, and whether the time and energy expended on so barren and apparently interminable a controversy, might not have been applied to better purpose. Such unsatisfactory result is no doubt in part due to the insufficiency, not to say destitution, of knowledge on the matter, but in this as, indeed, in all controversies, much depends on the temper and spirit in which the subject is approached. If we come to it with a foregone and fixed conclusion, determined like a

knight of old to hold the field against all comers, the experienced dialectical warrior will be prepared for every assault, to parry every argument, combat every objection, to find or create some device for every emergency, and retire with honours from the field. No more good can be expected from a controversy conducted in this fashion than from grinding the east wind. But there is another and more hopeful way. We may consider the question in the spirit of judicial inquiry, of scientific investigation, of critical but fair examination, ready with open mind to receive as truth whatever can be proved, but equally resolved to suspend our judgment where proof is wanting. There are, indeed, some truths of which no proof is needed, truths of immediate perception, intuitive or self-evident truths ; truths not so immediately obvious but which are assented to as soon as we apprehend the terms in which they are expressed, and the proof by which they are demonstrated.

But Re-incarnation obviously belongs to neither of these categories ; we are therefore justified, nay more, as reasonable beings we are bound, before yielding it our credence, to require and even to insist on proof. But when this, our first and last demand is pressed, the advocate of Re-incarnation is obliged to admit that he has no proof to give, and he even candidly avows that the subject is not susceptible of proof, that it belongs not to science but to philosophy, that all he can offer and all we have a right to ask is the evidence of argument. I beg of you to note and bear in mind this admission ; it at once places the discussion on a lower platform ; it is a descent from proof to probability, from fact to argument, from the certainties of science to the doubtful speculations of philosophy. But here again we have to discriminate and take another step to a still lower stage. Men of science sometimes disagree about theories ; they may hold that a particular theory is not supported by sufficient data or that the correct inference has not been drawn from them, but they all agree as to the facts of admitted science ; that is the common basis of agreement and reference. It may require only that some new fact be discovered, or some hitherto obscure fact be placed in a more prominent light and new relation, in order that the controversy may be finally and amicably settled. It is otherwise with the theory of Re-incarnation. There are no admitted facts to which appeal can be made. Speculation is piled on speculation, assumption follows assumption ; one theory is invented to explain another. Arguments of doubtful value are buttressed by others equally unreliable. The creations of fancy are projected and regarded lovingly till they are mistaken for realities. So long as the pious opinion of the faithful is undisturbed all may look fair and specious, but when the incorrigible sceptic casts upon it the dry light of science, the insubstantial pageant fades into the light of common day. Nowhere do we feel the ground firm under us, the horse and his rider come galloping bravely on but suddenly are swallowed up in the deep and treacherous bog of metaphysical conceits. The Re-incarnationist builds his house not upon the hard rock of fact but on the ever-shifting sands of speculative opinion, and when the winds blow around and the waves beat against it and there is a great storm, need we wonder that it should tumble with a mighty crash into the open sea, for it is built upon the sand ?

But if we reject the theory of Re-incarnation we are asked, how else, without its guiding light, can we explain the moral phenomena of human life, which we are told must remain unintelligible and chaotic ; and forthwith a series of appalling philosophical conundrums are propounded which might puzzle even *Edipushimself*. We are invited, I had almost said peremptorily summoned, to determine the relations between matter and spirit, the nature and origin of the human soul, its pre-existence in a spiritual world, and how there can be immortality after physical death if the spirit did not eternally exist before physical birth ; with perhaps a score of similar questions which have perplexed and baffled many of the wisest men of the world for twenty centuries, but which we are rather jauntily expected to settle in an hour's discourse or in a single column of a newspaper. But above and before all we are confronted with the problem of moral evil ; we are required to explain the diversities and inequalities in human character and condition ; how it is that some are subject to suffering and adversity without demerit, while others equally without desert attain to prosperity and power ; how we can reconcile the injustice and misery, the afflictions and calamities of life with Divine justice and the moral government of the world ! That is a large and heavy demand upon us ; I do not wonder that many Spiritualists are staggered by it and almost ready to accept the theory of Re-in-

carnation, or any other, rather than undertake so formidable a task to which they feel themselves so unequal. But when we have recovered ourselves a little and taken breath and had time to look around, the situation does not seem quite so desperate as it at first appeared. We do not feel sure that any special obligation rests upon us to undertake the responsibility sought to be imposed upon us; on a little reflection we feel assured that it lies elsewhere. Whatever we may fail to accomplish, or whatever our inability in the solution of these high mysteries, those who make affirmations of a doubtful kind may fairly be called upon to prove them. Those who assert the truth of Re-incarnation and are sure that it is the solution, and the only solution, of the problem of moral evil, may reasonably be required to make good these affirmations. We cannot absolve them from this responsibility. It rests upon their shoulders. There it is, and there it must remain.

But though we disclaim any special obligation in the matter, it would be discourteous not to answer as best we may the queries that are placed before us, even though we may have to make the modest confession which is sometimes so hard to make, that we do not know. But while we humbly make this acknowledgment we would urge our conviction that ignorance is better than error; that where the proof is insufficient or wanting it is wiser to suspend judgment than to rush to hasty and unproved conclusions. We may indeed ask, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

Who shall tempt with wandering feet
The dark unbottom'd infinite abyss,
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncouth way, or spread his airy flight
Upborne with indefatigable wings
Over the vast abrupt?

