

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

To all who have remembered me in kindness at this season of goodwill, my hearty acknowledgments in the only way in which I can send them. For it would be beyond my power to respond individually, even if I had little else to do and were in vigorous health. As it is, the Russian epidemic has laid its icy claw upon me, and I devote most of my time to variations in sneezes and coughs. To anyone inclined to be too festive at the festive season I can recommend this pest as a thoroughly efficient corrective, the most irritating, and at the same time depressing, plague I know of.

Rays from the Christmas Star, by the Rev. Minot J. Savage, is a booklet that goes for a Christmas card, and is of rare beauty from cover to cover. I do not stay to praise Mr. E. E. Clark's printing, admirable as it is—the perfection of art—but go straight to the contents, a mixture of poetry with prose, all good, all noble in thought. Mr. Savage is a believer in the development of the race. He believes that man can bring the Kingdom of God upon this earth, when we abolish vice and crime, and learn that man's true happiness consists in a pure, clean, wholesome life, and cannot subsist without it; when we have done with war, and cease to deal in wholesale butchery because nations are rivals; when disease is conquered by science (as it will surely be one day): then, says Mr. Savage, "I believe that the Kingdom of God will come; not suddenly, not revealed from Heaven, but slowly evolved from earth." This, so far as we have yet mastered it, is the scheme of orderly evolution which we have yet to learn so much about. I have never been able to understand the strong feeling that exists in many minds against that which Darwin taught us when he revealed to us a sequence of cause and effect extending throughout the whole creation of God.

It is orderly, it is in accord with what we know of the processes of Nature—and they are never disorderly—it is simple and beautiful in operation. "Science has shown us the Oneness of God, the oneness of human origin, the oneness of human nature, the oneness of human destiny." Surely the stream of human knowledge in the ages to come must make for the confirmation of this which we owe to Darwin and Wallace. Yet this is a bold thing to say in the teeth of the latest utterance of one of our most intuitive and penetrative intellects. Lord Tennyson writes in his latest volume of poems:—

"The Lord let the house of a brute to the soul of a man,
And the man said, "Am I your debtor?"
And the Lord—"Not yet: but make it as clean as you can,
And then will I let you a better."

Amen, say I. I believe that the body that my soul has grown for its needs here, wherever it may have come from, is no more than a temporary appurtenance of my real self. And so, when the accident of incarnation is over I can join with the Laureate again:—

I have climbed to the snows of Age, and I gaze at a field in the Past,
Where I sank with the body at times in the sloughs of a low desire,
But I hear no yelp of the beast, and the Man is quiet at last,
As he stands on the heights of his life with a glimpse of a height that is higher.

One more thought from Mr. Minot Savage, condensed but, I hope, not spoiled. The great souls of the world, towering above us like mountains, catch the first rays of light. We are not tall enough to see, but we can learn from them. They on the mountain side see what we in the valley must take on faith, "So when some man that I recognise as having brain and heart and soul unspeakably above me, assures me that he does see some great spiritual verity, I can, at any rate, feel that he probably does; and so I gain a grander faith in that which I was disposed to doubt and let slip from my grasp":—

As when the valleys all in shadow lie,
And shadowy shapes of fear still haunt the night,
Some mountain peak reflects the coming light,
And waiting lips break forth with joyful cry,

For gladness that at last the day is nigh—
So when some soul that towers afar, is bright,
The souls that sit in shadow, at the sight
Grow sudden glad to know 'tis light on high.

And when these mountain-towering men can say
We see, tho' it be hidden from your eyes,
We can believe in better things to be.
So, tho' the shadows still obscure our way,
We see the light reflected from the skies
That crowns Thy brows, O Man of Galilee.

I have come upon some words on mediumship which were spoken at one of our séances in 1877. In these days there is an attempt being made to ignore external agency altogether and to refer whatever is done to the action of a man's own spirit in an exalted condition. When these instructions were given the tendency was to ignore the potential action of the incarnate human spirit altogether. The truth lies, as it usually does, midway between the two positions. We have learnt much of the inherent powers of the incarnate spirit, but we can never ignore the influence that is brought to bear on it from without. If we do, we shall miss our way lamentably. The gist of this communication is that a medium, if properly developed, progresses from what we know as physical mediumship to mental, to what we call clairvoyance, clairaudience, the control of the organs of speech, or of hand in automatic writing, in short, to all that evidences the action of spirit on spirit. Associated with this phase is the gift of healing, and the many symbolic methods of teaching, such as spirit-drawing.

Beyond this, and beyond the ordinary development of these spiritual gifts, comes the highest type of all, the use, namely, of the normal powers of the developed medium supplemented by the use of him as a channel of inspiration. Here is no lulling of the medium's powers of mind and spirit, no replacing his normal gifts by the efforts of an external intelligence. Accustomed to receive teaching and guidance, he becomes the vehicle of what is given to him in the way of instruction, and his own mental powers are stimulated and strengthened in their normal use. To revert from this state to the earlier methods, save where it is necessary for a specific purpose, is to retrogress. The orderly progress is what should be aimed at, for thus true spiritual development is gained. Herein is the difficulty that besets public mediumship, and hence its danger. For an ever-fresh stream of inquirers necessitates a supply of the elementary phenomena, and, even when these are genuine and real, the constant production of them is fraught with risk.

All which is, as might be anticipated, orderly and progressive. We shall never know much about mediumship till we get an opportunity of studying it from its first development in the young; and that seems as far off as ever. It must be in America that that work is to be begun. We English are too dull and sluggish; we move too slowly, and we are too chary of our money. Personally, I have always regretted that the money subscribed or bequeathed to Spiritualism in the United States was not more intelligently applied. We do not really want public services and pretentious "temples." Our knowledge is leavening all faith. That is better than the addition of a brand-new sect to existing schisms. We want a serious and scientific attempt to study mediumship in all its branches; and to do that we must catch it young. We want a sectional study of ourselves and our psychical powers. There the French schools do excellent work with hypnotism. But, above all, we want an open mind and no preconceptions when we come to this most important study.

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINE.

Eighteen-hundred and eighty-nine,
Ere other suns shall arise and shine,
Take our thanks for the flowers that lay
Mid the thorns and thistles of Time's highway,
For the honest eyes and the open hands,
For the heart that hearkens and understands,
For the new friend found, for the old—still dear,
For the kind, brave souls God called from here,
Safe and sure in Death's crystal shrine,
Eighteen-hundred and eighty-nine.

Take our thanks for the summer's glow,
For the hills asleep under winter's snow,
For the tender promise of April leaves,
For the glad fulfilment of Autumn's sheaves,
For the secret scent of the violet sweet,
For the poppies ablaze in the golden wheat,
For the twitter of birds in the early light,
For the gracious solace of silent night,
For nature's comfort and calm benign,
Eighteen-hundred and eighty-nine.

Take our thanks, ere the day stars shine,
Eighteen-hundred and eighty-nine,
That you sowed with salt the strange pale land,
Where we built our houses on the sand,
That the fleeting friends of a summer day
In the dust of your chariot passed away;
Mingle life's cup with the bitter rue,
If only you leave us true with true,
Till right shall triumph and wrong decline,
Eighteen-hundred and eighty-nine.

Eighteen-hundred and eighty-nine,
The sands of time trickle fast and fine,
The new year comes with its bliss or ban,
But our life is bound in a little span
Which shall presently loose and set us free
In a land of infinite harmony;
We feel the stir, ere the spirit wakes,
We see the gleam, ere the morning breaks,
We are twelve months nearer the Light Divine,
Eighteen-hundred and eighty-nine.

MARY L. HANKIN.

INSPIRATION.

What is inspiration? What is automatic drawing, painting, writing, versifying? The Psychological Research folks and the Positivists, the Theosophists and the Spiritualists, may differ in their theories about this matter, but in ninety-nine special cases out of one hundred their decision would be practically identical. The automatic drawing, the automatic poetry, are so tinged with the individuality of the medium as to render outside influence practically indiscernible.

But the hundredth case is sometimes a puzzle. At an old book-stall we have come across *Poems from the Inner Life* by Lizzie Doten.

In the presence of such a work the unanimity of the speculators on inspiration would at once vanish.

These poems may be divided into three categories:—

1. Poems written by Miss Doten in her normal state.
2. Poems said to be written under spirit influence, and which are immeasurably inferior to the normal poems.
3. Poems said to be written under spirit influence, and which are immeasurably superior to the normal poems.

We will say at once that Miss Doten's original poems are neither bad nor good. They might have been written by the poetical young lady of many a boarding school. In that delightful story, "Sophy," Violet Fane gives us a capital sketch of one of these. Miss Jacintha Darlington rhymes with facility; and finds the words "the lea" excessively useful to round off a couplet, even if under severe cross-examination she is unable to quite expound their meaning. Miss Doten and Miss Darlington, to use the language of the Chetwynd inquiry, run somewhat "level" in their poetic abilities:—

O early love! O early love!

Why does this memory haunt me yet?

Peace, I invoke thee from above—

I cannot, though I would forget

How I have sought with prayers and tears

To quench this wasting passion flame,

But after long, long, weary years,

It burns within my heart the same.

This poem might have been written by Miss Darlington, but in point of fact it was written by Miss Doten.

This brings us to the second category, for our inquiry perhaps, the most important of all. In the volume there is a poem so atrociously bad that Miss Doten certainly could not have written it when in a conscious state. It is said to have been inspired by William Shakespeare.

Man learns in this Valhalla of his soul

To love, nor ever finds "Love's Labour Lost,"

No two-faced Falstaff proffers double suit,

No Desdemona mourns Iago's art,

And every Romeo finds his Juliet.

* * * * *

Fairer than "dreams of Midsummer's" night,

The fields Elysian stretch before him,

No "Tempest" rends the ever peaceful bowers.

