

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, 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.)"

Mr. Hayes makes an important point in his letter printed in another column. In my mind the question he raises is open. The modern hypnotic school, he alleges, is "essentially hostile" to tenets of the old school represented by Gregory, Elliotson, Ashburner, Lee, Esdaile, and their followers. He thinks their bitterness and prejudice against what I understand him to believe and advocate is not less than that which obliterated all belief in mesmerism half a century ago. This strikes me with surprise. I am familiar with the fact that the Paris school, represented by Charcot, has taken a very limited and one-sided view of the subject. I incline to think that their view is so one-sided as to lead them into error. But I was not aware that the Nancy school were in this "essentially hostile" attitude to the old authorities. If this be so, and I, at least, have no proof that it is so, we shall have to call up the ancients and put them on their trial. For, unless I much mistake, the moderns have spent as much care and used as much acumen in this matter as did the ancients. Their methods, if the truth is to be boldly told, were much more empirical than ours. They arrived at their conclusions by leaps and bounds. In these days we are apt not to arrive at any conclusions at all. If *they* went too fast, perhaps *we* go too slow.

Mr. Hayes makes a strong point of "magnetisation without sleep," i.e., Odylism, to adopt a convenient term. He thinks that the curative properties of mesmerism may be had without the entire subjugation of the will which is involved in the practice of hypnotic suggestion. He believes that the foreign hypnotist, with his theories of "suggestion," has frightened people. There is, he thinks, no reason to push matters so far as to dominate the individuality of the "subject." There is no reason to countenance the "implanting in the mind of a wholly artificial and alien set of ideas by the operator" in order to arrive at a result which may be beneficent or the reverse. Neither hypnosis nor hypnotic suggestion is required, "nor is any impression on the mind of the patient called for or serviceable." If I may use convenient terms, the hypnotist puts his patient to sleep and suggests to him, while in that unconscious state, that he should do something in his after-state of waking consciousness. The Odylist maintains that it is quite unnecessary to subjugate the will and infuse (if I may so say) an alien consciousness. "Everyone is open to be relieved from pain and disease by odylisation."

Now it seems to me that there is a conflict of opinion here, and it is important that it should be looked into.

First of all, is it not the case that post-hypnotic suggestion, as we have learned it from the French modern school, is made in the deep trance into which the subject is put by mesmerism, and in which he is quite unconscious of sensations that may come from his ordinary surroundings, and which is a condition that he is absolutely unconscious of in his ordinary waking state? If this be so, I apprehend that a "suggestion" made in normal consciousness would have no effect, e.g., for cure of dipsomania; but in the hypnotic state would be operative. Then how does Mr. Hayes maintain that the cure of such disease does not depend upon the "complete mental subjugation of the patient"? And what has Dr. Wyld to say to that?

It seems to me now, as it always has seemed, that this is a most dangerous power. I should not like any person to be able to put into my mind any "suggestion," good, bad, or indifferent, on which I should afterwards act. I prefer to "paddle my own canoe." If I am to be responsible for results *I must do so*; otherwise I shall throw the blame on the irresponsible pilot. And furthermore, though there is something very enticing in the notion that a poor creature may be saved from destruction by being hypnotised and moralised, there is something desperately repulsive in the idea that a base or brutal thought may by the same means be implanted in a pure mind and bear its crop of sin and misery. We must look at the matter all round. If A can be cured of an ingrained tendency by hypnotic suggestion, B can be made to poison his mother-in-law by the same process. And what about accountability? If A is put to sleep and made by hypnotic suggestion to poison his mother-in-law, is he responsible for the act? Emphatically he cannot be, for it is an alien suggestion. Is the hypnotiser, then, responsible? Or are we to do away with any such old-world rubbish as responsibility? I dimly see that the administration of justice would become very complicated under this new order.

There must be private property for us all, and, in the last analysis, I take it that we have an absolute right to our own individuality, to our "self-hood," if we have no shred of other belongings. For that we are responsible: for that no one else can be held amenable. It is ourself, it is the product of our lives, it is the heir of all the after ages. We shall report ourselves as we have made ourselves. We may have nothing else, no influence that we know of—though all of us have some—no money, no position, no brains, no working bone and sinew, but we have all got *ourselves*, our own property and no one's else. And I do not think it wise or well that any person should intrude into that piece of private property without the knowledge and sanction of the proprietor. It may be that my friend comes to do me good. I should prefer to be approached openly and to be consulted before being deprived of my volition, and so robbed of the only property I possess. It may be that my enemy desires to do me harm. I should like to meet him face to face. I will not voluntarily be placed at the disadvantage of an ambush. Still

less will I be made responsible for acts which originated not with me but with him.

These are not fanciful objections. No one is less likely than myself to undervalue the benefits that hypnotism, or mesmerism, may confer. But I want to know more about it. Is there an effluence from the mesmeriser which is capable of being transferred to his subject? Is hypnotism, on the contrary, a subjective state? These questions lie on the threshold of the inquiry. If there is an effluence communicable to the subject, what is its nature? If it be capable of curing disease, is it also capable of communicating it? Can, for example, a powerful, masterful will dominate a weaker one and convey into the system seeds of sickness or positive disease? Is it possible that a patient who has been repeatedly mesmerised should lose the power of independent action and become subservient to the will of the mesmeriser? Can it be that a bad man may so gain power over a weaker one—the case when opposite sexes are concerned is too obvious to need statement—and mould him to his own purposes? If it be so, if it be even conceivably possible that it should be so, then I, speaking for myself alone and desiring to influence no other opinion, would pause and hesitate before I gave that power to any but a tried and proven soul, whom I esteemed as a saint and would trust with my life and my all.

TENNYSON AND CARLYLE ON "SORDELLO."

This, which is quite full of interest, we quote from the *Pall Mall Gazette* :—

Everyone will remember Douglas Jerrold's excellent story—a story which Browning himself used to like to tell—about the incomprehensibility of Sordello. But more illustrious personages than Douglas Jerrold (says Mr. Sharp) were puzzled by the poem :—

Lord Tennyson manfully tackled it, but he is reported to have admitted in bitterness of spirit : "There were only two lines in it that I understood, and they were both lies ; they were the opening and closing lines, 'Who will may hear Sordello's story told,' and 'Who would has heard Sordello's story told !'" Carlyle was equally candid : "My wife," he writes, "has read through *Sordello* without being able to make out whether 'Sordello' was a man, or a city, or a book." In an article on this poem in a French magazine, M. Odysse Barot quotes a passage where the poet says, "God gave man two faculties," and adds, "I wish while He was about it (*pendant qu'il était en train*) God had supplied another—namely, the power of understanding Mr. Browning."

"I DENY DEATH."

Here in conclusion is Mr. Sharp's report of what Browning once said to him on the subject of death :—

"Death, death ! It is this harping on death I despise so much," he remarked with emphasis of gesture as well as of speech—the inclined head and body, the right hand lightly placed upon the listener's knee, the abrupt change in the inflection of the voice, all so characteristic of him, "this idle and often cowardly as well as ignorant harping ! Why should we not change, like everything else ? In fiction, in poetry, in so much of both—French as well as English—and, I am told, in American art and literature, the shadow of death—call it what you will, despair, negation, indifference—is upon us. But what fools who talk thus ! Why, *amico mio*, you know as well as I that death is life, just as our daily, our momentarily dying body is none the less alive, and ever recruiting new forces of existence. Without death, which is our crapelike, churchyard word for change, for growth, there could be no prolongation of that which we call life. Pshaw ! it is foolish to argue upon such a thing even. For myself, I deny death as an end of everything. Never say of me that I am dead."

MR. J. HAWKINS, magnetic healer, asks the attention of his friends to his change of residence. His new address is 443, Edgware-road, W. (near Maida Vale.)

THIS from the *Pall Mall Gazette* :—

A curious instance of discovering a dead body by a dream has occurred at the village of Werrington, Northamptonshire. An old woman named Hardstaff had been missing for a week, and streams and ponds had been dragged. A neighbour, however, dreamed several times in succession that the body was at the bottom of a certain well. On communicating this to a man named Spridgeon he went down the well and found the body. The woman had, no doubt, committed suicide.

NOTES FROM MY SPIRITUAL DIARY.

By F. J. THEOBALD.

PART VII.

[My cousin T.G. became a Roman Catholic when quite a youth. His monastic name was the Very Reverend Father St. Alban G. He passed away, after a lingering consumption, at the age of thirty. A few months before, I had had a long conversation with him about Spiritualism, when he said to me, "Faunny, I believe in Spiritualism fully, but in the Church it is of God, out of it, 'tis the devil."]

Very soon after he had gone to the spirit-land I was conscious of his presence, but somewhat ignored it, and would not take the pencil for spirit-writing. At last, in about six weeks' time, my mother wrote :—

"Cousin T. G. would like to tell you, through me—as you do not wish him to write direct—that he is now sure that Spiritualism is true. I mean he sees the good is *not only* confined to the Romish Church. This is because he finds all the teachings he read of, and laughed at, in *Heaven Opened* are true. He finds he lives in a house and has all things as he had on earth, more than he expected. But he has much to learn, and to unlearn."

[A few days after I had received these few words, I felt cousin was with me, so I took the pencil and asked, "Is T. G. here?"]

"Yes" was written. I said "I did not resist your writing because I had no wish to hear from you especially, but I thought you had not had time yet to learn much to tell me."

"Just so, my dear cousin, and you thought quite right ! But how is it you did not care to hear my first impressions on awakening up here ! If I had been in your place I should have been pleased to hear from a Roman Catholic priest so soon after his arrival here."

[I remarked, "You cannot be much wiser yet."]

"True, neither am I ; but my eyes are at least open to the true state of things, and I am glad to acknowledge what I would not for worlds have acknowledged to you when I was with you in the flesh. I see you know I am with you in the spirit, and the small matter of the body goes for nothing to a Spiritualist so true as you are. Well, it was your little book I laughed at ! But it touched a chord, for I felt I was about to give up the real and material for the (to me) unsubstantial, or spiritual. Well !—I awoke—where do you think ? Just where I went to sleep. For my spirit first saw the very room in the monastery where I passed away, but then I found I could *will* myself away, and so I did, and came to a very beautiful country, of which, however, I only got a glimpse, for I am as yet all in a mist of wonder ! Your mother helps me, because of her sister, my poor mother, who little knows of how very little moment the mere matter of sect is, in the sight of God. If so, she would not feel so estranged from me because I was a priest."