And we may exclaim in companionship with an older poet than the blind bard of Paradise, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." There are those who appear to conceive it their mission to "assert eternal Providence, and justify the ways of God to men," but we feel under no such obligation and are content to let eternal Providence assert itself and the ways of God to be their own justification; to await the clearer insight, and deeper vision, and fuller knowledge, and ampler revelation of that world of light whither we are bound. But if our friends, not content with this disclaimer, insist upon a definite and categorical answer to their importunate questioning we must examine their argument a little closer and subject it to careful scrutiny. If we rightly understand their contention it is that our condition in this life is at least largely the result of our conduct and character in a previous incarnation; that we reap in the present as we have sown in that perhaps far distant past; that our present suffering and the evil we bemoan is the natural outworking of the Divine law of moral retribution, the necessary consequence of causes we have ourselves set in motion in a former life. These are brave words and are often uttered with the confident assurance of absolute knowledge. But the first inquiry that naturally suggests itself is, How do you know all this, and where is the proof of it? We can travel from the present to the past only over the bridge of memory. Journey over that road to the farther end; as you proceed your companions become fewer and finally disappear, the voices grow fainter and die away into silence. Peer into the vacancy beyond, listen with ear attent! "There is no sight nor sound, nor any that regard"; you hear only the hollow echo of your own voice, --darkness there, and nothing more! Place Consciousness in the witness-box, interrogate her as you may, you will elicit no evidence from her, for she has none to give. To all your obstinate questioning, *Non mi ricordo* is her only reply. It is, too, rather hard upon the unfortunate and afflicted, those who have the greatest need and strongest claim upon our sympathy and regard, to have cast upon them the stigma of moral reprobation, to be roughly told that their suffering is all their own fault although they do not know it, the consequence of their wicked doings in a former life, of which they are wholly unconscious. If only for their sake we should exact rigorous proof before accepting so offensive and, I think, so unfounded an imputation. It is not the fault of the Re-incarnationist that when we ask for the bread of proof he presents us only with the stone of argument. He cannot give what he has not got.

He gives us all, he can no more,
Though poor the offering be.

But at least the argument should be sound and without flaw. Is it so? Is it quite free from assumption and from fallacy? I

think not. One or two I may venture to specify. It is assumed that if Re-incarnation furnishes a sufficient explanation of the phenomena of human life, it should, therefore, be accepted as a truth. But this by no means necessarily follows. If indeed it were only modestly held that it would afford a reasonable presumption in its favour, I should not greatly care to contest the point; we should then only have to consider the value of that presumption and whether there were not countervailing considerations to set against it. But presumption at best is far, and it may be very far, from proof. As John Stuart Mill has pointed out in his work on Logic, it is not sufficient that an alleged cause adequately explains the facts to be accounted for; you must prove that your hypothetical cause is a *vera causa*, and this must be proved on other and independent grounds; and it is just trustworthy evidence of this kind for which we ask and ask in vain. But were it otherwise, were the contention of the Re-incarnationist conceded to the full, and his theory conclusively established, should we be any nearer to the solution of our problem? Does it sufficiently explain the facts or furnish any explanation at all? You tell us that evil originated in a former life, how, then, did the evil in that former life originate. In a still earlier incarnation? Yes, but trace it back as far as you will, trace it to a golden age of happy innocence when evil was not, trace it to the first advent of man upon the earth, you do not solve the problem by removing it farther back. The stone you have so laboriously rolled up to the summit of the hill returns again and is lying at your feet. If the world stands on the back of a tortoise what does the tortoise stand on? To whatever period or to whatever cause you assign the genesis and beginning of evil, human nature remaining substantially the same, the operant and efficient cause then must be operant and efficient now, and your theory of Re-incarnation is an uncalled for interpolation, and may be at once discharged as irrelevant and superfluous.

There is another assumption, the audacity of which may well excite amazement; it is implied, if not directly affirmed, that Re-incarnation is the *only* solution of our problem. Is this so? I need hardly remind even the most superficial student of the history of philosophy that the case is otherwise. We are not shut up within the narrow confines of a single theory; it is not Hobson's choice, that or none. Re-incarnation is but one of many alternative theories at least equally worthy of consideration, and some of which have been long and widely held. Let me pass briefly in review a few examples. They may for our present purpose be broadly divided into two categories, the physical and the metaphysical. Let us take the latter first; they are first also in the order of time. One of the earliest, assigns the origin of evil to the union of spirit with matter, the latter being the refractory element, that which is farthest from the Divine. Between these two elements of our composite nature there is constant and internecine conflict, the flesh warring against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. The desires of the flesh may indeed be regulated and subdued, but so long as this union subsists can never be wholly eradicated. This must be effected not by deeper immersion into matter, not by now and again plunging into the sea of corporeal life, but by the entire liberation of the spirit, its complete enfranchisement into the free citizenship of the spiritual world. Another of these ancient oriental theories, with which we are all familiar, insists upon the duality found in universal being, positive and negative, light and darkness, reason and passion, Ormuz and Ahriman, Jehovah and Satan; it finds the source and seat of evil in a potent will divorced from goodness, ever striving by its subtle influence and by its emissaries to extend the dominion of darkness and evil and bring man more completely under its domination. By yielding to this temptation, man through disobedience to the Divine law brought sin into the world with all our woes, and transmitted a fallen and corrupt nature to all his posterity. I need offer no criticism on this theory further than to remark that if the postulate of the Re-incarnationists be accepted, that a theory must be true if it sufficiently explains the facts to be accounted for, I do not see how we can withhold our assent from this theory. If we do so it must be on the ground, not that it is insufficient, but that like Re-incarnation it is not proven.

Again, there are those who from the earliest dawnings of philosophy have traced the source and springs of evil to the constitution of human nature itself, to what they consider its greatest privilege and endowment. They hold that man is not a mere automaton but a voluntary agent, having a moral nature capable of conscious wrong doing, of acting from the