And so on through the catalogue of Shakespeare's plays.

Now it is evident at once that if Miss Doten or Miss Darlington had been called on, say, in a competition in a society paper, to give a mimicry of Shakespeare's style, each would have done much better than this.

Poetry is imitation, says one school of poetical critics. But here there is no imitation at all. Either the ghost has never read more than the table of contents of Shakespeare's works, or else he was on earth a poet accustomed to write what are called "topical" songs for a music-hall, metrical effusions that need not be very witty or very appropriate, if the very latest topic of the day is brought in by neck and by shoulders. We will now cite a poem that is immensely superior to any of the avowed works of Miss Doten's:—

CRADLE OR COFFIN.

The Cradle or Coffin, the robe or the shroud,
Of which shall a mortal most truly be proud ?
The cradle rocks light as a boat on the billow,
The child lies asleep on his soft, downy pillow ;
And the mother sits near with her love-lighted eyes,—
Sits watching her treasure and dreamily singing,
While the cradle keeps time like a pendulum swinging,
And notes every moment of bliss as it flies.

Lullaby, baby !—watch o'er his rest,
The dear little fledgling asleep in his nest ;
How blest is that slumber, how calm he reposes,
With his sweet pouting lips and his cheeks flushed with roses.
O God of the Innocent, would it might last !
But know thou, fond mother, beyond thy perceiving
The Parcæ are near him and steadily weaving
The meshes of Fate which around him they cast !

Lullaby, baby—let him not wake !
Soon shall the bubble of infancy break ;
Life with its terrors and fears shall surround him,
Evil and good with strange problems confound him,
And as the charmed bird to the serpent is drawn,
The demons of hell from his proudest position
Shall drag down his soul to the depths of perdition,
Till he bitterly curses the day he was born !

The Cradle or Coffin, the blanket or pall,
Oh, which brings a blessing of peace unto all ?
How still is the coffin ! No undulant motion ;
Becalmed like a boat on the breast of the ocean.
And there lies the child with his half curtained eyes,
While his mother stands near him her love-watch still keeping,
And kisses his pale lips with wailing and weeping,
Till her anguish is dumb, or can speak but in sighs.

He needs not a lullaby now for his rest ;
The fledgling has fluttered and flown from his nest.
He starts not, he breathes not, he knows no awaking,
Though sad eyes are weeping and sad hearts are breaking.

O God of all mercy, how strange are thy ways !
Yet know thou, fond mother, beyond Thy perceiving,
The angels who took him are tenderly weaving
His vestments of beauty, his garments of praise.

O, call him not back to earth's weariness now,
For blossoms unfading encircle his brow ;
From glory to glory for ever ascending,
His soul with the soul of the Infinite blending.
Great luminous truths on his being shall dawn,
With no doubts to distract him or stay his endeavour,
He shall bless in his progress for ever and ever
The day that his soul to the kingdom was born.

The Cradle or Coffin, the robe or the shroud,
Of which shall a mortal most truly be proud ?
The Cradle or Coffin, the blanket or pall,
O, which brings a blessing of peace unto all ?
The Cradle or coffin, both places of rest,
Tell me, O mortals, which like ye the best ?

Now it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that we have in this volume the work of three distinct minds. We are aware that the apostles both of Psychical Research and Psychical non-Research are bound logically by their theories to avoid this inference by suggesting hypocrisy and fraud. They may say that Miss Doten has been clever enough to thrice change her style. But to a critical mind there are great difficulties in the way of this theory. In the first place there is a good deal of pretension about Miss Doten's own poems. They do not seem in the least to have been designed to be a foil to the inspired ones. The poem we have just narrated at length is attributed to Edgar Poe. Whether or not his spirit inspired it is a question that need not be discussed as it can never be settled. But one or two observations suggest themselves. Miss Doten's own poems, like those of Miss Darlington, of which the novel of "Sophy" gives us a few delightful specimens, scan beautifully and jingle musically. Never is there a foot too few in one line or a foot too many. But in the ghostly Poe as in the living Poe this praise cannot be given. Both poets fall into faults

that mediocrity religiously shuns. There is one point more. Miss Doten's own poems are essentially spiritualistic. But the plane of spirit of the ghost is distinctly different from that of the mortal.

EXPERIENCES OF AN INQUIRER.

[It is not long since the gentleman who communicates the notes of séances which follow applied to me—introduced by a valued friend—for some guidance. I gave what I could, and I now print the rough notes of the various séances without any endeavour to trim or dress them. I remember that my own first introduction to Spiritualism was somewhat in the same way: and increasing experience leads me to think that we have in ourselves little ability to command these manifestations of spirit-power. I suppose that a series of experiments, in which the sitters were changed and eliminated, might end in the construction of a circle where good results might be obtained. But sometimes the results "break out" at once.—"M. A. (OXON.)"]

SIR,—Perhaps a few notes of my inquiries here during the past two months into the phenomena of Spiritualism may not be uninteresting; besides being a help to others seeking "Light."

1ST SITTING.—With a local medium in my business room. Medium entranced; and a good deal of successful clairvoyance; but no attempt at opening up communication. Much impressed, but room rather unsuitable.

2ND SITTING.—Present: medium, my wife and self, in a room largely used by family—startling description by medium, while clairvoyant, of old lady relative deceased; peculiar shawl worn by her, and other characteristics. He also described a peculiar cradle used in room, quite accurately; though cradle had been locked fast in a closet for five years. Medium then described as being near us a sister of my wife dead twenty-three years ago; also our little darling boy, aged four and a-half, snatched from us some months ago. I now suggested a table being got, which was brought from another room. We sat in light. Tilts began five minutes after the cold wave came on, as often described in "LIGHT"; messages came quickly from both, but particularly purporting to be from our boy; table becoming touchingly, caressingly demonstrative to mother, who was deeply affected and impressed. Question after question, test after test put, and answered without the slightest hesitation or delay. Medium then went into trance; voice changed to broken English, message came purporting to be from German doctor (name and university given) to my wife explaining nature of an irritating disease in the throat which she had, and giving simple cure (since followed with remarkable success).

3RD SITTING.—With medium in our drawing-room; raps came and tilting of table in five minutes, purporting to be from another dear young relative, who passed over eleven years ago. Medium, in clairvoyant state, accurately described her, particularly a mode of dressing her hair when in life. Here, again, test after test put on family matters occurring before and after this girl's death, showing her knowledge, care, and anxiety as to our family maintained unbroken throughout. It would be impossible to multiply details; two short but very emphatic messages tilted by table on our repeating alphabet. My son now entered the room; table at once tilted to him three times, told his age, employment, and even salary. Finally asked the communicating intelligence to specify in what part of room her portrait was; table moved rapidly across large room (our hands still resting on it) and stood directly under a small portrait—quite correct.

N.B.—Medium could not have seen portrait, as he was never near that side of room all night.

4TH SITTING.—Without medium, no results; we sat too short a time, I think.

5TH SITTING.—My wife and myself only. After about fifteen minutes table began to move as before, raps not so frequent, communications by tilting table from same intelligence referred to in third sitting. A close review of family history entered into; names, dates, places, &c., not a single flaw in results.

6TH SITTING.—We now introduced some of the family into sittings without the medium. Power considerably increased. My daughter played several hymns and tunes known to the

relative with whom we were now in communication. The table kept time to the music in a manner "intensely human" and stopped exactly when music ceased, resuming and keeping accurate time to a new tune when again played.

We now sit in family circle about thrice weekly with the same results, but several more intelligences known to us are beginning to send one message after another. We are promised several developments, including power of writing to one of the family circle, as to which I am exceedingly hopeful after a first experiment that has been tried; but these few notes of a mere inquirer into what are certainly occult phenomena are sent "*pour encourager les autres.*" Should further developments prove interesting I will forward them, if deemed worthy of insertion.

Edinburgh, December 23rd, 1889.

EDINA.

P.S.—I should have said that the medium was an entire stranger to me when he came in response to a written request to join our family circle, to which he was introduced the first time by me. I got his address from a gentleman in Glasgow, well known in Spiritualistic circles there, to whom I also was an utter stranger. The results are, therefore, all the more satisfactory. Two points I ought to have made clearer, and perhaps you may give effect to them. (1) The table used was a small occasional one, with our hands resting lightly on it. (2) We sat *throughout* in light. I may also add that one of the family got tilts and intelligent communications last night, *sitting alone*, without any difficulty.

VERIFICATION OF A SPIRIT-MESSAGE.

What constitutes proof of identity? We have sometimes asked the question, and have been struck by the different answers we receive. As a contribution to the solution of a perplexing question we extract from the *Banner of Light* a communication made by a well-known citizen of marked individuality. And we add to it a verification from a man who knew him well. Dr. Dyer has no doubt as to the identity of his friend. Is the proof adequate to a dispassionate mind that can bring to the discussion simply what a lawyer would bring to the study of a point of evidence? To us it has always seemed that the heart rather than the head is the best judge in these cases. And this we say bearing in mind how easy it is for the wish to father the thought. It is almost impossible to overstate the difficulties that must beset any attempt to perfect a piece of evidence such as this. It is the accumulation of cases that tells: the extreme unlikelihood that there should be an organised conspiracy of falsehood and deception the purpose of which is absurdly inadequate. If all that comes to us from the world beyond—errors, blunders, and falsities excluded—is worthless evidentially, a cunningly devised scheme of imposture, it is at least incumbent on those who make that allegation to furnish some conclusive evidence of its truth.

The message was given at the *Banner of Light* free circle, on October 25th ult., and the verification is appended:—

UNCLE STODDARD.