"The orders did me good, they helped me, if they could not help her, but I'm better without them now. Good-bye, your affectionate cousin, T.G. No 'Father St. Alban' here !—we are all alike here. I have lots to learn. One thing I rejoice in is, the renewal of my vigorous powers, prostrated by the long consumption of the body."

"It's over now, and I rejoice in that ever so much."

[Suddenly writing ceased, and I asked, "Can you not write more?"]

"No, I am going now, for I have to attend Mass still. I am not free from that yet, because I feel still to need it."

[A few years passed away, then my Aunt E. joined her son in the spirit-home. She had never entered much into the subject of Spiritualism ; in truth, was somewhat opposed to it. One day, not very long before she went to the spirit-land, she asked me if I had had any messages from a friend who had recently gone. I replied, "Yes," and pointing to my spiritual diary lying on the table, "If you would care to read them, you will find them copied in my diary." I noticed on several occasions she was looking at them, and at last she exclaimed, as she put the MS. book down, "Well, it does seem impossible for you to write all that, your own self." I only said, "Indeed, I should have a remarkable brain, especially as I do not know at all what I am going to receive when I take the pencil."

No more was said, but a few days after she had been taken from us unexpectedly—for she was not considered in any danger, although suffering from bronchitis—my Mother thus wrote through my hand:—]

"Dear E. is with us, but scarcely as yet realising the mighty change wrought by the sudden loss of her earth body . . . We are so rejoiced to bring her.

"I wish her dear A. and S. could be comforted, as you, dear, feel. They will not listen to our spirit whispers. . . . She is awaking, surprised at her new surroundings. . . . She now sends you her love, and says she shall soon come and write herself, if she can, for her first question to me was, 'Can you really write through Fanny? If so, we will do so!' She watches with wonderful interest her own power of seeing all she loved so on earth."

[A few months later she writes herself thus:—]

"DEAREST FANNY,—I like to come for a little glimpse of you, in the home where I was to have come to you last year. Ah, dear, I am better off. All the weakness and trials of the body are over. And I now am in the midst of all my loved ones who left me on earth."

"Yes! I find a real home here, just as you used to say. And oh! it is lovely and real. I seem to have so much to say, I can scarcely begin. I found my dear husband, and poor O., but so different, so glorious in their spirit robes. I found your mamma and papa, my parents, dear Stephen, and his beloved M. . . . and all, all whom we had loved and lost were here in glorious beauty, for their home is shining in the midst of love. And the Christ Spirit dwells in their midst. . . . I am having a glorious home now, and all my hopes are more than realised.—Your affectionate Aunt, E."

[Again she writes:—]

"It was a happy day that brought me here. I rejoice with joy unspeakable! I glory in the spirit-life, in which, contrary to my earth-life teachings, I find I am still near my loved ones; able to enter into all their joys, and even their sorrows. With the light of God's love shining over all, I see now that the shadows of earth have their real, true good, and are necessary for the spirit's training.

"Your mamma is by me. Together we look in upon your quietude, and bid you dismiss all sad thoughts. Work for God; and this you can best do by taking up the day's burthen with the day's joy, and take no care for the future. We watch with deep interest the growing power at Morell's. This is the thin end of the wedge; for better and fuller glories will be let in to their circle. Always live in prayer."

[On another occasion my aunt refers to her present feelings about her son, T. G.:—]

"I am so happy, progressing daily in spiritual knowledge, but by no means losing interest in all I loved so well on earth. I know all about your goings on at Morell's. I find that my spirit requirements are diverse now, as when on earth. I have full satisfaction in all spiritual matters, and also in seeing the interpretation, and the real good of the earthly trials that lie around the path of my dear ones. All in God's loving way of training. Here I see my poor boy T. often. He is still in the Catholic belief; strangely so, but it responds to his nature and inner life. This is his training. I see we should not, when on earth, be over anxious at the contrary paths or grooves of thought that our different friends go through. Each mind takes the groove which is to him the needful one. With all of you, you see, the Spiritualistic, or development of super-nature, was a necessity.—Your loving Aunt, E."

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

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

All the Year Round. Spring and Easter number. [Contains "A Dual Personality," by T. W. SPEIGHT.]

Transactions of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society. No. 18. "Faith," by "PILGRIM." (Redway.)

The Buddhist Ray. (Santa Cruz, California, U.S.A.) [A small eight-page paper devoted to exposition of Buddhism.]

The Theosophist. March. [Contains an announcement of the sudden death of Charles Francis Powell, who was a convert to the Buddhist faith, and died at his post, working to the last.]

The Ha'porth.—[A new journal of light reading, the first number of which is excellent of its kind. It will, no doubt, circulate largely. Of course it has its Spiritualist paragraphs. No paper is complete without them.]

FRED EVANS.

We quote from the *Golden Gate* the following editorial, desiring that full justice should be done to a public worker, and that all that he may desire to have said should have such publicity as we can give it:—

Fred Evans relates that one of the chief difficulties he had to encounter at the crucial test séance in Brisbane, Australia, was the persistent disposition of the committee appointed to conduct the séance to open and examine the slates held in their hands.

It should be remembered that those slates had been thoroughly cleaned by the committee themselves, that they had placed bits of pencil between them with their own hands, and that the slates were not for a moment out of their hands.

Mr. Evans explained to them the conditions necessary to produce the writing, one of which was that the slates should be kept closed,—that the opening of them exposed their inner surfaces to the light, which interfered with the collection of the spirit forces necessary to enable the spirits to enable to communicate.

But it availed nothing. First one and then another, overcome by curiosity to know what was going on inside, would insist upon opening the slates. There was one sensible gentleman on the committee who obeyed instructions, and his slates were filled with writing, while the others got nothing. But this was sufficient for the object intended.

The history of this test séance is as follows:—After Mr. Evans had left Brisbane for Melbourne, and notwithstanding he had given a most satisfactory demonstration of independent slate-writing before the Society of Psychical Research of Brisbane, a fakir broke out in the local papers, claiming to expose the medium's method of obtaining the writing as a trick of jugglery. Upon his return to Sydney from Melbourne, Mr. Evans went back to Brisbane, hired a hall, and gave a free séance, all at his own expense. He challenged his accusers to come forward and make their charges true. It is enough to say that he put them all to rout by producing the writing upon slates in the hands of sharp-eyed sceptics, and under conditions where jugglery was simply impossible.

When preparing for this task his psychographic control, Spirit John Gray, on being consulted in the matter, said, "Yes, 'I can get there,' but it will be hard on you." And, indeed, Mr. Evans states, it was hard on him. He was very sick during all of his return trip to Sydney, which occupied nearly two days, and did not get over the effects of the séances for many days.

It is natural that good mediums should want to accept all challenges of their spirit powers, but we question whether it is wise for them to do so. Many Spiritualists, and all sceptics, have no idea of the delicate machinery of mediumship, or of the nature of the forces used to produce such wonderful results. Mediums themselves, and even their spirit guides, do not always understand these things. Hence it is that mediums of this class are often broken down and ruined by an over-straining of their powers.

And, after all, what good is accomplished? The very next fakir that comes along will demand a repetition of the challenge, and endeavour to use it as a means of free advertising to foist himself upon public attention. He can always find a Church open to him, and some pious but ignorant minister ready to assist him with his show, which usually bears no more resemblance to genuine spirit manifestations than a dead donkey does to a live race horse.

We cannot afford to have our good mediums over-worked in trying to convince those who are not ready to be convinced. We need their powers for worthier ends. Hence we would urge all mediums to pay no attention to those who challenge their powers for the purpose of disproving them.

THE speculative man, the scholar, is the right hero. He is brave, because he sees the omnipotence of that which inspires him. Is there only one courage and one warfare? I cannot manage sword and rifle; can I not therefore be brave? I thought there were as many courages as men. Is an armed man the only hero? Men of thought fail in fighting down malignity because they wear other armour than their own. Let them decline henceforward foreign methods and foreign courages. Let them do that which they can do. Let them fight by their strength, not by their weakness. It seems to me that the thoughtful man needs no armour but this—concentration. One thing is for him settled, that he is to come at his ends. He is not there to defend himself, but to deliver his message.—EMERSON'S Essay on *The Scholar*.

A PATHETIC DEATH BED.

FROM THE *Carrier Dove*.

Engineer Dimmick, of the Chicago express, said he had been in nervous dread of an accident from the moment he pulled out of the Lake Shore depôt in Chicago, writes William H. Maher. This had made him unusually careful, but as he reached Sherman's crossing a little behind time, he began to lose his fear; he opened the throttle of old 90, intending to gain a few minutes in the remaining eight miles between there and Toledo. He started to signal for the crossing, just this side of the trees, when horror! he saw a farmer driving furiously toward it, as if to cross ahead of the train!

It was suicide!

Dimmick sent out a heart-breaking signal to the brakeman, reversed the engine, put on air brakes, knowing all the time the train could not be stopped this side of the crossing, and then shut his eyes and prayed.

When the engine stopped a part of the waggon was on the headlight, the horses were distributed along the track, and two old people were lying near the fence.

Dimmick was the first to reach them. They both breathed. Was there a physician among the passengers? Yes, two.

A hurried examination and consultation. The man was undoubtedly fatally hurt; the woman probably so.

They were tenderly carried to Mr. Richards' house, near by, and the physicians were told that if they would stay until the local practitioner could be found a locomotive would be sent back for them in an hour. They agreed to stay. The bell rang; travellers hurried to their places; some with white faces at the thought that it might have been themselves; others full of the importance a participation in the event would give them and their story, and others, forgetting themselves, thinking only of the sorrow brought to others.

Mr. Richards placed his house at the command of the physicians. Stimulants were administered, and when the family doctor and the children of the sufferers had arrived, the father was groaning, but the mother had opened her eyes.

Late in the night, after hours of faithful and incessant labour over them, the mother spoke.

"How is father?"

"You mustn't think of it, mother. You are very badly hurt yourself. You must be very quiet."

"I must go to father; he needs me."