nobler or from the baser motive. Evil they regard as the outcome of this moral freedom; a voluntary moral perversion, a yielding to the base solicitations of appetite and passion rather than to the Divine voice which speaks within the conscience and the reason. By another class of thinkers this ethical condition appears to be wholly eliminated. Evil with them is not an infirmity of the will, but a weakness and error of the judgment, due to the deficiency or absence of clear guiding intellectual light. They regard evil as synonymous with ignorance, and, of course, knowledge is its only sure and sufficient antidote. I fear the experience of most of us attests the inadequacy of this explanation; we too often do that which we ought not to have done and leave undone that which we ought to have done, not for want of light upon our path, but because we do not walk straight by the light we have; we "know the right and yet the wrong pursue." Of the theories which assign the origin of evil chiefly or purely to physical causes, I can only barely mention two of the most prominent. One that has excited much attention in recent years, chiefly through the writings of Mr. Herbert Spencer, is known as the *Doctrine of Heredity*. It traces moral evil to parentage and ancestry; we are heirs of all the ages in the bad as well as in the good sense; we inherit its evil tendencies as well as its virtues; we wear not alone the form and features, but the moral lineaments, of those who have gone afore, a kind of spiritual Re-incarnation. Others, again, find the springs of evil in the constitution of man's physical organism; his character for good or bad is chiefly the result of his cerebral organisation, of the quality and volume and peculiar conformation of the brain. Evil is only an unbalanced brain, a predominance of those organs which are the seat of the animal propensities and a deficiency in those of the moral sentiments. I would only here observe that I think sufficient attention has not been given to the intimate union and blending of these two opposite forces in human nature, the physical and the spiritual, and which have an especial claim on the consideration of the philosopher and the psychologist.

There is another class of theories which attribute the injustice and miseries of the world mainly to bad social arrangements and political institutions; these it would be foreign to my present purpose to consider. I am not attempting a complete catalogue of theories on this subject. Those I have specified are cited, not merely for the purpose of showing how unwarranted is the Re-incarnationist's assumption to which I have referred, but because I believe that in the last analysis it will be found that the cause of evil is not simple but complex, not unitary but manifold, that each of the theories named holds in solution a partial truth, which is a factor in the sum total. Each stream of evil tendency contributes to swell the turbid current of that dark, rolling river ever flowing in our midst. It is only in proportion as we recognise and understand these causes that we can hope to set in motion those agencies that shall effectually counteract them.

In conclusion, I think we may conceive of the possible constitution of the world in either of the following ways, and I ask you to consider more fully at your leisure which of these is best adapted to human nature and to the highest welfare of humanity. First, the world might have been made entirely and absolutely bad, with no gleam of goodness, no possibility of redemption, a veritable Inferno, over the portals of which might be inscribed Dante's famous line:—

All hope abandon ye who enter here.

The terms in which this conception has to be expressed sufficiently condemn it; I name it only to dismiss it. Second, the world might have been so constituted as to be the very opposite of this, absolutely perfect as men generally estimate perfection;—a world with neither sin nor suffering, nor sickness, nor sorrow, nor pain, nor death; where the sky would be ever blue, the flowers ever bloom; where the earth would bring forth no thorns nor thistles, but yield only the kindly fruits of the earth spontaneously and abundant; where there would be no need for labour; where men would simply take the good the gods provide them and live for pleasure and enjoyment; a Paradise with no tempting serpent and no forbidden fruit. That might be a pleasant picture for the fancy, it might for a time be pleasant to experience, but it would be for only a very short time. Consumed with *ennui*, such a life of placid, stagnant, monotonous indolence would ere long be irksome and insupportable; we should soon weary of our *dolce far niente*. Like the prince described by Dr. Johnson we should experience the wants of him who wants nothing and be glad to escape from our

prison in the Happy Valley to some free world beyond, where there would be something to learn, something to do, where we might shake off our lassitude and brace our energies in successful conflict with nature and create for ourselves an ever improving paradise of our own making. Third, we might conceive of the world as created good and very good, but from the first ever deteriorating, growing worse with each successive generation, the silver age succeeding to the golden, the iron to the silver, and the age of stone to that of iron; all the good wine consumed by the first comers at life's banquet and only the sour and the dregs left for the later guests. That would never do. Lastly, we may conceive of a world in which there would be much evil and suffering, much toil and tribulation, where there would be many hardships to endure, many obstacles to surmount, many perils to encounter, into which man would be born feeble, imperfect, ignorant, but with vast capacity for knowledge and latent powers, ever unfolding and strengthening, enabling him to clear the forest, to cultivate the wilderness, to navigate the seas, to rear cities and temples, arts, sciences, commerce, civilisation; above all with a nature in which there should be deeply implanted the sense of a beneficent Providence shaping the ends of human life, and, like the blue sky, bending over all; and with an undying conviction that beyond all the illusions of sense and all the troubles of mortality, beyond this bank and shoal of time lies his future, his true, eternal home. That is the actual constitution of the world in which we live, and I venture to submit that it is for us the best. With this deeper knowledge and abiding faith, looking behind and before, at what man has been, what he is, and what he shall be, with our assured knowledge of the constant care and companionship of those most dear to us who have passed on before us, we may bear with fortitude and hope the sorrows and afflictions and calamities of life, finding in them the moral discipline we need, a school for the formation of character, the cultivation of the affections, for bringing our human will into conformity with the Divine, and for the education and ripening of those spiritual faculties which can only blossom into full fruitage under a sun that was never yet on land or sea. And here we may well be content to rest and abide, enfolded in the arms of eternal love, finding there the only complete and final, and even here and now possibly the best attainable, solution of the problem of moral evil. (Applause.)

An interesting discussion followed.

Mr. Mitchener dissented from Mr. Shorter's views. He was more than ever disposed to study the question, having heard what was to be said against it. It seemed to him worthy of attention as a theory, if only for the light that it shed on the problems of human life. What had we to offer as a reasonable explanation to a man who asked us to reconcile these problems with the idea of a good and loving God? Take the daily, nightly scenes of this or any great city and try to reconcile them with the teachings and professions of Christianity. No theory that could by any possibility be illuminative should be rejected hastily.

Mr. C. Pearson pointed out that Spiritualists knew by experience that spirits could and did progress in the world of spirit, and Re-incarnation was not, therefore, the *sine qua non*, the necessary avenue of progress. Moreover, there was no recollection of alleged previous incarnations. The soul, therefore, started afresh in its present incarnation. Without memory or recollection of a previous existence, there could be no progress for the soul from its forgotten experiences.