[To the Chairman:] Well, how do you do? I just got here in time: the door was coming to, but I got in. They said: "Push right along"; and I'm used to that. I kept a hotel, so I know all about it. I want them to know old Uncle Stoddard is here, and I want to tell 'em that it is all correct; I did make 'em know at one time, although the dear old friend was in this city of yours, and I went out of the shell in Farmington, Me. That ain't very nigh, is it? What do you think? This old friend of mine—he's in the spirit, remember—he told one in the flesh that I had come over. I don't know whether to call it "over" or not. I can tell you one thing: I didn't go *down*. I am alive, sir, and I'm mighty glad I got in here 'fore you slammed that door. It's worth your while to get up here to smell these flowers,* if nothing else. Well, well, this is a grand place to come to. If you ask me if I'm keeping a hotel, I shall tell you I am; and I can pay the bills, too. They don't half of 'em do that on this side. I suppose I hadn't ought to find fault about it.

* The table is decked with flowers, freewill offerings from friends.—ED. OF "LIGHT."

I want to put in just one word here about Dr. Dyer: If he aint got a soul—I was going to say bigger than an ox—I'll give up. There's Jerry Mann: he said if you want to know him you've got to live with him. I don't know as I've any wish to come back here, to get into that old shell again. No, no; don't offer it to me! I am satisfied with the home I have got, but they tell me I can build it on better and better. I had, as I must say here, as good a mother as God ever gave a child.

I'm not here to pick flaws with anybody; but I do say you'd better do the best you know how. I suppose you'll say Uncle Stoddard is kind o' throwing out hints that some of us don't. I don't say that; I take the coat myself.

I'll be much obliged to you, sir, if you'll just say that Uncle Stoddard has got back here. I've been here a good many times. I send love to the handful of friends that are left, and I do wish they would try and learn a little something about spirits coming to converse with them. I should be glad to talk with them if there's anybody that wants to talk with me; if they don't I shall come all the same. I should be very thankful to have a little talk with them sometime, where there's some kind of a medium. That's what Joe Dyer tells me to say. He's here. He's no relation to the Doctor, but I guess the Doctor knows who he is.

I am greatly obliged, sir. I am happy. I do feel first-rate. Tell 'em we have no worriment now about what we'll do and how we'll get our bills paid. It is all right. Good afternoon.

I desire to verify the message of "Uncle Stoddard," given at the *Banner* free circle, October 25th, 1889, through the mediumship of Mrs. B. F. Smith, and published in the *Banner* issue of November 16th.

I knew him well and intimately for forty years. He built the hotel in this town known as the "Stoddard House," and was its landlord until a few years before his demise, which occurred April 1st, 1885. I boarded with him, practised in his family, and his son was a student of medicine in my office. Perhaps no man in this town knew him better than myself; and I am perfectly satisfied that none other than he spoke that message.

But the message itself contains a *test*, which not only proves his identity, but the genuineness of the medium through whom it was spoken. He says: "I did make 'em know at one time, although the dear old friend was in this city of yours, and I went out of the shell in Farmington, Me. This old friend of mine—he's in the spirit, remember—he told one in the flesh that I had come over." Now this relates to a manifestation given me four years ago last April. On the evening of the 1st of April, 1885, I was at a séance in Boston, Miss Gertrude Berry the medium, when there came from the cabinet the spirit of Jerry Mann, the friend above referred to, and told me that "Uncle Stoddard" had that morning "come over." As I had but a few days before left my home, and as I did not know that "Uncle Stoddard" was sick, I thought there must be some mistake about it. I had so much confidence, however, in spirit communications, that early next morning I telegraphed to a friend of mine here, asking, "When did 'Uncle Stoddard' die?" The answer promptly came, "'Uncle Stoddard' died yesterday morning, very suddenly." Thus the information given me by the materialised spirit was confirmed to the letter; and now "Uncle Stoddard" himself not only confirms that manifestation, but he confirms the genuineness of the medium through whom it was given, and he also confirms the genuineness of Mrs. B. F. Smith, through whom this message of his came.

The message is characteristic. I believe if "Uncle Stoddard" ever spoke, he spoke the words contained in that message. I have shown it to several of his intimate friends, and they all endorse my view regarding it.

Farmington, Me.

P. DYER.

November 21st, 1889.

THERE are some sciences which utterly destroy the faculty of thinking and annihilate the rational; as, for instance, *scholastics*, namely, when they describe one plain matter, intelligible to almost anyone, by means of many scholastic terms, until no one understands it. *Philosophy*, when a judgment is formed by means of a train of inferences—from definitions of terms and conclusions thence—which, when they are linked together, set forth such things as can be understood by no one, nor what is their connection. They take away all reason; when, nevertheless, they comprise nothing else than may be so simply explained that it may be understood by any one who pleases.—SWEDENBORG'S *Spiritual Diary*, No 4,578.

THE "SPECTATOR" ON IMMORTALITY.

The old *Spectator* is not much read nowadays. More is the pity, for in it are to be found mines of wisdom. The subjoined letter will be new to many of our readers, and, we hope, acceptable to all. It is of the class of writing which the more we are acquainted with it the more we like it. It would be an unmixed blessing if men would study, in these days of advertisement without blush the reticence and dignity of the ancient writers. They succeeded in imparting knowledge in a few terse, well-compacted sentences. We succeed chiefly in exposing ignorance in columns of inconsequent and flabby gush:—

There is, I know not how, in the minds of men a certain presage, as it were, of a future existence; and this takes the deepest root, and is most discoverable in the greatest geniuses and most exalted souls.

Nescio quomodo inheret in mentibus quasi seculorum quoddam augurium futurorum; idque in maximis ingenii altissimisque animis et existit maximè et apparet facillimè.—CIC. TUSC. QUAST.

TO THE SPECTATOR.

SIR,—

I am fully persuaded that one of the best springs of generous and worthy actions is the having generous and worthy thoughts of ourselves. Whoever has a mean opinion of the dignity of his nature will act in no higher a rank than he has allotted himself in his own estimation. If he considers his being as circumscribed by the uncertain term of a few years, his designs will be contracted into the same narrow span he imagines is to bound his existence. How can he exalt his thoughts to anything great and noble, who only believes that, after a short turn on the stage of this world, he is to sink into oblivion, and to lose his consciousness for ever?

For this reason I am of opinion, that so useful and elevated a contemplation as that of the soul's immortality cannot be resumed too often. There is not a more improving exercise to the human mind, than to be frequently reviewing its own great privileges and endowments; nor a more effectual means to awaken in us an ambition raised above low objects and little pursuits, than to value ourselves as heirs of eternity.

It is a very great satisfaction to consider the best and wisest of mankind in all nations and ages, asserting, as with one voice, this their birthright, and to find it ratified by an express revelation. At the same time if we turn our thoughts inward upon ourselves, we may meet with a kind of secret sense concurring with the proofs of our own immortality.

You have, in my opinion, raised a good presumptive argument from the increasing appetite the mind has to knowledge, and to the extending its own faculties, which cannot be accomplished, as the more restrained perfection of lower creatures may, in the limits of a short life. I think another probable conjecture may be raised from our appetite to duration itself, and from a reflection on our progress through the several stages of it. "We are complaining" as you observe in a former speculation "of the shortness of life and yet are perpetually hurrying over the parts of it to arrive at certain little settlements or imaginary points of rest, which are dispersed up and down in it."

Now let us consider what happens to us when we arrive at these "imaginary points of rest." Do we stop our motion, and sit down satisfied in the settlement we have gained? Or are we not removing the boundary and marking out new points of rest, to which we press forward with the like eagerness, and which cease to be such as fast as we attain them? Our case is like that of a traveller upon the Alps, who should fancy that the top of the next hill must end his journey because it terminates his prospect; but he no sooner arrives at it than he sees new ground and other hills beyond it, and continues to travel on as before.

This is so plainly every man's condition in life that there is no one who has observed any thing but may observe that as fast as his time wears away his appetite to something future remains. The use therefore I would make of it is this, that since Nature, as some love to express it, does nothing in vain, or, to speak properly, since the Author of our being has planted no wandering passion in it, no desire which has not its object, futurity is the proper object of the passion so constantly exercised about it; and this restlessness in the present, this assigning ourselves over to farther stages of duration, this successive

grasping at somewhat still to come, appears to me, whatever it may to others, as a kind of instinct or natural symptom which the mind of man has of its own immortality.

I take it at the same time for granted, that the immortality of the soul is sufficiently established by other arguments: and if so, this appetite, which otherwise would be very unaccountable and absurd, seems very reasonable, and adds strength to the conclusion. But I am amazed when I consider there are creatures capable of thought, who, in spite of every argument, can form to themselves a sullen satisfaction in thinking otherwise. There is something so pitifully mean in the inverted ambition of that man who can hope for annihilation, and please himself to think that his whole fabric shall one day crumble into dust, and mix with the mass of inanimate beings, that it equally deserves our admiration and pity. The mystery of such men's unbelief is not hard to be penetrated, and, indeed, amounts to nothing more than a sordid hope that they shall not be immortal, because they dare not be so.

This brings me back to my first observation, and gives me occasion to say further, that as worthy actions spring from worthy thoughts, so worthy thoughts are likewise the consequence of worthy actions; but the wretch who has degraded himself below the character of immortality is very willing to resign his pretensions to it, and to substitute in its room a dark negative happiness in the extinction of his being.

The admirable Shakespeare has given us a strong image of the unsupported condition of such a person in his last minutes in the second part of King Henry VI., where Cardinal Beaufort, who had been concerned in the murder of the good Duke Humphrey, is represented on his death bed. After some short confused speeches, which show an imagination disturbed with guilt, just as he was expiring, King Henry standing by him full of compassion, says:—

Lord Cardinal! if thou think'st on Heav'n's bliss,
Hold up thy hand, make signal of that hope!
He dies, and makes no sign!

The despair which is here shown, without a word or action on the part of the dying person, is beyond what could be painted by the most forcible expressions whatever.