The physician looked at her keenly, saying in a low tone to the son: "I think we had better fix a place for her near him. She will never be content otherwise."

The son coaxed and argued with her, but it was of no avail. They moved her bed beside her husband's; she attempted to take his hand, but could not. His stertorous breathing made no impression upon her.

"Is father going to die?" she asked. The weeping daughter nodded.

"You must keep quiet for your own sake, mother."

"We've been married over forty-eight years," she said to the doctor; "but we've known each other all our lives."

"You mustn't talk, mother."

"We was raised side by side; he took care o' me when we went to school together; he always took care o' me. Put me on my side, so's I can see him better."

"Mother, you must stop thinking and talking." She paid no heed.

"Seems if twa'n't but a little while ago since we was married, but it's over forty-eight years. We was talkin' of our golden weddin' this very week. Ben!"

The son put his hands on her lips to silence her, but the doctor whispered: "Better let her talk a little. She's beyond control."

The grey-headed husband seemed to hear her call; he opened his eyes, breathed noisily, struggled with his voice, then managed to whisper, "Rachel!"

"Here I am, Benjamin," and turning her eyes to the daughter, "put my hand in his."

They laid her poor, wrinkled hand on his hard, knotty fingers.

"Is it morning, Rachel?"

"No, it ain't; you just lie still. You see," said she, turning her eyes to the others, "he thinks it's time to get up."

"Rachel!" In a very low whisper it came.

"Yes, Ben; I'm right here beside you."

"Tell Jim to milk this morning."

"Yes, yes; that's all attended to. Can you see me?"

"It is very light, wife, but—I—can't—see—you."

The doctor motioned to the children that the end was near.

"Put my face to his, Susie; yes, I know he's going, but tain't for long! Lift me over to him."

They lifted her face to his; his eyes opened; he smiled—and passed away.

They carried the mother back to her own pillow and were glad to see her quietly go to sleep.

And in that sleep she crossed the river to her Ben.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.

Mrs. Gordon puts on record (January 27th, 1882) the following personal experiences. We give them in continuation of others derived from *Psychic Notes*:—

On Tuesday, January 11th, a party of friends of Mr. Eglinton's dined at Mr. Meugens', and afterwards sat for a materialisation séance, the conditions being favourable for such manifestations. A curtain of black calico had been arranged, behind which the medium sat. There was a square hole cut in the curtain with a piece of the material attached at top so that it could be lifted up. The lamp was turned down and placed in a position to throw as much light as possible on this opening. After a few minutes the small flap was lifted, and a white round form came before it, but no features could be distinguished. This happened several times. The medium then came out entranced and made passes around the circle of sitters, and then made rapid passes down the black curtain. This, it is said, was to take magnetism from the sitters and magnetise the curtain. The medium was scarcely behind the curtain again when a small form in very white drapery came out. It came a step forward, but we could not see the features; it then, in front of the curtain, slowly vanished, becoming shorter and smaller, until only a white patch could be seen against the floor. Soon after a taller figure came out, and on this occasion the face was very dark beside the white drapery. A beard could be seen by those nearest. The hands moved and the drapery could be seen falling over the arms, it looked like a profusion of the whitest and softest material. This form came close and bowed, and twice appeared, it also vanished by degrees close to one of the sitters, going down to the ground as before. Then another form looking like a woman came out and went close to a lady sitter, but she could not distinguish features.

We were then instructed by raps to put out the lamp, and shortly after the same small dark face with short beard appeared floating over us, and came quite close in spite of the table which would have prevented any human being from doing this. There was a light of the usual phosphorescent kind, apparently held by a hand close to the chin, and we thus, when the face was close, could see it plainly. It floated far above our heads and came down over the table, sweeping close to us and touching us with what seemed like soft drapery. We had the musical box playing through the early part of the séance; music seems conducive to the manifestations by harmonising the minds of the sitters. Perhaps it is that all follow the rhythm, and thus a temporary sort of mental harmony is effected among the sitters, or else the unpleasantness of a dead silence is prevented by the presence of music.

Whatever be the explanation we know that when many people are sitting music assists the manifestations, while with only two or three sitters, well known and very friendly with the medium, neither darkness nor music is necessary. We then heard a voice, said to be that of a well-known Spiritualist deceased, and it said that the first attempts at materialisation were failures, the spirits who were trying being new ones and unable at once to use the power. Three other voices spoke with us for some time, two of them being those often heard at previous séances. All this seems utterly impossible to one who has not by reading opened his mind to possibilities far beyond anything his ordinary experience can have led him to believe in. Having once shared in the unbelief prevalent I can well sympathise with the difficulties of new comers, and have not in the least forgotten the feeling of incredulity with which I first read some such account as the above. I, like so many others I meet, had heard nothing from any eye-witness, and had read only newspaper accounts, with the exception of one article by A. R. Wallace, in the *Fortnightly*. I am glad now to reflect that this article by such a man struck me much, and induced me to discuss the subject

with men whose intellects I respected. A desire to investigate arose, but opportunity not offering, the impression more or less died out, and, though in England shortly after, I made no effort to satisfy my curiosity. At last, a few months before leaving to return here, a large placard outside a public hall in Notting Hill attracted my attention by its announcement of "Religious services in connection with Spiritualism." This amused me, as all I had heard of Spiritualism had not connected itself with religion in my mind. I quite resolved to go to this service, but seven o'clock on Sunday evening was rather an inconvenient time, and several Sundays passed and I did not manage it, though still intending to go. One Sunday morning when looking through the lecture engagements for the day in the newspaper I saw this service advertised and resolved to go.

That evening I did so, and heard a wholesome Spurgeonite sort of service, suitable, as I in my pride said, for the congregation, but not æsthetic enough for me. The only hint about Spiritualism was when a man, not the preacher, got up and said he was going to speak under spirit influence, but as he spoke less fluently than the other, I did not think much of his *spirit*.

I left the hall, having gained no information on the subject the name of which had attracted me. As I went out of the door I bought a periodical, and then went to the underground station close by. I had scarcely taken my seat in a second-class carriage when a respectable-looking couple got in, and seeing, I suppose, the paper in my hand (how seldom have I ever laid out money to such good purpose!) the gentleman spoke to me, remarking on the noise some clod-hopping boys had made when leaving the hall during the—I must acknowledge—very long sermon. I answered that they probably were attracted by curiosity like myself, I having hoped to hear something about Spiritualism. Pointing to his companion, he said, "This is my wife, and a medium, and we shall be very happy to assist you in inquiring into the subject." Thanking him I took the proffered card, feeling amused at the *finale* to my adventure. Two days after I went to the address on the card, perhaps not without a little trepidation, as *mediums* were more suspected than known in my case, as they are with the general public.

This one was what is called a *trance* medium, and as this subjective form of the phenomena would never have impressed me, I feel sure, had any fee been taken from me on that first visit, I should either have concluded that the whole thing was humbug, or else a form of self-delusion. I am thankful to say that a delicate offer of remuneration was refused, and I was invited to come again. I went a few days later, and again saw this spirit control phenomenon, but being convinced that nothing of the kind could impress me I told the husband this, explaining to him that I knew many theories which could cover such quite outside of all fraud. I told him I wished to see *objective* phenomena, such as he during a long conversation assured me had taken place in his own house. He then gave me a letter to a physical medium which would admit me to a *séance* to take place that evening. At the proper hour I started, eager to investigate, and yet not imagining the extraordinary things I had heard could be true. I try always to bear this in mind to give me patience with sceptics now; but I am indeed thankful that my curiosity was stronger than my scepticism, and that I had the courage not only to face and admit my own humiliation and the blow to my self-conceit, when I proved these wonders true, but also to face the ridicule attached to a confession of my conviction. At this first *séance* I saw as a surprised spectator the most pronounced phenomena of Spiritualism, but being among strangers and at a medium's house I did not even *suspect* that they might be true, I was merely *astounded* that anyone could believe such things. But this itself was such an astonishing phenomenon that I felt compelled to discover how it was that apparently sane people believed in such—to my mind—*impossibilities*. Having the *entrée* I went to another of these *séances*, and was struck by seeing a figure robed in white come apparently out of the table in front of me and float noiselessly up to the ceiling, holding a light by which I could see the shadowy form, and also the globe and arm of the gaselier as the light passed up the other side of it. This struck me, as no human being could have got on to the table without *two* persons present knowing it, we were sitting so close. At this meeting there were twelve or fourteen persons, and I heard their conversation before we sat down at the table with a dazed kind of wonderment. A grave and evidently educated man spoke of "matter passing through matter," and of the certain knowledge they

had of this, to which another sadly remarked, "Yes, but we may say with Isaiah, Who hath believed our report?"

I seemed to be among a new order of beings rather than my ordinary fellow creatures. On the Sunday following this *séance* I went off again to the religious meeting where I had first gone, and seeing a fine intelligent looking and earnest man in the lecturer, I resolved to speak to him after the service. I did so, and inquired particularly about the form manifestations and other phenomena I had witnessed. He assured me that six years of experience had proved to him the truth of all these things, and advised me to go to the British National Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell-street, and continue my investigation under its auspices. I went, and there met in the lady secretary a clever and charming woman, and was eventually introduced to many Spiritualists whose kindness enabled me to prove for myself the absolute truth of even the most marvellous manifestations. This new world with its wonderful knowledge was to the mind what fresh mountain air is to the body when it has been shut in a narrow and heated valley, and small worries and petty cares seemed to fall away in the sense of exhilaration which ensued. And they have never again established themselves, for the mind occupied in such interesting researches does not waste its energies on trifles, and is saved from that Martha-like care about many things which so often ruins tempers and wrecks lives.

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.

SEVERAL CORRESPONDENTS.—The "Stories about Sleepwalkers" have been going the round of the provincial Press, it seems. They give us no news, but recall attention to facts that slip out of memory.

J.H.M.—No. We can give you no further information as to the facts cited.

P.R.—We do not know of any Spiritualists in Reading, but we shall be glad to put you in communication with anyone who sends us name and address.

M.—*Art Magic, and Ghost Land*, fetch long prices now. Their value is in inverse proportion to their cost. We cannot tell where a copy of the books is to be had.

M.G.—The fact is we do not know anything about it: nor can our invisible friends tell us anything about it. The facts are clear, but the explanation is not yet forthcoming.