"1st M.B. (Lond.)" admitted that Re-incarnation could not be proved by mathematical demonstration. The theory was given by teachers whom they had learned to trust, to be received or rejected at will. It could not be demonstrated any more than the lecturer could prove the existence of God. Even Science—to which he had appealed—was a variable quantity, true to-day, false to to-morrow's wider experience. He was told that Re-incarnation was not obligatory, that each individuality did as it pleased in the matter.

Mr. Dawson Rogers was much surprised to hear that statement. Was it really the teaching of the school of Re-incarnationists that a spirit could do as it pleased in such a vital matter? He had been studying Madame Blavatsky's

Key to Theosophy with a candid mind and due care. He would read it over again, but, as at present advised, he found nothing in the teaching there set forth on this question that commended itself to his mind. It was merely a clever piece of speculation. If the law of Karma brought the Ego back into incarnation in this world, what was to be said of an abortive incarnation of a single hour? How did that help matters? And again, if we are to suppose that a soul is paying the penalty of a wasted life by returning here and grovelling in sensuous love of material surroundings and pleasures, was it not a trifle inconsistent that these surroundings should be luxurious and the soul be lapped in ease? Where did the retribution come in? Then there was the theory of shells on their way to rapid extinction. He had made the acquaintance of a spirit who could not at that time converse in English. For twenty years he had watched his development, intellectually and morally. There was no extinction there. It had been a steady growth. Now, where was the Ego all this time? According to the theory, first in Pre-Devachanic dreamland, and then in Devachanic bliss—a state of pure illusion. A mother might have left her children to starvation and despair, and yet dream on in spurious bliss. And what was the final issue? Individuality gone, absorption into the great ocean of spirit. Then to what end all this experience? He failed to see in such teaching any solution of the great problem of moral evil.

Mr. Preyss could not see how Re-incarnation explained the inequalities and injustices of life. It was an insult to reason to suppose that this was the only training school, and that man must dwell here till he had exhausted its possibilities. He could not do that by any conceivable number of incarnations, and God's universe was very wide.

Mr. Shorter, in reply, said that he did not pretend to have treated a vast subject more than partially. He had mainly contended that there was no *proof* of the *theory*, and that contention had been conceded. One speaker had said that he received it on the faith of what had been told him by spirits. But spirits were by no means agreed on the subject. The teaching was very various, and there were no authoritative utterances.

The President proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Shorter, which was cordially given, and a pleasant meeting was closed.

On Tuesday evening next, Mr. Morell Theobald, who has recently returned from a trip round the world, will give an address narrating his experiences amongst Spiritualists abroad, and his observations on the progress of Spiritualism in some of the more important places which he had the opportunity of visiting. He will, no doubt, be able to tell his audience some things which will greatly interest them.

"SYMPNEUMATIC HAND-BOOK."

A further supply of the *Sympneumatic Hand-Book*, by Mrs. Laurence Oliphant, has been received at the office of "LIGHT," and copies may be had at the cost of fourpence each, or fourpence-halfpenny post free. In further elucidation of some remarks which occur on p. 4, Mrs. Laurence Oliphant writes:—"I have been asked whether the Influx may be transmitted between persons of the same sex. Yes; it is often given by one woman to another, by one man to another, without a word or a touch being exchanged. There is very little of the personal element in it. Sometimes the power rushes in an overpowering torrent to the least attractive, and refuses to flow to the gifted and beautiful. The most intense spiritual experience is reserved, however, for the twain whom God has joined together, for here the fusion of the four-fold life is manifest; two dual natures become one. The Heavenly Jerusalem lieth four square."

TRUTH.—Truth is as indestructible by the steel sword as the ruby is by the steel saw. The flint that broke the diamond because it was jealous of its light, only shattered it into a thousand flashing prism instead of one.

SOME RE-INCARNATION DIFFICULTIES.

It must have been often noticed by all reading and thinking Spiritualists that communications given by spirits often contain a great enigma. In other words, that there is something very peculiar in the constant recurrence in long messages purporting to come from good spirits, and often apparently highly developed philanthropic ones, of what seems to the reader good mixed with bad. For instance, the believer in Re-incarnation frequently comes across an address, containing lofty, soul-raising sentiments, ideas that cannot but have an ennobling influence on the reader, flowing from the lips or pen of a medium, whose aspirations are high, and whose method of life is exemplary, but in which the truth that he holds is contradicted or apparently contradicted. On the other hand, the non-believer in the doctrine of plurality of lives, also has the same experience. He meets with teachings abounding in noble and elevating exhortations, but they are to his mind sullied by the presence of and insistence on the pernicious doctrine he abhors. How is this? It is an important question that deserves the attention of every student of spiritual matters. It is one to which personally I have given a good deal of thought and as yet am far from perceiving a rational explanation that covers all the facts. To my mind, moreover, it is one which we cannot solve from our side alone; but for its solution must apply to our spiritual teachers for aid. If some of the writers in "LIGHT" would favour us with information on the point, or give us the benefit of their own opinion on the subject, we might perhaps be able to thresh out the point; or at any rate we should be able to form juster views on the subject, from the larger amount of facts on which we might ground our judgments.

The following information seems to throw some, but hardly sufficient, light on the matter. The guides of the medium Rose assert that there is a class of spirits who hold that the time has not yet come for man to know this great law of evolution; and that therefore they evade the point, and when directly questioned give evasive replies.

One of the instructors of our own circle says that a very large number of even good spirits know nothing whatever about it, and so of course deny its truth.

He also says, "The process of Re-incarnation is unseen by its compeers, for more than one reason. In the first place, most of them have not the power to see a soul that is incarnating. Next, it is, as it were, one of the secret things of the spirit-world, as with the birth of the physical body on earth, so is it with the Re-incarnation of a soul. It is a matter of privacy and secrecy. Again it is by spirits looked upon as the greatest misfortune and the most severe punishment that can befall them to be obliged to come back to earth. And so the shame of it is hidden by the matter being kept secret. Fourth, it is looked upon as a kind of insult to refer to the rebirth of any person, and hence it becomes a tabooed subject. The great majority of spirits have no idea of returning to earth, nor even of the necessity for it, and it is only gradually borne in upon them individually that the best thing they can do is to incarnate once more. That heavy task having been once determined upon, the matter is kept as a jealous secret, and is carried out without the knowledge of previous acquaintances." (Who, we are told by someone, I forgot for the moment by whom, believe that their absent friend has removed to higher spheres, or been sent on a mission, or something of the kind.)