I shall not pursue this thought farther, but only add, that as annihilation is not to be had with a wish, so it is the most abject thing in the world to wish it. What are honour, fame, wealth, or power when compared with the generous expectation of a being without end, and a happiness adequate to that being?

I shall trouble you no farther; but with a certain gravity which these thoughts have given me, I reflect upon some things which people say of you, as they will of men who distinguish themselves, which I hope are not true; and wish you as good a man as you are an author.

I am, sir,
Your most obedient, humble servant,
T. D.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

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

Logic Taught by Love. By Mrs. BOOLE. (Published for the Author by Frances Edwards, High-street, Marylebone.)

A Chapter of Amaranth: Being Brief Thoughts on this Life and the Next. (From the Writings of the Author of *From over the Tomb.* James Burns.)

A CURIOUS story reaches us from St. Petersburg. A well-known Polish Princess, who is equally at home in the society of Berlin as of St. Petersburg, recently took a house in the Russian capital. To her disgust she found it haunted. A religious service was held, and the demons exorcised. But after a few days they returned with reinforcements. The result is that in order to live in the house at all the princess has to lay on an exorcist religious service every three days. This is said to be actually going on this week in the capital of the Russian Empire.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

We are in some degree sensible of the presumption which may be involved in bold speculations and large expectations of knowledge; but we think little of the presumption that is involved in denials and in the assumption that we can mark out limits. Our pride may pass if it will but wrap itself in the cloak of humility.—J. HINTON'S *Life in Nature*, p. 223.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
2, DUKE STREET,
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Light :

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

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4th, 1890.

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

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

THE OUTLOOK.

What, on the threshold of a new year, is the most striking feature in the prospect? We should say the persistence with which the faith everywhere spoken against—as that faith once was that has vanquished the world—has battled with prejudice, conquered opposition, and has commended itself to those who have ears to hear, eyes to see, and brains to comprehend.

There can be no doubt about it: the world of thought is more intolerant than it ever was of shams. That which pretends is soon relegated to the limbo of the forgotten, and with pretences sometimes go what look like them. The world is sometimes mistaken in its estimates, and the leaders of thought are as wrong as Browning was when he wrote that poem—we suppose it is a poem—"Sludge the Medium." But apart from this, the age is intolerant of shams. It started with a strong predisposition to disbelieve in what Emerson called "a rat-hole revelation," and Carlyle, "a liturgy of Dead Sea apes." One likes to fix those two great men—great as leaders of opinion, great, therefore, in their responsibility for the power they wielded—to those remarkable utterances. Carlyle was a professor of strong language, and it is not always clear that he knew how much it was above proof. Emerson had a calmer intellect and a more chastened utterance usually; so "rat-hole revelation" must be nailed to the counter.

The proof that Spiritualism "has come to stay" is found in the repeated assertion of things and opinions that it has taught us by those who elaborately repudiate any connection with it as a concrete form of thought. In ancient days, when respectable Judaism shrugged its shoulders at the Christ, and scornfully asked, "Have any of the Pharisees and rulers believed on Him?" there was a force at work that has since leavened the world.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." The words are as applicable now as they were then. There is a silent force at work among us which may, and probably will, have incalculable effect on the future.

It is not so important to stimulate this force as it is to regulate it. There is not so much need to convince a sceptic

that we are not mistaken in our estimate of its action and importance as there is to study it in operation, to tabulate and systematise the evidence of its existence, so much of which is likely to perish, and to interpret its various activities in the light of a sober and sound philosophy.

It is not certain that the last word has yet been spoken by any of the many classes of mind that have meddled with the occult. It is quite certain, it seems to us, that we are on the very threshold of the inquiry, and that we are all necessary, the one to the others, in the elucidation of the mysteries that surround us.

This is the hope of the dawning year: that increased attention from educated minds may legitimately spread knowledge, and that a more modest estimate on our own part of what we do really know may lead us to listen more attentively to those who differ from us. A critic who starts out with an impression that what he does not know is not worth knowing, is very apt to stumble and fall before he has gone far. If we be wise, we shall drop our efforts to convert the world, and divert them rather into the direction of studying our facts and framing a reasonable and careful estimate of the philosophy that may interpret them. So doing we shall do better work than is brought to perfection by any amount of controversy, whereby a man is not convinced of that which he does not wish to believe.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE ASSEMBLY AT THE BANQUETING HALL, ST. JAMES'S HALL.

At Mr. Morse's address on this occasion (January 21st) members may introduce friends. Tickets can be had by application to Mr. Godfrey, at the office, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C. Subject of the address: "The Status of American Spiritualism as seen during a Four Years' Visit." For further particulars see advertisement.

DEPARTURE OF COLONEL OLCOTT.

Colonel Olcott, after delivering many successful addresses in Great Britain during his stay in the Old Country, has returned to India. He carries back with him two able coadjutors who will be able, we hope, to ease of pressing work the willing shoulders that have long borne up an increasing burden amid circumstances of increasing difficulty. The Colonel is accompanied to Adyar by Dr. J. Bowles Daly and Mr. E. D. Fawcett, whose philosophical disquisitions are known to the readers of "LIGHT," as well as *Lucifer* and the *Theosophist*. Both render willing and unpaid service. As he departs Colonel Olcott sends us a photograph of the founders of the Theosophical Society, Madame Blavatsky and himself—a truly striking picture. The intent face of Madame Blavatsky, with its air of concentrated power, and the patriarchal benignity of the Colonel are admirably caught.

LADY CAITHNESS.

The *Women's Penny Paper* (December 21st)—"the only paper conducted, written, printed, and published by women"—contains an interview with the Countess of Caithness (Duchesse de Pomar). Swedenborg and Boehme she avows as her chief instructors. The present forward movement of these days she considers to be only a revelation, an unveiling of truth which is of, and for, all time. The exaltation and elevation of women is to her the sign of the times. We are living in the very throes of the Second Advent—the revelation of Truth. And yet once again, hereafter, the Son of Man will come, celestially, to give Eternal Life to those who can receive it. This is intimated in the saying, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." Such is Lady Caithness's mystic reading. Once He came to show man the way to Heaven. Now He comes as the Comforter, to reveal Truth. Yet again He will come in the Millennium, the harbinger of Eternal Life.

LORD TENNYSON'S LATEST VOLUME.*

Generations have run their course since the Laureate first sang for us. Generations will not cease to run, so long as English poetry lives, without his poems being valued. For they form a large part of the best literature that the Victorian age has produced : and the Victorian age has no reason to be ashamed of its fruitage.

It is not within our scope to give any estimate of the Laureate's latest verse : still less to attempt any criticism of the little which does not rise to the level of his usually sustained excellence. A general account of what chiefly impresses us in his volume is all that we attempt. There is in it some verse that recalls the fire and fervour of his early years. "His eye is not dim, nor his natural force abated." Needless to say that the matchless melody is there. Sometimes, too, the poet permits us a more intimate glimpse of his inner self, as when, in the dedication to Lord Dufferin and Ava, he mourns his son's loss, and owns his debt for kindness conferred on him.

For he—your India was his Fate,
And drew him over sea to you—
He fain had ranged her thro' and thro',
To serve her myriads and the State.

But ere he left your fatal shore,
And lay on that funereal boat,
Dying, "Unspeakable," he wrote,
"Their kindness," and he wrote no more.

And sacred is the latest word.
And now the Was, the Might-have-been,
And those lone rites I have not seen,
And one drear sound I have not heard,

Are dreams that scarce will let me be ;
Not there to bid my boy farewell,
When That within the coffin fell,
Fell and flashed into the Red Sea,

Beneath a hard Arabian moon
And alien stars. To question why
The sons before the fathers die
Not mine. And I may meet him soon.

But while my life's late eve endures,
Nor settles into hueless gray,
My memories of his briefer day
Will mix with love for you and yours.

"Demeter and Persephone," the poem that gives the title to the volume, is the voice of the Poet of Ulysses, Tithonus, CEnone, full of flashes of infinite beauty :—

Child, those imperial, disimpassion'd eyes,
Awed even me at first, thy mother—eyes
That oft had seen the serpent-wanded power
Draw downward into Hades with his drift
Of flickering spectres, lighted from below
By the red race of fiery Phlegethon.
But when before have gods or men beheld
The Life that had descended re-arise ?

When, indeed ? And what a picture of the mutterings and noises inarticulate of the Underworld is this :—

I feel the deathless heart of motherhood
Within me shudder, lest the naked glebe
Should yawn once more into the gulf, and thence,
The shrilly whinnings of the team of Hell,
Ascending, pierce the glad and songful air,
And all at once their arch'd necks midnight-maned
Jet upwards thro' the mid-day blossom.

But quotation is fruitless where all so hangs together, where it is so hopeless to give a just idea of the whole. We must pass that most powerful poem, "The Leper's Bride," from want of space to deal with it. "Vastness" has already been noticed in these columns when it first appeared. "The Progress of Spring" we will not mutilate by extracts. It shows the poet at his best, in the home that

* *Demeter and other Poems.* By Lord Tennyson. (Macmillans, 1889.)

he has made for himself, wandering over the grounds where the birds nest and sing, and where the flowers of spring grow, none disturbing them.

"The Throstle" pairs with this, though shorter and different in its tone. We doubt whether the flippant critics, who gayed that little gem of a poem, had read it with sufficient care, or had sense enough to appreciate the adaptation of the musical lines to the thrush's note.

"Far, far away" is written for music. We hope it may be worthily set ; no light task.

What vague world-whisper, mystic pain or joy
Through those three words would haunt him when a boy
Far—far—away.

A whisper from his dawn of life ? A breath
From some fair dawn beyond the doors of death
Far—far—away ?

Far, far—how far ? from o'er the gates of Birth
The faint horizons, all the bounds of earth,
Far—far—away.