"OBSERVER."—No: you will fail, probably, at first in getting satisfactory phenomena in full light. Try in semi-light. We have found bright moonlight very conducive to results, and should think a modified form of electric light might be good.

J.T.C. wants to know of the "Buddhist Propagation Society," what it is, where it lives, what it does, who is its authorised representative, what sections of the great Buddhistic world, what countries, and how many sects it represents. Correspondents are respectfully informed that the space of "LIGHT" is limited.

D.G.—We print your letter. On reflection we did not think it worth while to discuss the question to which you refer. It is a common experience, and by no means to be disposed of in your way as "humbug and falsity proceeding from peculiar forces." More experience will lead you to revise that statement.

THE REV. G. W. ALLEN asks us to state that the Bible Class in connection with the Christo-Theosophical Society (announced in last week's "LIGHT") will not be held on Sunday next, being Easter Sunday. It will be resumed on April 13th.

THE *British Mail*, "Journal of the Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom," with which we have not before made acquaintance, reveals to us the fact that a journal of its type is also concerned with matters that are our speciality. Berkeleyanism on one page and a "Double Existence" on another. "There was not a house in which there was not one dead," they said in old time. There is no exponent of opinion now which does not deal with the "one dead," who is not dead but alive.

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

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post-free to any address within the United Kingdom, or to places comprised within the Postal Union, including all parts of Europe, the United States, and British North America, is 10s. 10d. per annum, forwarded to our office in advance.
The Annual Subscription, post-free, to South America, South Africa, the West Indies, Australia, and New Zealand, is 18s. prepaid.
The Annual Subscription to India, Ceylon, China, Japan, is 15s. 2d. prepaid.
Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and should invariably be crossed "— & Co."
All orders for papers and for advertisements, and all remittances, should be addressed to "The Manager" and not to the Editor.

ADVERTISEMENT CHARGES.

Five lines and under, 2s. One inch, 4s. 6d. Column, £2 2s. Page, £4. A reduction made for a series of insertions.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and all Booksellers.
MANY letters and articles are crowded out owing to pressure on our space.

Light:

EDITED BY 'M. A. (OXON.)

SATURDAY, APRIL 5th, 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.

COINCIDENCES AND PSYCHICAL PROBLEMS.

A mass of unconsidered matter that ought to arrest attention drifts past the consciousness of busy people without due consideration. Problems of life meet us at every hour, and we pass them by. Sometimes we go so far as to say, "How curious!" sometimes a shrug of the shoulders suffices; sometimes we ignore altogether what is at least as well worth attention as (say) a crayfish or a fossil.

We propose to draw the attention of our readers to records of what, for want of a better term, we will call Coincidences. We shall invite explanation, and we shall welcome criticism. It seems to us that common experiences of daily life are passed by, while attention is directed to abnormal experiences. We have shown no inattention to what most people know of only by repute. What are called the physical phenomena of Spiritualism are as well attested as any other facts. But there are occurrences in our daily lives which do not attract attention in the same imperative fashion, and are mere matters of habit. We pass them by without reckoning what they mean.

Man is a composite being. He is a unit in a very composite state of being. We do not even know whether what we are most acquainted with in common experience bears the conventional interpretation. The recent paper of Dr. Wyld addressed to the London Spiritualist Alliance, and the discussion that it called forth, is a case in point. Dr. Wyld testified to facts beyond the cognisance of Science. Nobody impugned them: on the contrary, a mass of facts, testified to by those who joined in the discussion, fortified his case. There is no reasonable doubt that, under certain conditions of which we know little, the ordinary laws that govern our conscious life are altered. It is not usual for one solid object to pass through another solid object. And yet, if we are to accept human testimony, that phenomenon occurs.

It is wise and well to mark the line of demarcation as to evidence with some precision. We are not called upon, because we have made a fugitive acquaintance with some wonders, to accept and endorse all wondrous tales. Equally we are not to arrogate to ourselves a perfect knowledge of all that may be, and to decide *ex cathedra* that such and

such a statement, reputably vouched for, is impossible. The student of Psychics learns to cut that word "impossible" out of his vocabulary. Nothing seems more impossible than that a solid object should pass through another solid object. Nothing is more certain than that it does. An arrested judgment is the desirable mental attitude.

Pursuing the same train of thought, we find in our lives a number of occurrences which are puzzling. We take them as they come, and mildly wonder at them. Perhaps we calculate the doctrine of chances, and regard it as curious that a "coincidence" of the kind should have occurred. Perhaps, if we are wise we wonder whether the term "coincidence" is well chosen, or whether it does not simply cover our ignorance.

We propose at intervals to print such records as are called Coincidences, and also narratives which present abnormalities of various kinds. These, we believe, will offer interesting ground for discussion, and will give our correspondents opportunity for ventilating their views as to the aided or unaided action of the human instrument or agents in the several cases. Are we automata? Are we mere vehicles of an alien power? Are we capable of explaining the simplest act of our lives? Are we units in one vast whole which acts and reacts upon us? The Macrocosm and the Microcosm, is that a truth or a fancy?

And, most important of all, can we define the legitimate and normal working power of our own spirit, and fix the point at which it is supplemented, consciously or unconsciously, by that which is outside of itself? Spiritualists cut the knot by referring all that they cannot understand and explain to the action of an external intelligence. Are they warranted? Those who know nothing of Spiritualism deny altogether the influence of any external intelligence. Are they warranted? The more we look into this question the more our ideas will clear themselves. We must drop our prepossessions on the threshold, and with an open mind study the capacity of our own spirits—an ascertained cause—before we import an alien agency. For it is a maxim not impugned in law that a *vera causa* is good till it breaks down. We must not cut a Gordian knot by importing the hierarchy of Heaven to account for what we may do ourselves.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

The rooms of the London Spiritualist Alliance and editorial office of "LIGHT" will be closed from Thursday evening to Tuesday morning. We beg to remind our readers that the Easter Holidays cause us to go press earlier than usual, a fact which may delay the appearance of some letters and communications.

LONDON HYPNOTIC SOCIETY.

This Society is constituted with a Council and Committee of the names following:—

COUNCIL:

A. J. CARDEN, Esq.	PROFESSOR BARRETT.
WILLIAM CHOOKES, Esq., F.R.S.	H. KINGSTON, Esq., A.M., M.B.
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F. H. GROVE, Esq.	DR. TYRRELL.
MR. CARL HANSEN.	DR. WYLD.
H. KINGSTON, Esq., A.M., M.B.	

The subscription of Members is two guineas and of Associates one guinea per annum. Mr. Hansen, who is responsible, under the council, for the practical working of the Society, devotes certain hours weekly to the treatment of poor patients without fee. This opportunity will be utilised for purposes of clinical instruction in the therapeutic and psychical action of hypnotism. Information will be furnished by A. J. Carden, Esq., 129, Holland-road, Kensington, or by the honorary treasurer, F. H. Grove, Esq., 15A, South Audley-street, W.

HYPNOTISM AND MESMERISM—WHAT ARE THEY?*

BY GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

I have placed myself in a position of very considerable difficulty in having selected for the subject of my short address an attempt to solve an extremely difficult problem, by answering the question, "What are Hypnotism and Mesmerism?"

Probably everyone present has, more or less, a belief that hypnotism or mesmerism is a curative instrument of wonderful power, yet probably not one in twenty of those I now address has any reasoned-out theory as to the constitution of this mysterious agent.

The many books which have been written on mesmerism and hypnotism are almost entirely given to histories of the movement, and to descriptions of the accompanying phenomena, together with records of the successful cure of certain cases of disease, chiefly selected from those who, in vain, had spent their substance on many physicians, but had at last found peace and health from mesmeric passes. Hence it is that from books I can derive little assistance in my attempt to formulate a theory.

It is not for me to go again over the history of mesmerism and hypnotism or to interest you by the narration of extraordinary cures, further than to remind you that to Mesmer, an Austrian physician, who flourished from about 1780 to 1815, we are indebted for the revival in our century of an occult art, known some 4,000 years ago to the Egyptian priests, as evidenced by many drawings on walls and mummy cases; that in London, about 1840, there was a Mesmeric Institution, of which Archbishop Whately was the president, and Dr. Elliotson the ruling spirit; and that for some ten years the subject, under the name of hypnotism, has been scientifically investigated with experiments at certain hospitals in France, Germany, and Holland; and that now we have just founded The London Hypnotic Society, a term chosen in deference to those scientists to whom we are indebted for reconciling the medical profession to the subject.

And here I may, in passing, add, that although I shall not further, at present, enter on the *general* subject of mesmerism, I can yet refer you to an excellent *résumé* of hypnotism, published in the February number of the *Universal Review*, by Mrs. Besant.

With these few words of introduction I will now pass to the question before us, "Hypnotism and Mesmerism—What are they?"

The name hypnotism was first suggested by Mr. Braid, a surgeon practising in Manchester, who in 1843 published a book entitled *Hypnotism, or Nervous Sleep*.

Mr. Braid was convinced of the truth of the phenomena of mesmerism, but denied its leading theory, namely, that an aura proceeded from the operator to the patient of a magnetic character. He asserted that there was no such aura, but that the phenomena of mesmerism were entirely subjective, and were mainly produced by a paralysis of the volitional power in man and a substitution of the involuntary and automatic powers, and that in effect the phenomena were entirely due to the physical and mental condition of the patient, and independent of any agency proceeding from another; and this is generally the theory now held by the Continental hypnotists, as described and illustrated by my friend Dr. Tuckey, in his interesting book, *Psycho-Therapeutics, or Curing by Suggestion*.

Now, in the first place, regarding this word hypnotism, we may say that it suggests no theory in solution of the problem in question, the word being simply derived from the Greek word for sleep, and we know that out of ordinary sleep no hypnotic phenomena arise.

But although the word itself suggests no theory, yet the theory attached to it is, as I have said, the same as that given by Mr. Braid, and signifies the sleep of the volitional faculties and the awaking of the automatic conditions of the brain, which passively submit to the dictations and suggestions of the operator, and thus through the unconscious imagination, as it were, of the patient, suggest cures which in many cases are realised.

These cases are given as illustrations of the power of the mind over the body—an extremely interesting subject, and one which is realised extensively in "the mind cure" of our day.