The same spirit says: "The reason why so much more is taught on this subject in some localities than in others, is because spirits group themselves in spots according as the prevailing thoughts and views in those parts agree with their own."

Then, here again, is a curious phenomenon. In the circles of some objectors to the doctrine, we occasionally

hear of a guide informing his hearers that it does sometimes happen that a very bad spirit that has utterly wasted his life does return.

Again, I have heard of a spirit well-known in a certain circle that seemed to be changing his views on this point. When asked about it, he said on one occasion something to the effect that he could not say anything about the subject because he did not know, and he was apparently beginning to gain knowledge of something that he had been previously ignorant of.

The Book of Cures (Das Buch der Kuren), a portion of *Studien über die Geisterwelt*, by Baroness Adelmä Von Vay, is a book replete with matter for thought on this point. In fact the whole book is worthy of the most close study by every investigator into the unseen kingdoms of nature.

We English Spiritualists on account, perhaps, of our national egotism, are running a great risk of becoming fossilised in the cold and cheerless external covering; or, if not, we are becoming onesided in our ideas from our unwillingness, or inability, to investigate the phases of the great wave now involving civilisation, that have their centres outside this little isle of ours. Those of us who would expand our views, those who are truly liberal, must extend our reading and study far beyond our home circles and our country; and examine how God treats those of His children who do not happen to have entered on this mortal life as Britons, but who are nevertheless as much the apple of His eye, and perhaps more so, as a Hibernian might express it, than the stubborn, obstinate, and egotistical nation that dwells in the Isles of the West.

"1st M.B. (LOND)."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Private Materialisation Seances.

SIR,—A series of private sittings have just been concluded, of which I purpose to give a short account. The medium was Mrs. John Warren, of Monkwearmouth. Five sittings took place at the house of a friend, and we made all the arrangements ourselves, inviting only five other private friends, in all eight sitters. We put up a pair of dark curtains across one angle of the room, away from door and window. The medium took her seat in front of the curtain. A small paraffin lamp in a red glass case stood on a table at the back of the semicircle of sitters. The medium, when entranced, drew back behind the curtain, and in about a quarter of an hour, after a little singing by the circle, a white garment was protruded from the centre opening, and soon a figure began to show between the curtains. It passed from side to side. The writer was sitting next the curtain on one side, and the form shook hands, and extended the drapery to be felt; it was similar to soft, but not clear, cambric. There were six appearances at short intervals. Once the form seemed very tall. A little later a very small figure appeared. The following seances were similar, varying however in strength. To particularise the second, a form came out, and walked from one sitter to another, shaking hands, and the drapery was pronounced different to that at the former séance, feeling more like crape, i.e., thinner and rougher than at the first. A chair was offered and one sitter got up: it was taken by the form, being the one at the extreme left of curtain, then the form rose from the chair and pushed it to the right end of curtain, throwing a quantity of material all over the chair in front of the writer, so that the figure being also covered the quantity appeared about as much as a good-sized bed-sheet. The edge felt strong and well-defined. The whole mass was now drawn backwards over the chair, and no more was produced that evening. At the fifth sitting much more time was required as about three-quarters of an hour elapsed before any form appeared. However, the drapery in which the form was enveloped from head to foot was again voluminous, and the form took a flower from a vase on the mantelpiece near the curtain, presenting it to one of the sitters. The light was dim, yet just strong enough to see the time on a watch with a white face. As the sixth sitting took place at the house of the medium, and in the dark, an account of the same would not be conclusive as good evidence; suffice it to say, objects were raised from the table and floated to some distance, both high up and into the

farthest corner of the room, again brought close under the writer's chin, and a seemingly small hand, plump and not very warm, patted the forehead several times, apparently from above.

It goes without saying that a thorough investigation of the medium's clothing was made. Each garment was examined separately, and the substance felt on both sides, in a good light, before the medium left the curtain and whilst yet sitting on the same cane bedroom-chair occupied by her during the seance. From this she rose, and invited due examination, which was effected by myself and friend, the remaining sitters leaving the room.

No positive proof was given that the figure appearing robed in white was any other than the medium, yet there seemed every possible presumption that not a shred of white drapery was anywhere secreted about her person.

November 11th, 1889.

H.

Budh—Bodh—Bud(d)h-ism, Esoteric, &c., and Théosophy.

SIR,—It has become desirable to clear up the inevitable confusion, in the public mind, as to the connection between Theosophy, Esoteric Buddhism, and the Bud(d)hism of the several countries, Ceylon, Nepal, Tibet, Burma, Siam, China, Corea, Japan, &c., where there are many sects of Bud(d)hists and numerous followers of Esoteric and Exoteric Bud(d)hism.

The author of the *Secret Doctrine* and editor of *Lucifer* discussed this subject with the author of *Esoteric Buddhism*. (*Vide Lucifer*, October, 1888, pp. 172-4, and November, 1888, p. 247.)

In "LIGHT," May 25th, 1889, p. 242, you remark, at foot of quotation from my article on Bud(d)hism in the *Two Worlds*: "As a detail I find myself mildly wondering," &c., &c. "... the double number of d's . . . what, then, is the saving value of that second d? How does Buddhism differ from Budhism?" Indeed, many doubtless, too, have also wondered, if not always so "mildly." Wherein is the difference or distinction?

In the following issue, June 1st, p. 268, you were so kind as to insert my letter "Budhism or Bud(d)hism."

In the preface to the Rev. Professor Bunyiu Nanjio's contribution to *Ancient. Oxon., Aryan Series II., Sukhācārī Vyāsa*, Professor Max Müller suggests "Bodh-ism" as the most appropriate for Japanese Bud(d)hism; that particular school of teaching, more especially, therein dealt with.

