

NOTES ON THE MAGAZINES.

All the magazines for the past month present features of absorbing interest. The prominence given to Madame Blavatsky is notable. "Lucifer" has the first instalment of a translation from the "Nouvelle Revue" of her sister, Madame Jelihovsky's biographical sketch, while in "The Path" is begun the publication of H. P. B.'s letters to her relatives. These straightforward accounts to her own family of her experiences will probably arouse equal interest and enity. Letter cviii. in Lucifer's interesting series of "Unpublished Letters of Eliphas Levi" is of more value than usual to the public. "The Path," as usual, is practical and helpful. The renewed literary activity of "Julius" is a distinct gain to the movement, and "The Screen of Time" in "The Path" and "Letters to a Lodge" in "The Irish Theosophist," have a welcome and familiar tone. Mr. Sinnett's note in the latter journal on the withdrawal of Masters' aid is important. "How the matter is regarded by the Higher Authorities is this: The momentum of the T. S. as it now stands is abundantly sufficient to carry it over the cyclic crisis now approaching. In the course of the coming century the knowledge at present held by a comparatively small number, will be generally diffused throughout the cultured classes." "The paths of the higher spiritual initiation are still open to those qualified to tread them." G. A. H. Brereton has a strong article on the sex question.

BODE'S LAW.

The distance of the planet Neptune had been theoretically deduced from a well-known empirical law called "Bode's Law," which, however, was first given out by Titius. It is as follows. Starting from 0 put down the number 3, and double successively, thus:

0 3 6 12 24 48 96 192 384

Add four to each of these numbers:

4 7 10 16 28 52 100 196 388

Now it happens that these numbers represent the successive distances of the planets from the Sun, even of the small planets, which were not known at the time this law was promulgated for the first time. The orbit of Mercury is expressed by the number 4; that of Venus by 7; the Earth by 10; Mars by 16; 28 describes the mean orbit of the Asteroids; Jupiter's is expressed by 52; Sat-

urn's by 100; and Uranus' by 196. According to this there seemed a legitimate right to place the new planet at the distance of 388. Now the real distance of Neptune is only 300; and it is to this irregularity of the series starting from Uranus that we must attribute the disagreement which exists in reality between the elements of the theoretical prediction of Neptune and those given by ulterior observation.—Flammariion's "Wonder of the Heavens."

ROBERT BROWNING ON DEATH.

Death, death! It is this harping on death I despise so much; this idle and often cowardly and ignorant harping! Why should we not change like every thing else? In fiction, in poetry, in so much of both, French as well as English, and, I am told, in American art and literature, the shadow of death—call it what you will, despair, negation, indifference—is upon us. But what fools who talk thus! Why, amico mio, you know as well as I that death is life, just as our daily, our momentarily dying body is none the less alive and ever recruiting new forces of existence. Without death, which is our crape like, churchyardly word for orange, for growth, there could be no prolongation of that which we call life. Pshaw! it is foolish to argue upon such a thing even. For myself, I deny death as an end of everything. Never say of me that I am dead.—Sharp's Life.

THIS WILL HELP YOU TO THINK.

Is this sheet of paper a surface? No; it has a surface above and a surface below. And if you were to split—not the sheet of paper, for that would be impossible—but the sheet of space in which the paper is, into a million sheets, and to-morrow one of those again into a million sheets, and the next day one of those into a million sheets, and if you kept up that process for a million years, the inconceivably thin sheet that you would have at the end would still be room, with a surface above and a surface below; it would be no nearer to being itself a surface than when you began. You see it is quite easy to say that a surface takes up no room, but it is not so easy to realise the enormous gulf that is fixed between very little and none at all. And when Euclid tells you that a surface has length and breadth, but no thickness, he means exactly what we have just been observing.—William Kingdon Clifford.