The question which I ask myself, however, in relation to this so-called cure by suggestion is this: How can the hypnotist

explain why a suggestion given to the mind when in a *sleepy* condition should effect *permanent* cures, while the same suggestion given to the mind in its *rational* state fails to cure?

The hypnotist will admit that the patient is in an inferior position while half or wholly asleep to the position he is in while in the full exercise of his reason, and yet grand curative results both to body and mind come through this inferior position.

I can understand how trifling or imaginary diseases may be thus cured, but I cannot understand how moral exaltations, as in the cure of confirmed drunkenness and other degrading immoralities, can be thus *permanently* produced.

But the soul and body often are washed, as it were, and the unclean demons driven out, in hypnotic operation; and if so, I conclude that there is an efficient cause, and that the cause is not merely a suggestion given to the half unconscious mind of the patient, but must be the result of the inner and higher soul awaking out of its slumbers and assuming the command of the self-indulgent lower soul.

If so, then hypnotism is only a means of producing trance, more or less complete, and trance must mean an awaking of the internal and hidden spirit, whereby the Spirit—The Lord—comes to His temple and drives from thence the concupiscences of the flesh; and here we have an analogy to certain cases of genuine and permanent conversion of the soul which sometimes result from the *entrancing* preaching of the words of righteousness.

If now we ask ourselves wherein does hypnotism differ from mesmerism, we must return to the question of the aura, said to be transmitted from the operator to his patient.

This aura is denied by hypnotists generally, but it is believed in by all mesmerists for the following reasons:—

1. The operator is often conscious of a sensation, much resembling that of a mild current of galvanism, as a tingling at the tips of the fingers.

2. The patient, on the other hand, is often conscious of a sensation of a like character, as playing on the body, and describes it variously as cold, or warm, or irritating, or exciting, or soothing, while some patients appear so sensitive as to desire that the passes may be made from a distance, say of two yards, rather than in close proximity.

3. Sensitives in darkened rooms can see this aura as a luminosity streaming from the hands of magnetic individuals, and describe its colour as red, violet, or white, according to the physico-psychical character of the magnetiser.

4. Patients in some instances can be magnetised from a distance, or through the walls of a room, while ignorant of the operator's intentions.

Now, I admit that the sensations and visions and effects of this supposed aura may possibly in some instances be illustrations of mind-reading, and that the operator may feel these sensations because he believes in them, and the patient feel or see them because she is *en rapport* with the operator, but it would be straining the argument to say that this can be the whole explanation; and, for myself, I believe in an aura, *odyle* or other, which a mesmerist by will can transmit from himself to his patient; and the well-known fact that it is unwholesome for young children to sleep with old nurses is a fact which makes in the same direction.

There is, of course, in connection with the idea of an aura this fundamental distinction between hypnotism and mesmerism, that whereas all the cures in hypnotism are produced when the patient is in a peculiar psychological condition, on the contrary by far the greater number of cures under mesmerism are performed simply by passes of the hand, when the patient is perfectly conscious and rational; and although the hypnotist might suggest that in all such cases the patient is cured by expectation, this suggestion cannot hold in those cases in which the patient is, by a process unknown to himself, affected through a wall or from a distance.

Before dismissing the question, What is mesmerism? I should like to say a few words on the term *animal magnetism*.

There are many who prefer this term to all others. Hypnotism, as I have said, offers no clue *quid* name to the interpretation of the phenomena, while the term mesmerism only indicates that it is a science rediscovered by Mesmer; but many desire a name indicative of the essence of the power in question.

It must, however, be confessed that we possess no scientific evidence that magnetic force, as usually understood, is present, as tested by the most sensitive magnetoscopes; for although there are instances in which the magnetic needle has been

* Read before the London Hypnotic Society.

deflected apparently by mesmeric passes, yet no doubt there are many now in this room who could give another explanation of this fact, and which we need not at present indicate.

On the other hand, the fact that no current is manifested by the magnetoscope does not disprove the possible presence of magnetism, any more than the absence of the effects of the more subtle vibrations of sound and colour from the normal human ear and eye disproves the presence of these subtle volitions, and we can easily believe that *metallic* instruments may fail to register the presence of *organic* magnetism.

This, at least, we know, that the digestion and assimilation of food creates animal *heat*, and as there is a certain relationship between heat and electricity, we may presume that the digestion of food *may* evolve magnetism.

For myself, as I believe that magnetism is the one force which rules nature, from the microscopic cell to the rotations of the suns and planets in space, to be consistent with this belief I expect that one day animal magnetism will be found to be a strictly scientific term.

Certain occult operations regarding the behaviour of iron in the presence of certain psychical surroundings are known to me, and no explanation apart from magnetic polarity can afford a clue to this mystery; and if will in certain psychical relationships can control magnetic force and affect iron, how much more easy it is to believe that the will may so act on the organic magnetism of one's own body as to affect another human body for good or evil. And if so, then those mysterious attractions and repulsions which occasionally present themselves between individuals may have some psycho-magnetic origin.

In conclusion, I would briefly define hypnotism, as in ordinary cases of cure, the submission of the soul of the patient to the will of the operator.

And I should briefly define mesmerism as an analogous operation, plus a psychical sympathy transferring a vital magnetism.

The hypnotist regards his patient somewhat as an automatic machine moved towards cure by suggestion, while the mesmerist rather regards him or her as a brother or sister in distress, to whom he desires to impart the blessing of sympathy.

In either case the power used is not only deeply interesting, but profoundly important—a power that may be turned to evil and malignant purposes as in witchcraft, or that may be used in the love of truth and goodness.

If so, then the subject is not one for idle curiosity on the one hand, or for hard scientific exploration on the other hand, but should be regarded as a Divine gift, whereby, bearing each others' infirmities, we may fulfil the highest law.

It is dangerous for the uninstructed to amuse themselves with mesmeric experiments, but probably every healthy and kind-hearted man or woman could more or less relieve pain and cure disease, especially among the poor, and one object of our society is to establish a dispensary for the poor.

But we also desire to investigate the psychical phenomena which arise in the practice of mesmerism, the highest of which is true entrancement with true clairvoyance or the illumination of the soul.

If it be so, then we can foresee that out of these experiments may arise a light in the darkness of the present age; and that in the place of dogmatic assertion on the one hand, and agnostic materialism on the other hand, we may arrive at a clue to the mystery of man and the universe, and discover that the highest science and the highest religion are one, and that both signify only this, the wisdom and the sympathy of God.

THE happiness of life is made up of minute fractions—countless infinitesimals of pleasurable thought and genial feeling.—COLERIDGE.

CHRISTIANITY minus Pentecosts—the shell of a religion—without the spirit of a religion—is what the carnal heart of the present age is hungering after, and what the present age endeavours to embody. Just as the new constitutionalisms are purely secular, are avowedly without God, and base the fact of their popularity upon this, that they have nothing to do with the Spirit or with the inspiration of the Infinite, or with anything above mere intellectualism and creature comfort,—just, I say, as in the secular sphere the new systems of government are based upon this godless idea, so the decorous conventionalities that represent to us religion, while they have in *theory* the doctrine of universal and continuous inspiration, the indwelling of Christ, and the active outpouring of the Holy Ghost in all degrees and in all divisions of the great body of believers, *ignore it practically*.—T. LAKE HARRIS.

JOTTINGS.

The *Daily News* on the Wesley Ghosts is not indicative of enlightenment. "Our Andrew" is jocose, but not instructive. He is better when he deals with more elementary topics, such as interest the Folk-Lore Society. But he makes some admissions that may be counted to him for righteousness. "Lying is quite out of question in the case of the Wesleys; the most robust scepticism cannot swallow that." Good; but what is a man's criticism worth who is always nosing out lies, assuming that they are there when he dare not say otherwise, and arguing from that hypothesis? In a word, it is worth nothing. It is on a par with the evidence of a private detective who is paid to prove a case.

It would be quite useless to take any note of the stuff that the *Daily News* prints, were it not that it is a melancholy sample of the nutriment supplied to its readers, and by no means to them alone. As the Church has degenerated into a treatment of subjects which most of all concern us, that shows to demonstration that the spirit has departed from what is now a *corpus vile*, so it seems that a certain section of readers is content to have this stuff served out to it by a writer who is obviously unacquainted with what he trifles with. The article, we presume, was written in the small hours to fill a gap which some more serious matter did not occupy.

A coincidence. Whittier, writing of the great change that must soon come over him, thus phrased himself in "Burning Driftwood":—

I know the solemn monotone
Of waters calling unto me;
I know from whence the airs have blown,
That whisper of the Eternal Sea—
"As low my fires of driftwood burn,
I hear that sea's deep sound increase,
And, fair in sunset light, discern
Its mirage-lifted Isles of Peace.

And Tennyson in his latest poem put the same thought in other words:—

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 floods may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face,
When I have crossed the bar.

Our friendly and kindly contemporary, the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, notes our £1,000 gift, and is "delighted to know that 'LIGHT' will now be free from financial problems." It considers that such an enterprise as we conduct is as "worthy of endowment as any school or college." It is; and by such means alone can we carry on in its fulness the work that absolutely clamours at our doors. We want nothing, the work wants much.

The *Religio-Philosophical Journal* prints a sermon by the Rev. Henry Frank, of Jamestown, N.Y., which is very good reading. "The Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace" is the subject. It is a remarkable exposition, far too compact and serious for condensation. It will repay perusal, and can be read at our rooms.

The *Chatham and Rochester News* reports the death of Noah Drew, aged seventy-two, a member of the "New and Latter House of Israel," a fanatical sect that has its headquarters at Chatham. The sad story is one more record added to the tale of credulity and knavery. Drew was a prosperous farmer at Michigan, U.S.A. The ingathering of the 144,000 sent him crazy. He put all he was worth into the hands of the (no doubt honest) crank who worked the "restitution of Israel," and he lost his all. Jezreel, the Crank, keeps his carriage and pair, and refuses even the pittance that is necessary to bury the poor old Michigan farmer whom they skinned. This is the story, of which we know no more than is detailed in the *St. James's Gazette* of March 22nd. We cannot doubt that it is substantially true.