I now wish to draw out from the leaders of the Theosophical Society, an official declaration as to what they intend shall be the form to be used by their followers, and others dealing with their teaching; and also a definite and (if possible) final statement of their claims, as to the connection between their Theosophy, Esoteric Bud(d)hism (or Budhism or Bodhism), and the Bud(d)hism or Doctrine of Enlightenment of the Extreme Orient, of which I have now been called upon to stand forth, as an exponent; and representative of the Eastern Bud(d)hism here, as it is known in its home. C. PROUNDER (Late of Japan).

The Method of Gratry and Boole.

SIR,—Many readers of "LIGHT" have called and written to me about the method of Gratry and Boole. Some of these have now decided to print a small edition of my book. It is called *Logic Taught by Love*. It might have been called, *A Mathematical Analysis of the Relation between those through whom Light is sent and those for whom it is sent*, but the less pompous title is less likely to excite the jealousy of professional teachers, both of logic and of Spiritualism.

The book is not exactly being published; for the present condition of English literature imposes conditions which would interfere with the due performance of my function as a lunacy medium. I only feel called upon to put the message with which I am entrusted within reach of whosoever wishes to receive it. Mr. Francis Edwards, High-street, Marylebone, W., will procure the book for anyone who wishes it, and the price, I believe, will be 6s.

I have translated the notation of Gratry and Boole into that of the most elementary arithmetic and geometry. Any higher mathematical reasoning is used only in one or two chapters which can be skipped without breaking the sense of the whole. And the method will, I hope, be perfectly intelligible to any person who has received the ordinary education of a Board school or commercial school (provided, that is to say, that he is not doggedly determined beforehand that everything shall be "unintelligible" which implies the possibility of perennial inspiration). MARY BOOLE.

Spiritualism and Fatalism.

SIR,—A letter signed "Disco" appeared in your issue of November 9th, on the subject of fatalism.

Your correspondent says that he is met by the objection that Spiritualism teaches fatalism. Now it seems to me that such an assertion is no objection at all. Everything teaches fatalism. The objector says that according to Spiritualism :

1. What is to be will be.
2. We are to follow our own sweet wills.
3. Nothing is to ruffle our serenity.

To the first statement I answer : Of course, what is to be will be : that goes without saying.

To the second : We cannot help following our own sweet wills since our wills determine all our voluntary actions.

To the third : That is a piece of sound wisdom taught by nearly all philosophers since the beginning of history. The question is, how to do it? I have thought upon the subject of freewill for some years, with the result that in my opinion the human will is not free.

1. A man's will at any particular point of time is the resultant of all his inclinations or feelings at that point of time. A man's inclinations at any particular point of time are determined by his circumstances at that point of time, i.e., by everything which acts upon the man in any way, whether by means of his passions, his prejudices, his reason, or his moral instincts, or of any or all these singly or combined.

A man cannot help his circumstances, for though some of them are the resultants of what he willed at previous points of time, still his former will was the result of his circumstances at that time, and so on till we come to the first time he willed, which he did as a result of circumstances over which he had no control whatever.

2. That the human will is not free may be proved by another method.

Let us assume that some being is aware that some particular person will do certain things during the remainder of his life. Let these things be represented by the letters A, B, C, D, &c. It is evident that that person must perform acts represented by A, B, C, D, &c., nor can he possibly will to do otherwise. Now take away the foreknowledge of the being referred to, and the performance of acts A, B, C, D, &c., still exists in the future life of the person referred to, though unforeknown. (Compare Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book I., lines 117-120.)

3. Did human freewill exist no reliance could be placed upon the actions of human beings. The history of the human race in the past would not in the least degree account for its present state, nor would its present state have any effect at all upon its future. The attempts being made at present to understand the science of society would be utterly useless. All the affairs of mankind would be chaos. Though a man were pure and good in every motive to-day he would have no guarantee that he would not be a rogue to-morrow. He could put no trust in Providence for he would be utterly and entirely his own Providence and completely at the mercy of his every whim. But since not chance but law exists, therefore, our wills are not free but bound by the laws of our being as everything else is.

Lordship-lane, S.E.

A. MICUS.

Clairvoyance.

SIR,—While talking to a friend—a poet and clairvoyant—on Saturday evening in our drawing-room he suddenly interrupted the conversation by saying, "Are you interested in some MSS. that are being illustrated? For a MS. is being held beside you and a picture, which I am impressed is one of the illustrations. The picture is of a girl in loose garments, like a peasant, and there are hills in the background. If you have any such work at present I should say it will prove a success." Now, exactly a week before I had given some fairy-tale translations to an artist to illustrate if approved of, and have since heard that he is "charmed" with the stories and anxious to come and "talk it over"; my former friend, the clairvoyant, having no idea of this, nor acquaintance with the artist. Of course, I know such things are occurring frequently, yet is each instance none the less striking and suggestive. To those who have eyes to see into this "dimension," astral light, whatever it be, it will seem nothing remarkable the fact of my utilising this "faculty" as a crutch to a naturally limping memory; my plan is this: Any word or sentence I wish to remember (or number, face, scene—anything) I carefully write in fluid that comes from my brain (like the silken thread of the spider) on the atmosphere of this psychic realm, by well concentrating my attention meanwhile (if that falter the writing or

drawing is weak and unlasting), then, when required I again put myself in condition, and, behold, it arises in white letters before me or my inner vision. I have tested this many, many times, and never known it to fail. Also, with people of affinity with me I can at will (but not always) place myself *en rapport* with them in this "dimension," and ascertain whether they have received my letter, will come in response to an invitation, are pleased or the reverse with me, &c. But such a sensitising effect it has that I would not advise anyone to develop such "faculties" if they want to play a successful part in the world of the nineteenth century. CAROLINE CORNER.

The Terminology of Mesmerism.

SIR,—I hope that some of the readers of "LIGHT" will take up the suggestion made by Mr. F. W. Hayes, in your issue of the 16th inst., as to the adoption of the words ODYLE, ODYLISM, &c., and the combination PSYCHODYLE, in connection with the operation of psychic force in certain of its aspects.

