

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

I do not pursue the subject of vivisection. Being, I hope, a practical man, I see that it is one of those subjects which liberates emotion and paralyses argument. I smile when some correspondents, with more haste than reason, regard me as a defender of atrocities that are committed under cover of the Act which licenses these experiments in certain cases. I do not defend, I deplore them. I deplore all forms of cruelty and all trifling with life. I object to flogging criminals, except in very rare cases where no other means of appeal to their inner selves is found available. I object to capital punishment, as I have repeatedly said. I will go further and say that there are sports of the fine old English gentleman which seem to me positively brutal. I should like to have the opinion of the hare on coursing, and of the fox on hunting. The hare is good to eat, and is, therefore, preserved after being run to death. The fox is not good to eat. He is, therefore, after being hunted to death, "broken up" on the spot and torn to pieces. There is no excuse of any conceivable kind for such savagery. Men want exercise and excitement, women want them too. So they surround their hunt with a sort of halo and sally forth on an errand that they have not even the decent excuse for that it may advance the store of human knowledge, and do somebody some good.

I feel sure that if prescription did not sanction these things the public conscience would be shocked by them, for they have no shred of excuse to cover their naked brutality. "It is a fine day; let's go out and kill something." So the country gentleman takes his gun, and, not being very expert, maims his birds and allows them to get away and die miserably; or he courses his hare or kills his fox, and sits down to dinner with a good appetite, and perhaps writes a letter to his paper with a high-toned screech about vivisection. I have no sympathy with any such course. Let us have a little consistency. Let us have, if we are to have any discussion of such subjects, the same careful all-round view that we should desire our opponents to take of Spiritualism. We object, and rightly, to Spiritualism being judged by the records of a police-court or the tricks of a cheating impostor. We claim that there is a higher aspect of the question, and we ask for judicial fairness. Let us give it in return. I do not admit with Mr. Maitland that there is any necessary connection between "Sorcery in Science" and Spiritualism. The pamphlet came to me marked, "For special notice." I said it was not a fair account of what went on under the Act. I said that the cited cases were picked for effect, and naturally would be.

I should have done the same myself. That is all I said, and I repeat it with emphasis. Into the niceties of disputation, e.g., whether our knowledge has been advanced by the practice of vivisection, I am not competent to enter, a disability which I share with my critics. The preponderance of educated and expert opinion pronounces decisively. But I am prepared to question the right to inflict pain, even for a beneficent purpose, to do evil that good may come. It is against the method of argument that I have protested. That protest I renew, and there I stop.

Mr. E. Douglas Fawcett contributes to the *Thesophist* an article of much ability on Mr. Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, in which, by-the-way, a correspondent sniffed politics. For myself I see no politics in the matter, and, if I did, I would not run into a corner and hide my head. For the time has come when that which constitutes our beliefs will have its say in politics, in religion, in all that enters into the daily individual life and into the corporate life of the community. To fail to see this is to confess to a failure to grasp the true significance of Spiritualism. We have had it with us nearly half a century. We sat around its cradle and gaped at it in wonder. For many years we did nothing to try and understand what it meant. It was to each of us what we made of it, and most of us made very little of it. So long as our curiosity was satisfied we were content. Then some of us scented in these strange phenomena a purpose and a plan. We could see, we thought, a direct intention of the world of spirit to impinge on the world of matter. There was, we fancied, a religious end in view. The old faith was to be supported by new evidence: a scientific age was to receive the class of proof respecting man's future that it could most naturally seek and accept. And so we rushed to the conclusion that Spiritualism would be at once a science and a religion separate and distinct from the Churches and from the Science of the hour. We were wrong; and only the wilfully blind or the careless can fail to see it. There are religious bodies, survivals of man's successful attempts to adulterate God's truth, and these are being informed and permeated by this latest revelation. Science, the sum of human knowledge on the plane of matter, is being equally influenced by this new truth. Spiritualism is not building for itself a separate habitation. It is entering into all that man's intellect now occupies and casting its light upon his dwelling-places.

It is a day too late now to attempt to shut Spiritualism out of human interests whether social, political, or religious. I hope sincerely that it will never concern itself with the many fads that belong to all these subjects. I trust that party politics may be left severely alone, and that we may avoid that remarkable conclusion which politicians seem to cherish that all that their party does is good and all that others do is vile. Equally I trust that theology may not vex us with its strife of tongues. But to cut off Spiritualism from all concern with man's highest and best interests is ruinous and even absurd. On the lowest ground it is to

ignore one of the purposes for which what we call Spiritualism comes to us. For its aim is not merely to demonstrate the survival of the soul after death and the possibility of communion with those who have gone before. It has the further aim of making a man acquainted with the potencies of his own spirit. It shows him, as nothing else can, the unknown possibilities that lurk within him: and it proves to him that the life he now leads is but a poor and meagre portion of that wider and higher existence which is the birthright of his spirit. To this end Spiritualism concerns itself with the life of man in all its varied aspects and is not shut off from any which may be marked by opinion as outside of its concerns. It has been the fashion to accept the objective facts of Spiritualism without question and to attribute them to the action, motiveless or unexplained, of the departed spirits of humanity. More careful experiment and reasoning confirm the action of the departed and emphasise the survival of the soul after death; but they also throw a flood of light on the action of the incarnated spirit and vindicate for it a share in the production of the phenomena which have engaged our attention as Spiritualists.