The following paragraph has started a quite serious discussion:—

The London correspondent of the *New York World* says:—I have heard from an authentic source a curious fact concerning Mr. Gladstone. One of his most remarkable physical characteristics is the size of his head. It is altogether exceptional. Recently a trusted follower of his

was visiting at Hawarden, and one evening the conversation turned on phrenology. Needless to say, Gladstone had included this empirical science in his limitless studies. "I am a bit of a phrenologist myself," said he, "and here is a circumstance that will surprise you. Within the last twenty years my head has grown considerably in size, and I can demonstrate it to you." The old man hied off to an adjoining room and returned with an old Court hat. He explained that it belonged to a uniform he had used early in his official career. Said Mr. Gladstone, placing the hat on his head, "This was large enough for me when I got it; but it is much too small for me now!" And so it was—it did not go down on his head at all. He confessed that the alteration in the size of his head puzzled him, and declared he had never heard of a similar case.

It appeared in the *St. James's Gazette*, and the Press has been deluged by letters from people, some relevant and some impertinent, on the subject. Some writers point out that the increase in size of the head is due to alteration in the shape and volume of the cranial bones consequent on old age. Some are so vulgarly silly as to write of "inflation by gas" and "water on the brain." These ineptitudes, which even a charity school-boy might blush for, and which a respectable journal should be ashamed to print, may be left in the gutter.

But the fact remains: and it is not so rare as people think. Mr. Gladstone's hat may have shrunk: probably it has, but that his head has grown we have no doubt. The shape of the head in sensitive persons with abnormally active brains is constantly altering: and that quite irrespective of ossification from old age. It is only the stolid person who does not think, who lives in the past and has no interest in the future, who keeps his head unaltered.

Hudson Tuttle deals with the bastard Theosophy of Mr. W. J. Colville in a recent issue of the *Banner of Light*. It is not important to notice the gaseous utterances that Mr. Tuttle deals with, save and except that they may be accepted as of any authority. A very little knowledge of Theosophy as expounded by its founders and inventors would suffice to show that Mr. Colville has nothing to say about it which advances our knowledge or commands our attention.

The Editor of the *Journal* (Chicago) addresses his constituents in his own proper person. He tells them straightly that thirteen years of hard work—he came suddenly to his post in March, 1877—during which he has done as much as a man can be reasonably expected to do to provoke animosity from people who regarded Spiritualism as their own preserve, and during which he has also done a great work in weeding out rubbish—he tells them that he wants the sinews of war.

He desires to form a company and to place his work on a financial basis that shall be satisfactory. Everybody else does it, must do it, ought to do it. But when we suggest money we are told that money should not enter into our concerns. It does: it must: and the people who talk in this way are they who sneak round and get all they can out of us, and lift a haughty nose when they are asked to pay as they would have to pay at any shop for what they bought. From these leeches may we be defended! We hope that our contemporary will weather any difficulty that may beset its course, and go on with a full sail and a flowing tide.

It is not necessary to disavow for a moment what has always been our habit in dealing with cases that come before us when our help is asked. It is at the service of the humblest, and we ask no return. But it is imperative that those who realise their benefits from knowledge received should also realise the responsibilities laid upon them.

The March number of the "White Cross Library," Prentice Mulford, Editor, F. J. Needham, Publisher (New York, U.S.A.), is concerned with "Some Practical Mental Recipes." The number forms a *résumé* of the publications of the last three years and a-half, and is, therefore, a brief setting forth of what Mr. Mulford desires to impress upon his readers. There is in it much that is true, as also much that is visionary. Mr. Mulford is, perhaps, over-writing himself in attempting every month to put out a panacea for all human ills. This is a pity, for he has given us valuable subject for thought.

Schopenhauer's last thoughts should interest those who study the father of pessimism. His was an eccentric mind, but he

had the courage of his opinions. These maxims were jotted down in a note-book found at the hotel where he died on September 23rd, 1860. The mind that originated them must have been a burden to the soul that possessed it. These are random specimens:—

Each nation has but one great poet—its first. I set little store by a novelist who does not love evil for its own sake. When you make a new friend, think of the future enemy who is already in him. Not one of the tortures of the Inquisition is equivalent to that of doubt; it is life-long. A really free man would be a monster. If I dared to promulgate a code, it would pass but one sentence for all crimes—"Live, wretch!" And the punishment would be too inhuman. Everything has been sung. Everything has been cursed. There is nothing left for poetry but to be the glowing forge of words. Style exhales the odour of the soul. In this age of machines I am expecting one that will keep cows.

"A really free man would be a monster." Think of that, and of the mental condition of the man who could write it down. To discuss such a statement would be absurd. The converse proposition, "An enslaved man is in the ideal state," is perhaps, sufficient to refute Schopenhauer. If the truth lies, as it is said to do, midway, we shall perhaps find it in a distinction between liberty and license.

Modern Thoughts has a paper on "Incarnation and Re-incarnation," by Dr. Buck. He makes in the course of his article some very much needed definitions. The abiding and permanent entity in man he calls the *Ego*. That, plus the body which correlates the *Ego* with its material surroundings, he calls the *personality*. The *Ego* independently existing, apart from the body, he calls the *individuality*. There is the man, *individual* in his self-hood, *personal* as he appears in the world in which he temporarily lives.

Dr. Buck has some very suggestive remarks on obscure subjects into which we cannot go fully, though they are well worth careful thought. Soul and Spirit he defines: also Faith and Belief. We need not do more than draw attention to the fact that these two sets of terms are not equivalent in meaning. Dr. Buck wants to know, when he has cleared the ground, whether the *Ego*, the central principle of the man, "originates with the conception and birth of the physical body."

Now, in asking this question Dr. Buck shows that his own mind is confused. For conception and birth are not the same thing, and there is evidence to show that between those two events there is consciousness in the immature *ego*, accidentally deprived of its incarnate life, which consciousness does not die out at death. Dr. Buck wants to know whether the soul of a given man has not existed before its union with the body in which Dr. Buck finds it. That, he says, which "has a beginning will have an end." Why? Dr. Buck invokes Logic to father his statement. What has Logic to answer to our query?

Is it conceivable by any mind that any entity should not have had a beginning? Is it necessary as a logical conclusion that that of which we know nothing must have had no beginning if it is to have no end? We do not acquiesce in that logical dilemma. Does Dr. Buck believe and affirm that the immortal *Ego* is the possession of every child of man? Or does he accept the Laureate's analogy of the seeds, the most of which do not come to fruitage?

When he comes to practical, as distinguished from speculative questions, Dr. Buck is even more suggestive. It is necessary to quote his words, lest we do him injustice:—

Turning now to practical life and everyday experience, what do we find? Something indeed that no theology attempts to explain, but which it everywhere practically ignores, and which the human principle of charity seeks blindly to mitigate and redeem; finding itself, however, powerless to prevent or greatly alter it.

One child is conceived in honour; another in dishonour; one is conceived in drunkenness and crime; another in sobriety and virtue. One child's body is saturated with filth and disease; another is born to cleanliness and health. One child is taught to lie, swear, and steal as soon as it can speak and walk; another is taught to clasp its little hands in prayer and revere the name of Deity. One is born in poverty, deformity, and distress; another to wealth, beauty, and all priceless opportunity. One *Ego* enters a career of crime and ends the present life on the gallows; the other *Ego* enters a career of virtue and usefulness and dies with honour and the applause of men. Neither of these *Egos* remembers that it asked the privilege of being born, or that it gave a reluctant or glad consent to become "incarnate." In the large majority of cases the incarnation was an incident or accident to be prevented whenever

prevention was possible, and to be endured without crime, and consummated with at best a tardy and reluctant welcome.

Vice and virtue are thus the natural inheritance, the "bias" irrevocably fixed upon the Ego at birth.

These pregnant questions are worthy of our deepest thought. Theology has not solved them. It has indeed drawn a red herring across the trail by suggesting that man can shunt on to another the burden of his own sin. There has, perhaps, been no greater wrong done to man than that authorised dogma, readily accepted and greedily welcomed. For it works in with a man's desire to make the best of both worlds so neatly. For the time that his bodily passions and desires are active he can wallow in satiety. When his body is worn out and its lusts are dying, he can cast an eye to the future and trim his sails to the breeze that will bear him into unknown climes.

This is taught, and has long been taught, as the doctrine "which except a man keep whole and undefiled without doubt he shall perish everlastingly," as a creed of the Church proclaims. It may proclaim it in this day of ours with no other effect than to raise a smile at ignorance, or a shudder at blasphemy.

Perhaps it is not well to pick apieces the formal words of the various statements made in times past and to turn them into modern English. They have done their work; they have served their purpose. What is now necessary to be grasped by those who are called to lead opinion is that the time has come to restate old truths in terms of modern thought. The round pebble has become worn down to uselessness. Let us have a clear, incisive, and effective statement of truth that is eternal.

For *truth is eternal*. Men's minds may grasp it in various ways. They may see different aspects of it. But the truth itself is changeless and eternal. Hence it is that to us, Spiritualists, who consciously concern ourselves with aspects of truth that the world knows not of, there comes an attitude of mind that the ordinary thinker hardly realises. We have done with superficial evidence: we have reached the region of beliefs: we are concerned only with the resultants therefrom. And the world goes on wondering and clamouring, much as a barrel-organ grinds on in the street and disturbs one's thoughts.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

J. S. Mill's Theistic Conundrum: and the Solutions Proposed.

SIR,—Your correspondents Messrs. Harpur, Thompson, and Henley, together with the Rev. H. R. Haweis, show commendable earnestness in their attempts to escape from the thorny dilemmas into which they are thrust by J. S. Mill's Theistic speculations. And after all the difficulty remains unsolved; for even if Divine goodness and wisdom are able to bring quite infinite good out of the suffering and sin of the natural and moral world, yet the primary puzzle remains—Why is it lawful for God to do that which is wrong in man—to use evil for the sake of good? To this enigma I see no logical answer. But there is one point of view which neither of your correspondents, nor the preacher, nor Mill himself seems to have taken,—on which one may rest even while the insolubility of the moral difficulty remains, and *because* it remains. It is evident that physical evil or suffering on the animal plane of life corresponds to moral evil—what the Bible calls sin—on the spiritual plane. Now in both planes evil is essentially an anomaly; it is a departure from or a violation of law. But the logical puzzle which Mill and others raise depends upon an effort to bring evil under the conception of law, and is, therefore, self-contradictory. If evil, i.e., sin or suffering, is explained, it is explained away, because it ceases to be outside the order of nature. The first condition in the moral struggle of human life is a frank recognition of this anomaly, and a refusal to compromise with it. The very failure of the logicians confirms, and indeed is essentially deducible from, this spiritual postulate on which all resistance to evil is based. If Mill's objection could be satisfactorily answered on the logical plane the strife between good and evil would cease, for evil would cease to exist; the combatants would shake hands and confess that their hostility arose out of a mistake.