And then a final gem. The aged poet, now in his eighty-first year, had felt a summons knocking at his gate. A terrible illness from which, by God's mercy alone, he was preserved to us, had intensified his thoughts and views of the silent land to which we are all progressing. He wrote thus his swan-song :—

CROSSING THE BAR.

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me !
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark !
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark :

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the Bar.

So mote it be ! No more faithful servant shall hear the "Well done" than that true and loyal man whose verse has been an illumination to many a struggler whose acquaintance he will make hereafter. He has preached in noble strains a gospel of enlightenment. When, all too soon, his voice is hushed, he, being dead, will speak to us still.

HESPER.

We called her Hesper ; for it seemed
Our Star of Eve had on us beamed,
Like Hesper, from the Heaven above,
To latest life a Lamp of love.

But for a little while withdrawn
She heralds an Eternal Dawn,
Above these mists of mortal breath,
Our Hesper in the dark of death !

Beyond the Shadow of the night
That parted us, she lifts her light
To beacon us the Homeward way,
Where we shall meet again by day.

The Star of Eve may set, but how
It shines, the Star of Morning now,
And smiles with look of love that dries
All tears from our uplifted eyes !

—GERALD MASSEY

(Written on the death of his daughter in her twentieth year.)

THE Liverpool Children's Progressive Lyceum may, we hope, benefit by a sale of work at Daulby Hall on Tuesday, February 18th, 1890. Any of our readers disposed to assist are invited to communicate with Miss Morse, 16, Stanley-street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

INTELLECTUAL LIFE AND SPIRITUAL LIFE.

With one consent the word *Life* has disappeared in the present day from the vocabulary of precise Thought. Nominalists and Realists, Spiritualists and Materialists, Theologians and Scientists are all shy of the vague and yet inevitable old word. For the attainment of greater subtlety of thought compels us to be more precise in expression, and therefore every different school of Thought avoids, as much as possible, those terms which are either popular and vague, or are appropriated by any other previous school; and in the following considerations of the difference between the phenomena of intellectual and of psychical or spiritual activities, it would have been well to eschew the word *Life*; but no term offers itself to supply its place, whether *Life* be taken to mean, from the scientific point of view, a manifestation of Force in activity, or whether it be taken to mean, in a popular sense, something (not the soul) animating Matter, or whether—as I would define it—the word *Life* be used to express that invisible element whereby Matter is brought into organic forms, and which manifests itself through what we call Matter, in the phenomena of growth, of action and expression, from the lowest to the highest organisation. It is not reasonable to contemplate this *Life* as existing in Matter only, although it would be unreasonable to suppose that (while we are in the realm of Matter) we can possibly perceive, or by any sense recognise, anything *outside* of the Material world. For instance, Harmony is a mere unexpressed idea until embodied in sound, or colour, or form: and yet we can think of Harmony existing and manifesting itself in modes utterly imperceptible to us as we are now organised. So *Life*, whatever it be, is to us never visible, and is perceptible only in its action on organisms.

CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS FUNCTIONS.

In the most simple organisms and in the merely physical functions *Life* appears to act unconsciously and perfectly—perfectly, at least, in comparison with the imperfect achievements of conscious efforts: thus, for instance, we cannot add up figures with the same unconscious persistency and regularity with which we can continue the action of walking. Nor, automatically and unconsciously as we now walk, could we do so as infants, nor can we now walk with the total absence of intention with which we regularly inhale and exhale air from our lungs. That is because the mere physical functions can perform their work without the aid of the intellect; but the intellectual powers are not so independent, they are fed by physical aid and are expressed by physical agencies; and while Intellectual Force depends on a fair development of the bodily powers, its energy depends on their due restraint: the intellectual acumen of the feeble valetudinarian will lack vigour, as that of the mere athlete will be childish and dull. Though rooted in the universal and eternal Intelligence, individual intellect is fed and supported by material food as well as by mental aliment, by the earth's atmosphere as well as by a more subtle and ethereal air. A late Materialist—Mr. Charles Bray—described the soul—when compelled to allude to it—thus: "The Soul is that portion of the Universal Power—Force—or Mind—which plays such varied tunes as it passes through the equally varied minds which are its instruments."

SPIRITUAL LIFE FED BY THE INTELLECT.

And the Spiritual Life, whilst rooted in unknown depths, draws its functional energies from its intellectual body, and owes its force and power of expression to the due cultivation and balance of the intellectual functions. It is true that much Spiritual Life may exist in an uneducated man, but, as his power of expression is limited by his intellectual ignorance, we cannot judge of his spiritual powers, and—as St. Paul said—"If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful." Evidences of Spiritual Life are to be gained—not from "mute inglorious Miltons,"—but from those who have been able to express themselves in words, or deeds, in music, in art, or in action; and through them we learn how far Spiritual Force is like, and how far it differs from, Intellectual Force. It is so far similar, that an extreme cultivation of mere mental functions—such as technical memory—or mere logical acumen, or constant observation of facts (irrespective of the conclusions to which these facts point) have as enfeebling an effect on the Spiritual Life as a cultivation of mere physical muscle has on the Intellectual Life.

SPIRITUAL—NOT RELIGIOUS LIFE.

By the words "Spiritual Life" must by no means be imagined that which is ordinarily deemed religious or a pious frame of

mind, although in its higher developments the Spiritual Life is essentially religious, because it unites Wisdom with Knowledge; and the union of Knowledge and Wisdom produces that placidity concerning personal matters, with that wholesome energy on all questions of first principles, and that splendid enjoyment of them which mark the truly religious mortal.

Life Spiritual—as distinguished from Intellectual life—shows itself in greater spontaneity of achievement, in fuller feelings of the altruistic type—in keener light, in vaster grasp. It does not plod, it does not even fly, for it is at once wheresoever it desires to be. The digestive powers of the Mind are comparatively slow; it may take a long time to absorb an idea; but, spiritually, the moment we recognise an idea, *we enter into it*, and then it is ours, and *we become it* instantly. Again, physically to *look* and to *see* are two different actions. *Seeing* is automatic, *looking* implies an intellectual effort, but in the Spiritual Life *seeing* and *looking* are identical. As far as we can judge, Spiritual Life seems rooted in Universal Feeling, rather than in Universal Intelligence: and as, even in the physical world, *feeling* is more spontaneous and rapid than *thinking*, so *Life* is more rapid and spontaneous when working spiritually than when working intellectually only. Indeed, Spiritual Life may be defined as *Unconscious Perfection*, rather than (as Intellect is) *Conscious Imperfection*. And in Spiritual Life, the will-power acts so instantaneously and perfectly as to be almost automatic.

SPIRITUAL AND INTELLECTUAL LIFE.

The line cannot be defined which separates the keenest of the Intellectual conditions from the lower of the Spiritual states; but in the mere Intellectual Life Thought and Action are diverse; they are *one* in the Spiritual Life, for the energy which perceives a line of action carries it out without further effort. From Reason, the tippler may see that he had better avoid the wine bottle; but he will not be able to refrain himself, until the various intellectual faculties can accumulate their powers to one supreme effort, and, generating *spiritual* force, he masters himself without effort, and can now tread, with unharmed feet, on the very pit of his former hell. It is by recognising the ascent of intelligence up to spiritual power that many mystic writings become intelligible. In the Psalms of David we see his higher spiritual self triumphing over his animal self; the long, dubious wrestle of the Intellect with the Passions is terminated by the rhapsody of spiritual power, so that he could say, "Mine enemies are put under my feet."

As said before, Individual Minds are rooted in the Universal Mind, and therefore Intellect can deal with the subject of abstract principles. And when the slow and blindfolded Intellect (blindfolded by time and sense) does attain to some consciousness of the ordinarily invisible, then comes the triumph, then *Life Intellectual* passes into *Life Spiritual*, and a new step gained on the ladder of existence. Those ideas which had hitherto been only dimly perceived, and through the telescope of reason with perpetual readjustment of the mental focus, suddenly are perceived in obvious objectivity. Now, we no longer sympathise with a feeling, for *we are* the feeling; we become the sorrow that enwraps us—or *we are* the joy; we do not grasp an idea, for it grasps us; we do not perceive a truth, for *we are* in it.

INSPIRATION.

It may be that all this is but an automatic action of the Intellect; but it is the action of the isolated intellect in union with the Supreme Intelligence; and the first, often fitful and incomplete, action and impulse is so novel, that the men or women to whom it has come have often deemed it a special and direct revelation, while lookers on have deemed it an insanity, and men exclaim, "Behold a madman," or "Lo, a prophet," or "Here is genius!" And the less perfect and complete is this automatic action of functions formerly exercised only with conscious effort, the more liable is the individual to self-deception on his own case, as the still slowly reasoning faculties make a false estimate of "the moments of rare ecstasy." Not every spiritually gifted man has the wisdom of Handel in his recognition of the source of his powers. Wrapt in a condition of rare ecstatic energy, he composed the score of the Messiah more rapidly than it can now be copied, and when asked how he had felt in those six weeks, he said, "I was all the time in Heaven and did hear the angels make the music which I wrote." The faculties of Time, Tune, Harmony, Dramatic Conception and Sense of Sublimity united with effort of will to make him a musician, but at times these various faculties energised themselves so intensely as to work unconsciously, and *then* he became per-

ipient of harmonies beyond those audible in the earth's atmosphere, and (fortunately for us), in Handel's case, with the perception of Divine music came the power to express it with the intellect and intelligibly.

THE GENIUS.