It is in this aspect of the vast question, of which some students make so much and some observers so little, that I find for myself my sufficient consolation. I think I should soon tire of watching open-mouthed swallowing of what it pleases loose thinkers to call "facts." I feel sure that the so-called facts would sooner or later (probably sooner) disagree with them. We should have a demoralised digestion which would take in anything; or we should find a sickly stomach that refused wholesome food and craved for peppered delicacies. These facts are what people make of them; and it is only now that observers are showing any intelligent desire to interpret them. Viewed in this light the last few years have marked a tremendous advance on the preceding four decades. Men are reasoning as to these things, whereas before they only sat open-mouthed and were inclined to attribute all that they could not understand to the action of departed spirits. They are finding now that we are all of us "spirits" and that the action of the incarnated human spirit has to be reckoned with in interpreting the phenomena that have so surprised our age. It is a good sign. Spiritualists have been the most careful of observers; they are now becoming equally careful in interpreting what they observe. One day, and that day is not far off, the successors of Crookes, Varley, Wallace, Lodge, and the rest of the noble band of Science that can afford to look facts in the face, will wake up and take all the credit for what Spiritualists have done. Very well. We can afford to make them a present of anything they can make out of it. And we will try and prevent them from talking more than ordinary nonsense about what they know little or nothing of. They have the ear of the world now, and we shall be happy to use them, but they will have to realise that the work has been done, in the teeth of their opposition, by us who are not indebted to them for any nurture. We have thriven on cold breezes and we do not fancy the air of the hothouse.

BARKAS TESTIMONIAL FUND.

It is desired to recognise in a substantial manner the valuable service rendered by Alderman Barkas to the Newcastle Central Exchange Art Gallery and News Room. The following have formed themselves into a committee:—

The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Newcastle (Chairman), The Right Hon. the Earl of Ravensworth, the Sheriff of Newcastle, Sir B. C. Browne, Joseph Cowen, Hugh Taylor, Charles Mitchell, A. S. Stevenson, Robert Robson, John Taylor, Dr. Embleton, Dr. Philipson, F. R. Goddard, T. M. Conradi, A. D. Murray, James Annand, Joseph Craggs, John Moses, J. M. Winter; Aldermen Hedley, Stephenson, and Stephens; Councillors Morton, Sanderson, Sutton, Richardson, Winter, Lord, and Goolden; and J. J. Pace.

Subscriptions will be received by Mr. J. J. Pace, at the Town Hall, Newcastle-on-Tyne. Considerably more than £100 has already been subscribed.

"MARIE BASHKIRTSEFF."

A PSYCHICAL STUDY.

By "BERYL."

Another phenomenal book has been given to the world. To understand the divine audacity which bequeaths itself in the revelation of a beautiful naked human soul, with its wealth of aspiration, passion, egoism, and pent-up genius; its intuitive perception of God and truth; its innate innocence of heart in a world of veiled impurity; its impatience of vulgarity and mean or inharmonious surroundings; its just ideal of love, and hunger for its impossible satisfaction, is to understand a type of woman of no ordinary kind. A type of woman, despite her confessions—perhaps because of her confessions—of the noblest kind. "The homely nurse" of this lower world "fails"

To make her foster child
Forget the glories (she) hath known,
And that imperial palace whence (she) came.

It is this descent from another sphere to ours that is the key by which to open the secret of this girl's nature and comprehend its divine discontent. Imprisoned in a baser clay from which she could not escape; with treasures of heart and genius she found it impossible to satisfy; with

Obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things
Falling from us, vanishings,
Blank misgivings of a creature,
Moving about in worlds not realised,
High instincts before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised,
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day.

This explains her.

The daughter of Russian parents of noble birth, Marie Bashkirtseff's first experience of life is the fatal one of seeing her father and mother living apart owing to the infidelities of the former. To the precocious child, who begins this revelation at the age of twelve, the next experience is love. Let no one be astonished at this. If the doctrine of pre-existence or counterparts contains any truth, this awakening of love comes at first in a sense of loss; something we had which is gone from us, and without which we are for ever incomplete. So when Marie sees a noble duke of glorified presence riding in a chariot with four horses, he evidently comes to her as a "shadowy recollection" of something great and splendid she once had but is now without. This fills her with a sense of yearning and pain. "O God," she prays, "give me the Duke of H. I'll love him and make him happy. O God, ease my pain. I can't pray any more, but listen to my prayer! Thy grace is so infinite, Thy mercy so great, Thou hast done so much for me!" All this for a man she had never spoken to!

But this artless prayer stamps the sincerity of her mind; and more, it is a ray of intuition, disclosing that woman is ever ill at ease in some measure or another while absent from her true home in the one heart whom God has created for her; also, that there is no such thing as love apart from God. For Marie is not in love with the duke, as the duke; she is in love with him as love's ideal and her completeness. And the child's prayer for this is to God! In all her subsequent egoisms and worldlinesses, when the world over-laying her soul with its follies and fashions seeks to possess her better nature, there is no truer, purer touch, hinting the girl's immortal origin, than this opening confession and prayer, egoistic and ambitious as it may sound to ears unacquainted with the mystery of woman's nature, or the causes that underlie her apparent contradictions.