This escape from the tyranny of confusion by accepting it as such, implies that the puzzles of logicians and sceptics can only be set at rest by making the distinction so wisely insisted upon by the best philosophical speculators, between logic and ontology,—between the laws of formal reason and the grounds of absolute existence. Forms of thought may be only conditions

belonging to limited experience, and part of the education of life is to deliver us from these conceptions, and to show us that the notions of logic—of time, space, and finite apprehension,—are not sufficient for the higher needs of human life. It is, therefore, no scandal for a sincere Theist to see a noble nature like Mill's struggling against its limitations,—beating against the logical bars that imprison it. The "wild and whirling words" that result may sound atheistic. Mr. Thompson seems to think they are essentially so. I do not think they are. They are only formulæ of rebellion against the idols which the logical cult has set up; and they may be but avenues of approach to the eternal and living God, Whose supreme sway includes both the order and disorders or anomalies of life. These inextricable logical mazes and convolutions are a Divine challenge to leave mere nature behind, and take hold on the supernatural, by virtue of the Divinity and infinity which, as sons of God and partakers of His nature, we inherit. In this higher region of eternal calm the conflicts of Time and Sense dwindle into small dimensions, while their reality is not stifled by merely logical solutions of the problems which they raise. And here again Spiritualism finds its justification, because its primary use is to deliver those who receive it from bondage to natural law, and thus make room for the higher order.

5, Grosvenor-street, W.

R. M. THEOBALD.

Hypnotism v. Odylism.

SIR,—It will be well for those interested in the progress of curative mesmerism in this country to bear in mind that the modern hypnotic school—at least so far as the Continental exponents thereof and their followers in England are concerned—is essentially hostile to the true scope of the great science so long and so powerfully advocated by Drs. Elliotson, Gregory, Ashburner, Lee, Esdaile, and their co-workers; and it is not too much to say that the position taken up by the Paris and Nancy "suggestionists" for the last dozen years covers an antagonism to the main truths of mesmerism only a shade less bitter and prejudiced than that to which they were subjected half a century ago.

The efforts of the Charcot school seem characterised by a perverse ingenuity in evolving and emphasising precisely those elements of mesmeric practice which display it in its most repulsive aspect and are most calculated to revolt and alarm the non-professional public; while the perfectly harmless phase of *magnetisation without sleep* (or, as it should properly be called, Odylism), which is the very essence of true mesmeric healing, is either ignored or denied to exist. Setting aside the inevitable ignorance and hostility of the medical faculty in connection with any unorthodox remedial method, there is no doubt that the propaganda of the foreign "hypnotist" or "suggestionist" school has tended to increase the dislike and suspicion of the public towards a system which avowedly relies for its success on the complete mental subjugation of the patient and the implanting in his mind of a wholly artificial and alien set of ideas by the operator, and which apparently presents unlimited opportunities of abuse in the direction of improper or criminal incitement. Whilst not seeking to underrate the advantages accruing from the method of post-hypnotic suggestion in those cases of hysteria and epilepsy which seem of such frequent occurrence on the Continent, and in a disease of which this country furnishes only too many examples, viz., dipsomania, it is, nevertheless, of importance to point out that the main benefits (judged by the criteria of facility and opportunity) of curative mesmerism will always lie in the relief of pain and the removal of morbid conditions *without sleep*—in other words, adopting the useful term "Hypnodylism" to cover the whole field of mesmeric cure of disease with and without hypnosis or mesmeric sleep, the hypnotic section thereof must yield in scope and efficacy to the odylic.

It cannot, therefore, be too often or too strongly urged by those aware of the value of Mesmer's great discovery, that in nineteen cases out of twenty (in this country at all events) where in curative action is possible neither hypnosis nor hypnotic "suggestion" is necessary, nor is any impression on the mind of the patient called for or serviceable—the odyle emanating from the operator by passes or contact affording the desired relief whether the patient expect it or not. The reliance of the "hypnotist" school upon artificial sleep as a *sine quâ non* operates as a bar to the treatment of innumerable cases presenting to the odylist no difficulty whatever; and a very slight familiarity with hypnodylic practice is sufficient to show the very small percentage of subjects who can be hypnotised even by an operator of

such exceptional endowments as could only rarely be available for general purposes. On the other hand, not only is practically every one open to be relieved from pain or disease by odylisation, but insusceptibility to hypnosis presents no bar whatever to its influence; and it is within the writer's experience that the most powerful hypnotists are themselves distinctly the persons most open to curative odylic action.

It is a matter for congratulation that at the London Hypnotic Society's meetings all the lecturers who have so far addressed the members seem to have been advocates of the full scope of curative mesmerism rather than adherents to the narrower system of the French "hypnotist" school; and nothing can be more serviceable to the movement than the facilities afforded by the Society for the instruction in odylic as well as hypnotic methods of those who wish to utilise the power which they in common with every human being must to some extent possess of dealing beneficially with morbid conditions of the physical organism.

FREDERICK W. HAYES.

Phenomena in an Inquirer's Circle.

SIR,—I am aware that your readers are generally too advanced in their experience of psychical phenomena to find either interest or edification in records of the—so to speak—rudimentary manifestations which occur during the earlier sittings of an inquirer's séance. Nevertheless, I trust you will find space for the following brief notes of the second circle held at my home. I may premise that I am fairly well acquainted with the theoretical side of Spiritualism, having been for years a student of its literature. Recently I was led to inquire into it more practically by instituting a domestic circle of inquirers, consisting of my wife, two male friends (both with some experience of the subject) and myself. Séance No. I. was interesting and suggestive, but of no general interest. Séance No. II., held on Sunday last, was distinguished by features that will, perhaps, bear recording. To commence, I was much interested in the rapping, and as several messages (of trifling importance) were thus communicated, I requested the invisible operators to afford me proof of their powers by knocking loudly. Immediately the knocks became sharper and more decided. "Louder yet," I said, and they increased in distinctness until it was almost as though a knuckle was tapping. "I want them still louder," I remarked. None of us were prepared for what followed. The table sprang into the air under our hands, dropped to the ground, and then repeated its leap.

Soon afterwards the raps were again apparent, and the communicating intelligence spelt out the name, "George Cohen," which he alleged to be his own appellation, gave us particulars of his death, &c., and stated himself (by implication) to be an old Spiritualist. He told us that his name was recently mentioned in "LIGHT," and emphasised the allegation by saying that it would be found on page twelve of current volume next to the name of Burns, also mentioned there. This, however, we have had no means of confirming up to the present.

Then a "Druid" spirit came and gave his name as "Cuir-dyas." Whether this is an ancient British name or not we do not know; perhaps the Editor can inform us.

Soon afterwards the table was again agitated, and, to the surprise of all, sprang from the floor and floated for some seconds in mid-air.

D. G.

Lyceums and Sunday Schools.

SIR,—Will you allow me a word or two on the question of Lyceums and Sunday-schools?

It seems to me that J. W. Burrell rather exaggerates the difficulties of Spiritualists as teachers in the latter. "The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," is far too strong meat for most ordinary men (to say nothing of the class of children who generally attend Sunday-schools), and if rigidly insisted upon, at all times and seasons, would necessitate the exodus of a number of our best preachers and teachers, both in church and school, whilst their places would quickly be filled by those unscrupulous and thoughtless men who, like the old pauper, were ready to declare "I believe everything."

I really question whether such subjects as he refers to, theories as to the creation, the teachings of Moses, always prefaced by a "Thus saith the Lord," &c., need, generally speaking, be introduced into the Sunday class at all. The teacher can find plenty of subjects for instruction, both as to precept and illustration, in the moral teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, St. Paul's spiritual body, or from Mrs. Gatty's beautiful *Parables from Nature*. The former are too well known to need

comment, but the latter are not half as much used in religious education as they deserve to be. Where, for instance, could we find a more vivid illustration of the resurrection of the soul from the death-bed than her simple chapter, "Not lost, but gone before," which the history she gives of the various stages of the dragon-fly so exquisitely illustrates? What innocent interest would the children, thus taught, afterwards take in those humble creatures, the frog and the dragon-fly, each wayside pool becoming to them an ever-recurring sermon on Immortality. A clergyman I know on going to speak at a Sunday-school just gathered a flower on his road and took it for his text.

I remember well the advice the late Mrs. Macdougall Gregory gave to a good, conscientious clergyman who had recently embraced the new Gospel, and was greatly "exercised" as to whether he could honestly retain his position as clergyman of his parish. On his expressing his scruples to her, she at once replied, "Stay in the position in which God has been pleased to place you, and bring the new light you have received to bear upon your teachings."

Let Lyceums (*properly managed*) be introduced wherever practicable, or private Sunday classes be formed by Spiritualists, but do not let our young people in the country, or in localities where Spiritualists do not congregate, be deprived of the higher teachings of such men as J. W. Burrell by a mere scruple—honourable as that scruple undoubtedly is.

ELIZA BOUCHER.

The Fruit that Perishes.

SIR,—In referring to the letter of "F.H.G.," entitled "Antecedent Existence," I am emboldened to reopen the question by asking, "What judgments, if any, have ever been held or expressed by past or present thinkers upon the co-related subject of ante-natal existence? What of spirits 'deprived of earthly experience through dying'—not 'in infancy,' but previous to actually entering upon it?" No doubt this is mainly a woman's question, but the day has gone by when, as such, it need shrink from obtruding itself, if suitably introduced by apology. For the majority of mankind it has been found sufficient, roughly to assign the moment of birth, or even that of baptism, as that of the bestowal of individuality, and therefore of immortality, upon the spirit; but such a decision must seem arbitrary enough, and bitter enough to the miserable mother for whom, in case after case, the lost child's individuality has awaited no such recognised epoch.