This power of expressing the things spiritually perceived marks the difference between the man of genius and the dreamer. For who among the most ordinary of men does not know that condition of mind when (thought being passive) we pass into a state of abnormal energy and intensity of perception? We may not speak of them, they may pass from us like a morning dream; but we have felt them. We become spectators of sights, actions, and events, enacted *within* ourselves (some of which have been identified with actual events concurrently going on), while others we recognise as a sort of dramatic representation of events or ideas; mesmerised by the swing of the express train as we travel through England's rural scenery, we may hear the war cries of an angry nation. We see life-histories enacted so powerfully that they pass into our memory almost as real events; or we hear simple melodies in the silent dawn, simple yet fraught with infinite meanings—or (a yet higher development of spiritual life)—we are suddenly touched, as was Daniel, and are bidden to stand upright when bowed down by the weakness of egotism; or when toiling on "*in mezzo del cammin della nostra vita*" we are suddenly rapt up into some "exceeding high mountain," and are refreshed by the sight of "the things which shall be." In other words—our higher faculties unite themselves (momentarily and with no effort of ours) with Infinity, and then for a blessed moment we lose individuality in the fulness of Life.

But more commonly, all that is revealed to man in these rare moments is the dominant motive of the surrounding events in which they may be interested. Then these events and their outstanding causes become often personified—so active and urgent do they appear till, with Swedenborg, we see the fraudulent oppressor appear as a wild beast of prey, or legalised crime take form as the *Scarlet Woman* of the Apocalypse, or the struggle between Right and Wrong, between Purity and Impurity will assume the vigour of human athletes; and if in such moments power of expression came with the vision we should describe the fight as Æschylus did when he wrote of Life (*Bios*) and Force (*Dynamis*), arguing over the fate of struggling humanity whom he personified as Prometheus.

A RIGHT JUDGMENT.

Enormous as is the advance in the development of Life in our organism when consciously-exercised *Intellect* develops into that automatic action which blends it with the Universal Intelligence and produces phenomena of *spiritual* Life, it is yet necessary that the Conscious Will shall study, dissect, and judge the merits of the unconscious or spiritual declarations. For, if the vision be accepted without reasoning on it, we may become more foolish than they who live without the vision at all. The vision becomes useless and often maddening—unless (like Peter's vision the clean and unclean beasts) the voice of Reason utters the explanation of it. It was perhaps because they knew of this necessity for the Conscious Intellect to sit in judgment on the visions or utterances from the Inner unconsciously-acting soul, that our forefathers in the Christian Church (in commemorating that outpouring of spiritual power which occurred on the first Pentecost after Christ's Ascension) prayed, not for like spiritual gifts, but for "*a right judgment in all things*." But, later on, there comes a far higher and more subtle phase of Spiritual Life in which the unconsciously-received spiritual information mingles itself gradually with the conscious spiritual life, blending them in constant intercourse, to the advantage of both. When this point is reached, we are "Past Masters" in celestial Freemasonry—Adepts in the Great Initiation. The beauty and the mystery of this marriage of the limited Intellect with the unlimited spirits are so great, so profound, that it has led Dante, Jacob Boehme, and more modern seers to try and describe it in language which, alas! sounds to the ordinary mortal but as the rhapsody of a passionate lover; and they have failed to recognise (as Shelley recognised) that "the winged words on which my soul would pierce into the heights of Love's rare universe, are chains of lead around its flight of fire."

NATURE AND SPIRIT.

In its earlier as in its more advanced conditions, the Spiritual Life finds pleasure in nature. Keble illustrates the lowest phase of spiritual expression; an active personality and a strong sense

of first himself and next the orthodox Church as centres of the universe produced a childish mode of translating the language of nature. He spoke of the "hues of the rich unfolding morn" as "*wasting* their treasures of delight upon our thankless joyous sight," though he rises to a higher, because less personal, plane when the "Sun of his soul cheers him," and when he can "by the light Thy words disclose, watch Time's full river as it flows" (Wordsworth), with higher inspiration forgets himself in nature, and sees, in *her*, prototypes of the universal existence. He knew with Keble that "*Two worlds are ours*"—but he would have said (not *sin*) but *sense* "forbids us to deary the mystic Heaven and earth within, plain as the sea and sky."

When the possibility of possessing spiritual faculties dawns on us the temptation may arise to sacrifice all daily duties and outer delights for their development, and to lead an ascetic life—so only we may gain this mysterious consciousness. But no course can be more suicidal; the seed might as well hope to sprout without being buried in the lowly earth, or the vine to bear fruit without being severely pruned. The spiritual growth may seem to us delayed, and, indeed, indefinitely postponed by reason of the daily round and common task which keeps our minds occupied with the affairs of time and sense, but they should be accepted as necessary to our development. For without contact with our fellows there would be no exercise for sympathy—the divinest of our faculties, and the base of all efforts at helping our neighbour, as well as the supremest and most Godlike of emotions.

If there be a Divine Idea, we do well to seek for it; but if *sought* for by the Intellect, it is *found* by the spiritual faculties, and is brought to our consciousness by the blending of the Life Intellectual with the Life Spiritual. M. C. T. G.

MODERN EASTERN MAGIO.

The last issue of the *Journal* of the Anthropological Society or Bombay contains a curious paper by Mr. Rehatsek on twenty of the branches of Eastern magic, all of which are in vogue at the present time. The first of these is the "Arcana of letters and of names," by which letters and figures are combined into magic squares, incantations, &c. These derive their power from the "arbitrary use of them made by the spirits governing the natural world, in such a way that the ninety-nine beautiful names of God, and other Divine words, formed of letters containing the Arcana which pass into material substances, intercede." The magician, of course, is the sole interpreter of the uses and significances of the combinations. Alchemy comes next, and is followed by astrology, the most popular of all the Eastern occult sciences. It is practised on all occasions, to discover thefts, to foretell the result of a journey, the future of an infant, &c. Another popular practice is soothsaying from the sacred books by opening one at random and placing the finger on a line. This is almost the only one of the sciences which costs nothing, and which everyone can practise. The selection of a day is a subordinate branch of astrology, and is employed to ascertain what days are lucky or unlucky for the commencement of certain enterprises, the wearing of new clothes, and the like. Divination and the interpretation of dreams are common everywhere. Summoning and subjugating demons is the most fearful of the magical sciences. There are two kinds, one dangerous and embracing unlawful magic, the other religious and consisting mainly in confining demons in flame so that they are compelled to obey the commands of the magician. Geomancy is practised by means of dots made with a pencil and arranged in complicated combinations so that they answer questions. The art of invisibility appears to be only known by name to Mr. Rehatsek, for he does not describe it. Jejr is a science which is known only to one family; it is defined as "the general science concerning the Tables of the Eternal Decree and of Predestination," and enables adepts to know all that has happened, is happening, or will happen in the most remote future. Palmistry, phylacteries, physiognomies, and prayers explain themselves; phantasms is the name given to the art of producing images in the air by incantations, aided usually by drugs and fumigations; while predicting from the past is exercised by studying the occult analogies between the past and the future. Sorcery is the term applied to all the phenomena produced by magicians, and popularly attributed to supernatural powers. It is divided into lawful or divine, or Satanic or black magic, the latter owing its power to evil spirits. The last of the magical sciences is soothsaying from trembling, by which the future is known from the involuntary movements of the body, a particular star controlling each particular part of the human frame.—*The Times* (December 28th ult.)

INSENSIBILITY IN MORTAL PERIL.

BY ANTON SCHMOLL.

(From the *Sphinx*, September, 1889.)

TRANSLATED BY "V."

In the July number of the *Sphinx* of 1889, Herr von Klarbach cites numerous instances of loss of sensibility and absence of fear in persons exposed to imminent danger of death. I once had an opportunity of remarking this curious psychical phenomenon in my own case.

In the South of France, not far from the borders of Spain, is the old iron and lead mine of La Cannette, long since fallen into ruin, but which has been recently partly restored and worked. I visited this deserted labyrinth of subterranean paths, abysses, and caverns on January 6th, 1876. As I was standing in an excavation, about four yards broad and twelve in length, the horizontal covering of which was composed of slate and clay, the roof suddenly fell in with a crash and buried me beneath the ruins. That I was not instantly crushed to death, I had to thankfully refer to the circumstance that I was not standing in the middle of the excavation, but near one of the sloping sides, against which the falling roof fell without reaching the ground, and thus there was about a foot and a-half of empty space, in which, after the fall I found myself confined. But further danger was imminent, as great masses of rock were continually giving way and threatened to break through the roof over me, while on the other side, the latter might give way at any moment; in either case I must be hopelessly lost. In this critical situation I never for a moment lost my consciousness, my brain acted normally, and my mind realised the danger which threatened me with extraordinary clearness. I told myself that at any moment I might be crushed into a shapeless mass, but, strange to say, I was completely indifferent in view of this fate. I even well remember smiling, when I heard the workmen who were running hither and thither crying out: "*Malheur! malheur! Monsieur Schmoll est mort!*" This indifference was neither due to the hope of being saved, to courage, nor to resignation; I simply felt that my body was threatened by a fatality, which, however, affected *myself* little or nothing. I recognised my state of mind as being essentially altered; what had happened appeared to me as a *necessary* event, quite in the natural order of things. The fatality did not weigh upon my consciousness, but rather seemed to surround me with an atmosphere of protection. At this moment I distinctly recognised the ascendancy of the *spirit* in myself, and that the body was reduced to a *quantité négligeable*. It seemed to me as if I could witness the destruction of my body, if it took place, with complete indifference. I experienced no bodily pain; the injuries, bruises, and dislocations which I had received only began to pain me when, some hours afterwards, I was rescued. I ever since recall this state of physical and moral insensibility as an inexplicable riddle.

How it happens that in cases like that described above, just that very sense becomes deadened, which is susceptible to bodily pain, and on the other side just that portion of our self-consciousness becomes blunted, which under normal circumstances would have stretched us on the rack of terror, is a psychological problem well deserving of careful study; for a state of mind similar to that above described apparently always precedes the phenomenon of death, under whatever circumstances, however painful they may appear to be, it takes place. I recognise in it a conscious operation of the transcendental half of our being.