With regard to the terms Hypnotism, Animal Magnetism, or Mesmerism, I do not consider any of them appropriate or descriptive. The last (the more familiar term), being merely derived from the name of an early practiser of the science, has no essential meaning; the second is an egregious misnomer, notwithstanding its prefix, inasmuch as no indications of any of the phenomena of electricity or magnetism within the scientific meaning of those terms have ever been detected by the instruments used to measure their effects or discover their presence; and the word Hypnotism is utterly misleading if applied to indicate any effect or influence on the human organism resulting from outward agency. It is the word selected by Mr. Braid, the discoverer of the possibility of self-mesmerisation (the stativence of Dr. Baker Fahnestock), to designate that condition as distinguished from the trance externally induced.

As we evidently have some "Force" involved in the phenomena in question (whether imparted or excited) it cannot be unreasonable to imagine that it may be a correlated mode of motion with electricity, magnetism, heat, and light, not manifesting physically as either of them. Possibly a vibratory or vortical motion of etheric atoms set up under certain conditions and inducing a responsive system of vibrations in the field of percepts and of mental action on the organism and functions of the subject (modified and varied by individual idiosyncrasy) rather through sympathy or "rapport" than any will-power of the operator—though its direction and manifestation may be to some extent determined by him, limited and modified, however, by the conscious or sub-conscious volition of the subject, and the physiological, psychological, and pathological state of the latter from time to time.

The term "Od" and its derivatives (often incorrectly stated to have been coined by Reichenbach) was the Quaballistic Hebrew word for "Light" (not that of the sun) in its motive or vivifying mode, and was no doubt the "root" whence his terms Odic-force, Odic-light, &c., were drawn.

Dr. Ashburner also used the term "Odized Water."

It may be interesting to quote, in the present connection, Baron Reichenbach's own views. He says in his *Researches* :—

During the last seventy years this force has had the greatest variety of names, nearly all having depended on certain resemblances to magnetism, but it has no more identity with magnetism than magnetism has with crystallisation, or electricity with affinity. We do, indeed, suspect the final unity of all these dynamics, but we cannot at the present time even fill up the gap between electricity and magnetism; and so long as an ordinary iron rod which will not support an iron-filing displays as much capacity in regard to this force as a powerful steel magnet of equal size, and no scientific explanation can be given for the vast distinction, so long will the two forces, mesmeric and magnetic, remain essentially different, and therefore a fitting name appears necessarily required.—*Researches*, p. 223.

The combination "PSYCHODYLE," suggested by Mr. Hayes, is open, it would seem, to little, if any, objection, not even disturbing the harmony between the apostles of "Emanation" and "Non-Emanation." I have frequently read in "LIGHT" expressions of regret from your learned correspondent, "M.A. (Oxon.)," and other Spiritualists that the nomenclature and terminology of Spiritualism were so vague, and unfit to accurately represent either its facts or its theories, and have wondered that some of the more capable among them have not as yet devised at least a provisional glossary. Indeed in this week's issue there are two allusions to this question by the writers Dr. E. W. King and Mr. T. L. Henly.

But it is not within my province as a mere student of Spiritualism as a branch of "the Occult" to suggest anything in that

direction, strongly as I perceive the need for a re-casting of its vocabulary; but with a fair knowledge of the phenomena of the condition known as mesmeric, and as a practical student of the same of considerable experience over a period of forty years, I am tempted to trespass on your columns in support of the attempt of Mr. Hayes to secure the adoption of an improved and consistent nomenclature for a science which is coming to the front so prominently at the present time, through the researches of the French savants, as well as the recently inaugurated London Hypnotic Society; with so experienced an operator as Herr Carl Hansen to carry out its most important function, viz., the application of the "influence" as a remedial agent in nervous disorders, and a curative one in cases of dipsomania and other mental disturbances.

20, Pimlico-road, London, S.W.

H. VENMAN.

Miss Lottie Fowler.

SIR,—Will you allow me to appeal to your readers on behalf of Lottie Fowler, the clairvoyante? She is now in actual want, with an invalid brother dependent on her. Her clairvoyant powers are wonderful, and she has always used them in an honest, straightforward way, and helped many with a far-seeing advice which no ordinary friend could give. I cannot but think that there are many who would in return help her now.

Maycott, Crown Hill,
Norwood, S.E.

ELLEN HOPKINS.

[We shall be glad (per Mr. Godfrey) to receive subscriptions to this very deserving case. "M.A. (Oxon.)," £1 to begin with.—ED. OF "LIGHT."]

SOCIETY WORK.

ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BEAUMONT-STREET, MILE END.—Mr. Emms delivered a very eloquent address on Sunday, upon "Man's Spiritual Possibilities." The address, which was well thought out, was particularly suited for the work we have to do in this quarter. On Sunday next at 7 p.m., Mr. J. MacDonnell will deliver an address upon "Spiritualism, a Science."

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—A vocal and instrumental concert will be given at the above hall on Tuesday, November 26th, 1889, in aid of the Stratford Children's Lyceum. Reserved seats, 1s.; body of hall, 6d. and 3d. Doors open at 7.30. Tickets may be had at the room on Sunday evening, and at the doors on the evening of the concert.—M. A. BEWLEY, Hon. Sec.

MARYLEBONE SOCIETY, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, W.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Humphries gave an excellent lecture on the "Reign of the Spirit." Next Sunday, at 11 a.m., Spirit Communion; at 7 p.m., Mr. Town's address and clairvoyance. On December 3rd, Mr. Burns will give a phrenological lecture, with experiments. Persons desirous of having their heads examined, should be present.—C. I. HUNT.

MARYLEBONE LYCEUM, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, W.—The Lyceum on Sunday was conducted through the various exercises by Mr. Lewis, in the unavoidable absence of the conductor. The children are getting on very well and the meetings are becoming more interesting. We are sadly in need of a few energetic friends to act as leaders, and so help on the good work.—C. WHITE, Conductor, 75, Balcombe-street, Dorset-square, N.W.

LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' FEDERATION.—The monthly gathering will be held in connection with the Mile End Society at Beaumont-street Assembly Rooms, Mile End-road, on Sunday, December 1st, at 7 p.m. Addresses by Messrs. W. Drake, W. E. Long, and Dr. Bowles Daly, and other speakers, and medium. It is hoped that there will be a good attendance of society delegates and Spiritualists of the neighbourhood.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec., 99, Hill-street, Peckham.

MR. J. J. MORSE.—A lecture will be given by Mr. J. J. Morse (who has lately returned from America), in the Victoria Hall, Archer-street, Bayswater, on Wednesday evening, December 4th. Subject: "The Relation of Spiritualism to the Liberal Thought of To-day." Chairman, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers. Doors open 7.30 p.m., commence eight o'clock. Music during the evening. Platform tickets (limited number), 5s.; reserved seats, 2s. 6d.; admission, 1s. and 6d. (for which early application is necessary); may be obtained at the office of "LIGHT" and of all the London Spiritualist Societies; at Young's Library, 38, Kensington High-street; and of the Secretary of the Kensington and Notting Hill Association, Zephyr Hall, and 68, Cornwall-road, Bayswater, W.—PERCY SMYTH.

LONDON OCCULT SOCIETY, CARLYLE HALL, CHURCH-STREET (THREE DOORS FROM EDGWARE-ROAD, CLOSE TO STATION).—Next Sunday at 7 p.m., H. Ringwood-Peach, Esq., will deliver a lecture on "Confucius." I wish to call the attention of your readers to my concert at the Portman Rooms, on Wednesday evening, December 4th, at which will be performed, with full band and chorus, my sacred cantata, *The Worship of the*

Image, composed under spirit influence. I hope to be well supported on this occasion by those interested in the higher phenomena of Spiritualism. Applications for tickets to the concert should be sent to me addressed as follows:—A. F. TINDALL, A. Mus. T.C.L., 30, Wyndham-street, W.

KING'S CROSS SOCIETY, 253, PENTONVILLE-ROAD, (ENTRANCE CORNER OF KING'S CROSS-ROAD).—Last Sunday morning Mr. Mackenzie read an able paper upon "Phrenology," claiming for it the position of an exact science. In the debate which followed Messrs. Rodger, Sells, and several strangers participated. Dr. Daly stated that, although he had formerly viewed the subject sceptically, experiments in Phreno-Mesmerism had convinced him that it contained some truth. Next Sunday morning Mr. Mackenzie will experiment in phrenological readings. The evening meeting on Sunday was addressed by the guides of Mrs. Perrin. Next Sunday evening Mr. A. M. Rodger will deliver a lecture, subject, "Startling Facts in Modern Spiritualism."—S. T. RODGER, Sec.

ZEPHYR HALL, 9, BEDFORD-GARDENS, SILVER-STREET, NOTTING HILL GATE, W.—The usual services were held on Sunday. In the morning Mr. Portman's guides gave a short explanatory address on the text: "Do unto others as you wish to be done unto." Mr. Drake also favoured us with some remarks on "Christianity versus Spiritualism." In the evening, after some very interesting remarks from Mr. Darby on "Spiritual Doctrine and Truths," which were listened to with profound attention by a crowded audience, Miss Marsh gave some excellent clairvoyance tests, most of which were readily recognised. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Captain Pfoundes will occupy our platform and will speak on "Theosophy: The Truth about it," followed by discussion.—PERCY SMYTH, 68, Cornwall-road, Bayswater.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—A large number of friends attended the monthly social gathering on Monday, which was a great success. On Sunday morning last we had addresses by several members and friends. In the evening the platform was occupied by Mr. R. Wortley and Mr. J. A. Butcher. Our speakers on Sunday next will be Mr. J. Veitch at 11 a.m., and Mr. J. A. Butcher at 6.30 p.m. At the Society's Rooms (99, Hill-street), for members only, on Saturday, 23rd, Mr. A. Savage. On Wednesday inquirers are welcomed; Miss Davy at 8.15 p.m. In aid of the organ fund the President, Mr. J. T. Andy, will give a grand concert at the Norfolk-street Hall, Choumert-road, Peckham, on Tuesday, December 3rd, at 8 p.m. Musical director Mr. Ernest Miles. Tickets, 6d. and 1s., to be had at Winchester Hall, from any member of the committee, or from the Hon. Sec., 99, Hill-street, Peckham. Frequent trains (London Brighton and South Coast Railway, and London Chatham and Dover Railway); busses and trams to Rye-lane, near the hall.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

GREAT pressure on space compels us to hold over various letters and articles already in type. We must again plead for brevity. We really cannot find room for long letters.

W. E. G.—Many thanks. We use in due course. Please send on succeeding matter if suitable.

R. S.—We answer your letter privately; but, as our correspondence is heavy, acknowledge thus. A leader in our next issue will answer some of your remarks.

E. C.—Have written. The paragraph enclosed is perfectly true as regards the English member: we do not know as to the American. Pamphlet sent. A letter shall follow as soon as some important business that takes us out of London is adjusted.

THE BURIAL OF MR. ROSE'S BOOTS.

The following letter appears in the *Times*:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Times*.

SIR,—Your Southern readers would note with surprise the remarkable reticence of the police when examined and cross-examined respecting the non-production of the boots worn by Mr. Rose at the time of his murder. The Highland constable who buried them under water acted in accordance with the ancient tradition that, by doing so, he would "lay" the ghost of the murdered man, and thus prevent it from disturbing the people living in the neighbourhood of the catastrophe. It is not unlikely that the officers had a lurking suspicion that they would be laughed at by modern sceptics if they revealed the motive of their apparently strange conduct.

Rothsay, N.B.

B. ST. J. B. JOULE.

November 11th, 1889.

RELIGION gives to virtue sweetest hopes, to impenitent vice just alarms, and to true repentance strongest consolations; but it tries above all to inspire men with love, with sweetness, and with pity for men.

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.