I am not seeking to raise the question in any forced attempt to obtain, reasonably, or otherwise, some comfortable hypothesis for the attempted solution of one more of the problems of existence; yet, perhaps, few lots are deserving of more sympathetic recognition than that of the mother condemned to lose child after child unseen and unembraced. It is surely one of the bitterest of dumb griefs, consecrated by no grave over which legitimised and healing tears may be shed and shared. If these little beings had only breathed for one moment in our common air, poets, divines, and consolars would alike have hastened to give them to their mothers as inalienable possessions; but they existed only for her; for days, and weeks, and months of thought and affection, for her only; and the most sanguine find no voice to encourage her to believe that the immature little spirits may obtain their further development under some other condition of state or time.

Victor Hugo alone, most human and large-hearted of poets, brings his perfect sympathies to bear upon the subject; and he solves the difficulty by re-incarnating the spirit in the body of its successor; the spirit that the mother vainly seeks, is in the babe that she afterwards holds in her arms: but what if no such happy way out of the dilemma presents itself? Is it then to be maintained that these alert atoms of humanity were indeed animated by no spirits at all? Or, if this was not so, what then has been the ultimate result as regards both themselves and their mother, of their failure to obtain a complete, or permanent, bodily investiture from her? If "contact with matter" be the necessity for "individualising consciousness," can it be considered an exhaustive reason for selecting the moment of birth as that of the bestowal of the soul, that "one must begin somewhere"? Yet were there no show of reason in this plea, might not some authority be found ready to bid the childless mother seek her lost hopes, divinely incarnated in the spirit-world, awaiting her arrival there, to greet her as their mother?

M. D.

[In many cases that have come within our knowledge communications have been received purporting to come from those who never reached the time of birth, and so never had an independent existence in this world.—ED. OF "LIGHT."]

SOCIETY WORK.

AN APPEAL TO MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALISTS.—For many years the Spiritualists and inquirers have had a local centre in this district, but at present seem to be under a cloud. All those who are anxious that our meetings, &c., should be continued on a firmer basis are requested to attend on Sunday evening, April 13th, at seven o'clock.—C. WHITE, Hon. Sec., *pro tem.*

MARYLEBONE LYCEUM, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, W.—The Lyceum was opened on Sunday, in the usual manner with a hymn and invocation by the conductor, followed by a musical reading, the Beatitudes, a reading by Mr. Lewis, and the "Psalm of Life," the benediction being pronounced by Mr. Collings. The marches and calisthenics were performed tolerably well. Children's tea-party on Good Friday at 4 p.m.—C. WHITE.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, STRATFORD, E.—Meetings free, every Sunday at 6.45 for 7 o'clock. The following is the list of speakers for April: April 6th, Mr. J. Humphries, at 7 p.m.; Lyceum, at 3 p.m. 13th, Mr. Dever-Summers, at 7 p.m.; Lyceum, at 3 p.m. 20th, Mr. W. Walker, at 7 p.m.; Lyceum, at 3 p.m. 27th, Mrs. W. Stanley, at 7 p.m.; Lyceum, at 3 p.m.—M. A. BEWLEY, Sec.

PECKHAM.—WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET.—On Sunday last the platform was filled morning and evening by Mr. J. Veitch, who spoke in the morning upon "Poetry and Spiritualism," and in the evening on "Clairvoyance and Psychometry," giving by way of demonstration psychometrical readings of a very successful nature. Sunday, April 6th, Mr. J. Lees, at 11 and 7; April 13th, Mr. G. Chainey; 20th, Mrs. Stanley; 27th, Mr. Leach. It is our intention to start classes for the development of psychometry, and information concerning the same can be obtained of J. VEITCH, Secretary, 44, Coleman-road, Peckham.

ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BEAUMONT-STREET, MILE END, E.—A pleasant evening was spent here on Sunday with Miss Marsh. The meeting, which was a very large one, and composed chiefly of strangers to Spiritualism, was greatly surprised at the ease and accuracy with which their surroundings were described. Owing to the large number present, Miss Marsh has consented to occupy the platform again on Sunday evening next. An address will also be given by Mr. C. Cohen upon the scientific aspect of Spiritualism. On Friday, April 11th, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Annie Besant will deliver a lecture upon "Spiritualism from a Theosophical Point of View." Admission by ticket, 3d. and 6d. each, to be obtained of the various secretaries, or at the door on the night of the lecture.—C. C.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, CHEPSTOW HALL, 1, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday last Mr. McKenzie addressed us on "Phrenology" at the morning meeting. In the evening we had an audience of over 70, and an excellent discourse by the controls of Mrs. Treadwell on "Where are the Dead?" On Sunday next, Mr. S. D. Rodger on "Psychometry," at 11.15 a.m. An anniversary discourse on the "Advent of Modern Spiritualism," by Mr. W. E. Long, at 6.30 p.m. prompt. On Good Friday we shall have a social gathering and soirée. Doors open at 7 p.m. Our report for the last quarter shows good work done, both spiritually and materially. We have some fifty members enrolled.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, MARYLEBONE-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Towns gave some remarkable psychometrical readings. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Spiritual Communion; at 7 p.m. floral service in memory of Mr. John Tomlin, who so efficiently managed the meetings in these rooms in times past. Flowers, cut or in pots, evergreens, &c., will be gladly received on Saturday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., to prevent confusion on the Sunday. Monday, the 7th, social gathering at 8 p.m.; Tuesday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Busy Bees' "Word and Work"; Wednesday, at 8 p.m., séance; Thursday, at 8 p.m., Professor Chadwick, on "Phrenology and Mesmerism"; Friday, 2.30 p.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., for conversation and sale of literature.—J. M. DALE.

KENSINGTON AND NOTTING HILL SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION, ZEPHYR HALL, 9, BEDFORD-GARDENS, SILVER-STREET, NOTTING HILL GATE, W.—On Sunday morning last Mr. Pursey read a paper on "Theosophy," and engaged the attention of a fair audience. In the evening Mr. W. E. Walker gave an address upon "The Spirit World. Where is it?" succeeded by some very interesting and accurate clairvoyance. Next Sunday—Morning, at 11, Mr. Pursey, "Spiritualism"; afternoon, at 3, Children's Progressive Lyceum; evening, at 7, Special Open Service "for investigators," Mr. Earl and others. Thursday, April 10th, a select concert and Cinderella dance (in aid of funds). The programme will include some talented artists. As there are only a limited number of tickets on sale, early application will be necessary. To commence 8 p.m. Dancing 9.30. Admission, concert and dance, 1s.; dance only, 9d. Tickets of the Secretary. On Sunday afternoon the Lyceum session was conducted by the secretary, with assistance. An invocation was given by Mrs. Wilkins' guides. Some good recitations were given of a very interesting nature. It was very encouraging to us to hear some pleasant remarks from a materialist visitor, who expressed an opinion that all the visitors had enjoyed the

afternoon's session—he had—and urged all to encourage these meetings. There was a very good attendance, both of visitors and scholars.—PERCY SMYTH, Hon. Sec., 68, Cornwall-road, Bayswater.

"A MODERN IDYLL."

PART I.

O lonely dreamer wandering far
Within the twilight-sombred wood,
The deep'ning shadows fall unseen,
Nor night-cold breaks thy reverie!
O fugitive from haunts of life,
From glare and glamour, wealth and whirl,
From things unreal, and false, and vile,
From all the unhuman works of man—
His care-constructed cells of soul—
Where lives thy thought, that thus thou'rt lost,
To all the darkness of the hour,
And coldly creeping mists of night?
O whither, whither are thy steps?
A lustre strange is in thine eyes,
Unwonted glow vermeils thy cheek,
And "Peace" encrowns a lustrous brow.

O maiden, maiden! radiant, fair,
In white arrayed, with flowing hair,
Some lofty purpose hurries fleet
Those flying, flying fairy feet!
'Twould seem as if some joy draws near
High-pulsed above all human fear,
Some ecstasy impels thy flight,
Some magnet draws thee this cold night.
The flashing eyes' expectant gaze
Ne'er helps to thread the forest's maze,
But peers through wood-bewildered space
As fascinate by unseen face!

Why breaks the moon to such raptured smile,
While the clouds, hurried softly away,
Leave a sky unflecked by the fleeciest dream,
And the forest glades glad in the light?
O, may be the angels have visited earth,
And the light wind that rustles the leaves
Of the lofty trees, and that aways the still grass
Is the sound of their joyous descent.
O tremulous air stirring softly about
Thou art, sure, what we mortals can hear
Of the rhythmic fall of the Heavenly feet
As they move to their work in the world.

FIRST ANGEL.—God hath said,
Let the Word be read
By Nature around
In a tumult of sound—
These two are one!

SECOND ANGEL.—God hath said,
Let the Word be read
By all men below,
And the seraphs that glow—
These two are one!

CHORUS.—Haste, mortals, haste!
For the Heav'nly light
O'er the human night
Grows radiant on your brows—
Ye two are one!

EVIL SPIRIT.—I weep, I weep for the shadows creep
Over my darkened soul,
And the joy I would spare, I cannot share
That comes with a mortal love.
I mourn, I mourn, as I stand on the bourn
Of all that is lovely and fair.

Full many a life have I wrecked in the strife
Of passions chaotic and bold,
But ev'ry success has gladdened me less
Since I fronted the purpose of God;
And almost a joy—though with fiendish alloy—
I feel in this purpose complete,
That my arts have failed, and the angels have hailed
Two souls into raptures of Life!
I pass from sight as a gloom and a blight
On the perfected Love of God.
The doom is out, and I wander about
A pitiful thing of despair.
Yet sometimes I dream that there floweth a stream
Of the mercy of God to me.

A great hush fell as he ceased, and th' angels
Had ceased. The trees were unmoved by a breath.
A stillness stole slowly o'er all. The world
Was a calm. A weight of expectancy
Hung in the air—unruffled, but pregnant
With song, with ecstasy waiting for voice!

THE high honour of the Grand Cross of the venerable Order of "Equitum Redemptoris" has been conferred upon Mr. Omerin, who already belongs to the Knighthood of Charles III. of Spain.