On hearing the news of the accident, Monsieur H., the engineer, was so excited that he ran through the mine from one end to the other *without a light*, a feat, which under other circumstances, would have been impossible for him to perform; as he said afterwards many times, it was incomprehensible to him how he could have run in this semi-conscious state through the gloomy abyss, without falling into some chasm.

Three weeks after the accident I was sufficiently restored to leave my bed and resume my customary occupations.*

Paris, July 19th, 1889.

A FIELD ripe for the harvest does not yield loaves of bread.—JAMES HINTON.

* Herr Schmoll informs us that the above facts are copied from the account in his diary at the time.—ED. "SPHINX."

PSYCHIC TELEGRAMS.

PART V.

[MAY 14TH, 1870.—Sister I. was entranced, while Sister II. put questions. A spirit friend deceased that year was a noted writer and thinker named R. W. Question put: *What is R. W.'s present perception in Spirit-sphere of the agency of prayer, and its action among disembodied spirits?*]

You won't see the great shade for a long time, for he is carried into a new state, which is as great a change from what he was when on earth as it was when he left college to teach young men; only now, he is learning his *incapacities* were as useful for the work he had to do as his powers were. A more vivid imagination would have carried him beyond the capacity of those he had to teach. Now, the imagination must be developed again, and the emotions taught their enormous use. Emotions as we see them are the action of the spirit.

You must allow us to explain what we mean by emotion. We do not mean any comparatively material feeling, bubbling up from any lesser depth than the innermost spirit. We really mean *spirit-action* by emotions.

He is now in a school where he learns the gymnastics of the spirit.

The only real prayer is the irrepressible impulse of the spirit. It is more than a perception of the judgment, or the craving of a bodily impulse.

Prayer is the action of the spirit when repressed, limited and fettered.

That which is prayer with you (who are embodied on earth) is action with us for good or evil.

He is now seeing that, and finding his faithful trust fulfilled.

It is because emotions are the action of the spirit that it is so important we should learn to *will* what is right.

The infernal spirits are those who know the power of volition, and yet love not that which is right.

SEANCE WITH THE THREE SISTERS AND A FRIEND, HYPERIA.
February 5th, 1874.

[*This is a contrast to the last subject and person; being one who was very musical in her former days.*]

Let us praise HIM! Come let us sing! though I cannot play to you, I can join your hearts. All things are lovely, all so beautiful, dear friend.

Hyperia then asked if her friend J.P., could tell us of her new spirit life.

Here I do not so much live, I am enjoyment; everything floats in harmony, entrancing, enchanting. Now trebles of rapid joy conceal, yet reveal, the grand chorus that underlies the whole grand fugue, and the great principles of humanity continue the bass which fills the universe; and I ever listen and wonder if it will change or fail. All is music which I before *only* felt after, as one in darkness feels after objects. I am *Music* now! J.P.

After reading over the foregoing, two of the party expressed the wish we were in the spirit world now, to perceive its harmonies and hear its music!

Ye who wish to enter spirit-life had better consider how to walk in it!

Do not walk—as with intelligence you need to walk—foot after foot, feeling weight poised before advancing. Intelligence progresses slowly, but *spirit*, which is not a process, but a being, does not walk, but goes into thought. It is there!

Let yourselves learn to be.

We *are* life; you are trying to be.

Let yourselves be!

God keep you and bless you both.

UNLESS Christianity be viewed and felt in a high and comprehensive way, how large a portion of our intellectual and moral nature does it leave without object and action!—S. T. COLERIDGE.

"OH, how differently would I behave towards thee *now*!" Such is the language we all use when we have *buried* those whom we have tortured; but on the same evening of affliction we cast the javelin deep into another bosom that is still warm.—JEAN PAUL RICHTER.

WEALTH without idealism is a great danger; and if oxen had plenty of money, they would still only buy plenty of hay. But we should all as transcendental beings pay the penalty were we to gain the objects of our earthly egoism.—DU PREL'S *Philosophy of Mysticism*, Vol. II., p. 251.

SPIRITUALISM AS AN ICONOCLAST.

In the December number of *The Arena*, the new monthly Review, the Rev. M. J. Savage in the opening paper considers the agencies that are working a revolution in theology. He claims at the outset that it is a fact palpable to every one of even moderately discerning mind that we are in the midst of a great theological change. The chief questions that arise are in reference to its cause, its radicalness, and the universality or otherwise of its results.

Romanism and Protestantism in their various divergences from the faiths and customs that governed them centuries ago are marshalled in review, and their strong contrasts outlined with a vividness that must astonish all, but which no one who boasts of his strict adherence to the religion of the fathers, however much he may desire to, can deny the truth of. Spiritualism comes in for recognition as one of the agencies that are advancing the world of religious thought, in reference to which Mr. Savage says:—

At present I do not even raise the question as to whether the claims of the Spiritualists are true. No matter, for my present purpose, whether they are or not. The belief is at work in the case of thousands, and so is supplanting the beliefs that held the field before. And the great peculiarity and importance of it, as contrasted with the most of the causes already mentioned, is that it makes its chief appeal to love and hope, and not so much to the intellect. So it reaches and suddenly converts multitudes that mere abstract arguments would not touch. Perhaps the chief power at work in the conquests of early Christianity was its promise of victory over death. And so mighty was this for a time that it made tender women strong even in the presence of wild beasts in the arena, and turned the torture chamber and the stake into the very gates of Heaven. But all this is now only a far-away tradition; and Paul's triumph cry, "To die is gain," even when it falls on professedly Christian ears, finds little response in the hearts of those who mourn "even as others who have no hope." But to such as these comes this new voice. It claims to be the call of friends who have just passed over. It has declared that death is only another birth—"a consummation devoutly to be wished." To such as are believers, it does indeed abolish death and give back the lost. No wonder, then, that wistful eyes look longingly toward it, and broken hearts are greedy for its promised balm.

Where it is accepted the old faith fades away, because no place for it is left. The new supplants the old. So it does not so much disprove the old theology as it dissolves and dissipates it. Then it is curious for the student of these things to note that none of the "spirits" are "orthodox." I have been greatly struck by the observation of this strange fact. Perhaps this largely accounts for the bitter opposition of the old churches. Without some such consideration it would seem unaccountable that believers in apparently the same kind of happenings long go should so denounce the possibility of their ever happening gain.—*Banner of Light*.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

A Dream Fulfilled.

SIR,—*Apr*opos to the interesting notes in "LIGHT," of December 21st, concerning Jeanne d'Arc, I take pleasure in relating the following:—

Early in March of last year while residing in Boston, U. S. A., I dreamed as follows: I found myself in a strange land, amid unfamiliar surroundings. At first I was in a village. The houses, made of some rough, coarse material and roofed with ridged tiles, were quite different to any I had ever seen before. I spoke to some of the people standing in the doorways; but no one understood me, though all looked kind and gave me pleasant greetings. I next stood in a low-roofed room filled with *souvenirs* and memorials to Jeanne d'Arc, in all of which I took deep interest.

Immediately afterwards, I was walking on the outskirts of a forest and looking down upon a lovely valley, in which nestled the village, and through which meandered a quiet stream fringed with willows and tasselled reeds. In the pastures grazed sheep and cattle, and over all was spread a soft mist, through which the rising sun was sending the first glow of the dawn. As I stood drinking in the beauty of the scene, and thinking of

her who, as a child, had played and gathered flowers in these fields, watched her father's flocks, seen visions, and heard angel voices calling her to the rescue of France, I became aware I was no longer alone, but accompanied by the object of my thoughts. She was clad in some soft fleecy material of silvery whiteness. Of her features, I remember only the large, dark eyes, glowing with a depth of love and tenderness impossible to describe. As she looked down over the valley she murmured, "My beautiful Domremy. How I love you still! The time has come for France to learn the spiritual meaning of my life, and to you is given the task. You will visit this place and know that this is a Divine commission." Then, bending forward, she breathed on my forehead, sending through me such a thrill of joy that in the intensity thereof I awoke.

This vision left such a strong impression on my mind that, in a few days, I was a passenger on board the Inman steamship, *City of New York*, on my way to Liverpool. Spending but a few days in London, I made haste to cross to France and visit Domremy. I reached the little station of Maxey, two miles from the village, just before sunrise. Not speaking French, I obtained the best directions I could from the station-master and the help of a tourist's manual.

The valley was veiled in mist, just as I had seen it in my dream. I was thrilled with a strange excitement. I picked a daisy and kissed it to the memory of the Flower of France; and, as I did so, I felt the same glow on my brow, and the same ecstasy that I had experienced before rushed through every fibre of my being.

In the village and in the house in which she was born, and in the forest over looking the valley, I found all as I had seen it. After wandering about most of the day in a state of joy, bordering on ecstasy, I went, towards evening, into the little church. It was Easter Eve. Preparations had been made for the coming day. As I knelt before the altar, consecrated to her memory, a warm glow enveloped me; and a light, like a star, seemed to enter my brain and reveal to me, like the sudden opening of a flower, the story and meaning of the life of Jeanne d'Arc.

From time to time I have felt the same sensation as of a blazing star on my forehead, and during these experiences I have written with joy what is now being published in Lady Caithness's *L'Aurore* under the title of "The Flower of France."

LEO MICHAEL.

The Fading Grasp of Spirit on Body.

SIR,—In his address to the members of the London Spiritualist Alliance, November 26th, 1889, Mr. Morell Theobald said, "As Spiritualists, we might profitably consider how it is that in old age the spirit of a man becomes dim, or is it only apparently so? and why? For it seems to be unable to grasp ideas of the most elementary kind. . . . Is the spirit—the Ego—weaker, poorer? If so, what is the cause? and if not, what makes it apparently so? When will it revive and continue its eternal progression?"

To this challenge my thought at once replied, Should not the phenomena of death teach us to mistrust common readings of those of old age? But until there had been time for other people to give their answer, I would not offer mine. The more I think about the seeming dulness of age, the less reason I can see for supposing that lack of power to grasp ideas on this life's plane is necessarily a sign of any real lessening of mental force. The spirit, receding from an external existence, withdraws attention from things in which it is losing interest; but according to the experience of people in trance, as stated by Du Prel, "transcendental consciousness the more prevails as the sensuous disappears."* Means for reporting the results of that higher consciousness could not belong to an organization made for a lower state of being; as this gradually becomes unconcerning to the old, their powers of expression diminish, as always unused forces fail. Those dominant habitudes of mind which remain, like the largest fibres of skeleton leaves in decay, seem stronger than ever, *concentration* of consciousness invigorating them; but for the rest, obtuse perceptions—the seeming vacancy of old people's minds—may surely be as much a sign of distraction as of failure, distraction of which they could give, even to themselves, no account. Du Prel, at least, concludes that our "self-consciousness has not information of our whole soul," and that "there is a transcendental Subject underlying our sensuous being infinitely richer and deeper than it displays itself in our sensuous consciousness."† And, further, may not the

* Du Prel's *Philosophy of Mysticism*, Vol. II., p. 248.

† *Ibid.*, p. 245.

withdrawal of attention from the sensuous plane he due to the transcendental self? Swedenborg's words in the following passage suggested this: "The sensorium—for instance, of sight—adapts itself in a moment to all objects, which it does, not from itself, but from influx out of the interior; and, moreover, thought and affection, which belong to the internal sense, determine the sight to objects which that sense fully grasps, and which are co-ordinate with it." [*Spiritual Diary*, 4804.]

If the sensorium is being lifted to a higher level, would not earth's objects become obscure, and the mind irresponsible to them seem to us dull and disabled, while really making great advance in its eternal progression beyond the limits of Time?

A. J. PENNY.

Theodore Parker.

SIR,—The following quotations from a sermon by this great soul, having reference to Spiritualism, I have not hitherto seen printed in any Spiritualist journal. They are from a sermon, "The Revival of Religion which we Need," and will be found in Vol. III. of the English Edition of his works, edited by Frances Power Cobbe:—

The Spiritualists say: The Bible is not a finality; it is no man's master, it is every man's servant. We, as well as the old prophets, can have communion with the departed, Christ reveals Himself directly to us as much as to Paul and Silas, Peter and James. . . . How rapidly Spiritualism has gone abroad! yet it has no great man in its ranks, not a philosopher, not a scholar. . . . The Spiritualists are the only sect that looks forward, and has new fire on its hearth; they alone emancipate themselves from the Bible and the theology of the Church, while they also keep the precious truths of the Bible, and all the good things of the Church. . . . Its function is to destroy the belief in miracles, it will help to set many men free from the idols of the old theologic den; no small service, even if it set up new ones of its own, because new they will be less dangerous. I also give thanks for "Spiritualism," and am not surprised at the follies and extravagances, the dishonesty of "mediums" which I partly see and partly hear of. . . . Let us always make allowance for casualties, for extravagance, in the old which is fixed, in the new which will become so. What extravagances had the Quakers once, the Christians in Paul's time.

Glasgow.

JAMES ROBERTSON.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

It will ensure despatch if all matter offered for publication is addressed to the Editor of "LIGHT," 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to any other name or address. Communications for the Manager should be sent separately.

It seems desirable to make clear that any facts previously published in transactions of any Society or in any journal cannot be printed as original matter in "LIGHT," and should not be sent to us except for our private information. All records sent, moreover, must be accredited by the name and address of the sender, and will gain in value by the attestation of witnesses.

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

He also begs respectfully to intimate that he cannot undertake to prepare for the press communications that are not suitably written. He begs his correspondents to see that all articles and letters forwarded are written on one side of the paper, are ready for the printer, and are of moderate length. Those over a column in length are in danger of being crowded out.

H.W.—Thank you. We use what you draw attention to gladly. *Detroit Free Press*.—Thanks for your courtesy. We did not say one word too much in praise of your Christmas number.

J.C. (South Amboy, N.J.)—We regret that we cannot use what you send. We reciprocate your kind wishes. *Fiat Lux* by all means.

M. J. S.—Best thanks for your valued remembrance, so beautiful both in form and spirit—a real gem. Not less grateful to a worker is the thought that prompted the missive.

M.—It looks like a case of clairvoyance; but it is impossible to say positively. In such cases it is likely that the old words apply, "I shall go to him but he shall not return to me." Have you never had a previous experience of a less definite character beside that of this particular person? If not, then there are probably links of sympathy between you that will account for an exceptional occurrence.

THERE is no choice of words for him who clearly sees the truth; that provides him with the best words. If your subject do not appear to you the flower of the world at this moment, you have not rightly chosen it.

WE love to be independent of men, and there is an element of virtue in the wish; but if it is to be a true independence, good for ourselves and our neighbour, it must have as its foundation a real and continuous dependence upon God. The independence in the one case must be measured by the dependence in the other.—WM. EDMONDSON.

SOCIETY WORK.

[Correspondents who send us notices of the work of the Societies with which they are associated, will oblige by writing as distinctly as possible and by appending their signatures to their communications. Inattention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions.]

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S.E.—On Sunday Mr. Lees lectured to a fairly large audience. Sunday next, Mr. Henly; Wednesday evening, Mr. Lees.—MARIE GIFFORD, Sec.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION.—The monthly gathering will be held on Sunday next, January 5th, at Zephyr Hall, Bayswater. The evening service will be preceded by a tea meeting at 5 p.m., when we trust a goodly company will assemble.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec., 79, Bird-in-Bush-road, S.E.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—Meetings free, every Sunday at 6.45 for 7 p.m. The following is the list of speakers for January: 5th, Mr. J. A. Butcher at 7 p.m., Lyceum at 3 p.m.; 12th, Miss Kees at 7 p.m., Lyceum at 3 p.m.; 19th, Mr. F. T. A. Davis at 7 p.m., Lyceum at 3 p.m.; 26th, Mr. W. E. Walker at 7 p.m., Lyceum at 3 p.m.

MARYLEBONE LYCEUM, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, W.—On December 28th we greatly enjoyed a tea and festive party, thanks to the kindness of Mrs. Bradley, who gave the tea and many useful presents to the children. The rooms were tastefully decorated and many suitable mottoes were exhibited. After tea, marching, recitations, songs, and round games kept all cheerful. On Sunday, 29th, we had a good attendance of members, when the usual exercises were gone through. Four groups were formed.—C. WHITE.

LONDON OCCULT SOCIETY, CARLYLE HALL, CHURCH-STREET (THREE DOORS FROM EDGWARE-ROAD, CLOSE TO STATION).—On Sunday evening, January 12th, Mr. Maltby has kindly consented to deliver a lecture, entitled, "The Work of W. Eglinton and other Mediums" illustrated by dissolving views. Mr. Maltby has now a fine collection of pictures of spirit drawings, &c. The lecture will be free and on this occasion there will be no collection. I trust many of your readers will avail themselves of this chance of seeing these spirit drawings. Further particulars next week.—A. F. TINDALL, A. Mus. T.C.L., President.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—A conversational gathering was held in the morning of Sunday last; and as Mrs. Treadwell was prevented from attending, the secretary addressed the congregation at the evening service. On Sunday next, Mr. Goddard, of Lavender Hill, will address us. In the evening there will be a spiritual service with which to commence the New Year. Friends are requested to note that no further circles will be held on week evenings at Winchester Hall. The Lyceum for children meets as usual at 3 p.m. on Sunday afternoons.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec., 79, Bird-in-Bush-road, Peckham.

KING'S CROSS SOCIETY, 253, PENTONVILLE-ROAD (ENTRANCE CORNER OF KING'S CROSS-ROAD).—Last Sunday morning Mr. J. Burns introduced the subject of "The State of Spiritualism as a Public Movement," and the theme was continued by several friends, and proved very instructive. In the evening Mr. Burns delivered an address on "Worship," prefaced by a reading from "The Cotter's Saturday Night." A class has been formed for Bible study, to which all interested are invited. It will meet in the hall at 3.30, Sunday afternoon. Our speakers for January are: 5th, 10.45 a.m., Mr. McKenzie, "The Science of Numbers"; 6.45 p.m., members; 12th, 10.45 a.m., discussion; 6.45 p.m., Mr. Darby; 19th, 10.45 a.m., discussion; 6.45 p.m., Mr. Emms; 26th, 10.45 a.m., discussion; 6.45 p.m., Mr. Hunt, "How I became a Spiritualist."—S. T. RODGER, 107, Caledonian-road, N.

KENSINGTON AND NOTTING HILL ASSOCIATION.—Service was held as usual on Sunday morning, at Zephyr Hall, 9, Bedford-gardens, Silver-street, Notting Hill Gate. In the evening Mr. Iver Macdonnell lectured on "The Birth of Christ." Questions were ably answered. Unfortunately, there was but a poor attendance, owing to the fog. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., the London Federation. Speakers: Mrs. Bell, Messrs. Butcher, Emms, Wortly, and Long. Social tea meeting in the afternoon at five o'clock, which it is hoped will be made a complete success. Tickets, &c., as already announced. Choir practices every Friday evening, at 68, Cornwall-road. Help wanted. First Sunday of Lyceum, 12th inst., afternoon at three o'clock, when it is hoped there will be a good muster of both visitors and children.—PERCY SMYTH, Hon. Sec., 68, Cornwall-road, Bayswater, W.

PERCEPTIBILITY and reality were never contemporaneous, and in their identification by materialism the course of the biological process is as though the objective highway grew in length with the advancing footsteps of the traveller, or the wall grew with the plant climbing it.—DU PREL'S *Philosophy of Mysticism*, Vol. II., p. 265.

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.