As she grows older she fancies herself in love with a certain Count A——, who is her next experience (she is educated by experiences). It is the ideal she is still pursuing which, as she unfolds, finds no satisfaction in him or any subsequent lover. For to her lofty nature worship is an essential towards the man she loves. He must be to her a tower of strength and intellect. She detects this when she says, after seeing Count A—— exhibit a feat of strength (*a la Ouida*), "I can still see his clenched hands gripping the knave's throat. You will, perhaps, laugh at what I am going to say, but I shall say it all the same. By such an act a man may win a woman's love at a stroke." No, Marie, I for one don't laugh, because I know that man must represent strength to a woman, as a woman must represent gentleness to a man, before love is born.

Eventually Marie gives up the contest with love. To one so gifted union with an inferior man would have been a veritable anti-chamber of hell. At eighteen she thus writes:—

I see nothing for me but painting. If I were to become a great painter it would be a divine compensation. I should be somebody. I might have been nothing, and should be happy in being nothing but the beloved of a man who would be my glory. . . . But now I must be somebody by my own effort.

Can we wonder at her ambition, her vanity, her egoism, gifted as she was with a superabundance of divine artistic force clamouring within her for creative expression. Her joy in her beauty is a child's natural hymn of praise to the author of its being for giving it a beautiful garment. What should we think of any daughter to whom a parent gave beautiful jewels were she to depreciate their value because she had become their possessor?

So with Marie's gifts of beauty and genius. She accepted them in a gracefully natural way as jewels she had been given not to hide but to wear; and she longed for opportunity to exhibit them, that the world might see and enjoy them. The girl all through her self-revelation is longing to give of herself out of her conscious affluence, and who shall say that we are not the richer at last for her legacy! This is the true artistic temperament. It must love, it must create, it must give, and limitation is its woe. The girl who felt powers within her worthy of a queendom pined as a bird in a cage under obscurity and neglect.

Let no one underrate this child of (Divine) Nature by ascribing her "untutored instincts" as her translator calls them to a religion "which is a curious compound of primitive idolatry and philosophical reasoning." Her instincts so far from being "untutored" were in advance of her creed, and her philosophies were inspirations. Her familiarity with God, which, as Mr. Gladstone says, disposed her to "treat the Almighty as she treated her grandfather *en egal*," was the familiarity of the "little child" at its mother's knee; a familiarity it would be well to emulate if we would "enter the Kingdom of Heaven." The perfect love and trust that see, in God, not a grandfather only, but a loving Father, which is nearer still, cast off that fear which is generated by the conception of God as a celestial autocrat enthroned in the unknowable, dispensing laws, organising punishments, needing litanies for mercy, and hedged about by ritualistic etiquette from all but formal and mediatory approaches which are a dead letter for the majority. Marie ran to God when she was happy or hurt, as a child to its mother, because her divinely tutored instinct taught her that an eternal Mother's heart included in the Father's beats at the core of all creation, and her children know her instinctively as the infant knows its mother's breast. Hence Marie's unconscious familiarity with the Almighty; although she would not have been able to formulate the reason in words any more than the infant can.

As she grows in years the "shades of the prison house begin to close around her." She doubts and analyses. Her rebellion against God at her sentence of death is the rebel-

lion of the child playing with its toys who is told that it is bedtime. What does it care for or know of the morrow? It is now it craves to "sit up" and play on. Marie did not know (how should she?) that she was only saying "good-night" in order to awake refreshed in a good Morning-land with artistic powers renewed and heart fully satisfied; the joys and mysteries of a future life being as much a sealed-book to youth as are the joys of happy bridals to the playing child.

Of one who could write of herself under a sense of life's corruptions, "I hate myself;" and again, in a moment of true introspection, "O visions . . . I rise higher and higher; I am capable of immense things," one recognises a "soul's immensity"; as she lets us see her rising on the "stepping stones of her dead self to higher things" by the oft contemptuous criticisms of the "What I am now" correcting the "What I was."

The exigencies of space prevent my saying more about this interesting creature. What I have said may possibly offer a new view of her to those who are disposed to read her story for themselves, and dismiss her, perhaps, with the Philistine exclamation, "How very improper!"

In early spring the fruit trees are rich with blossom, the fruit sets, it is full of promise. Taste the young fruit while it is yet young and it will be acrid in your mouth. But wait. Let the air and sun of heaven descend upon it and presently it will ripen into a mellow deliciousness. So with this bit of human fruit we have been considering. The beautiful flower of her childhood gave place to the crude fruit of youth, in which she lays bare all her faults and follies—such as they are—that served as experiences for her development. Her further ripening needed a more powerful sun than ours to bring it to perfection, so that when we read of her early death at the age of twenty-four, we feel that it was no tragedy, but the necessary climax to a brief existence in a world where she was never fully at home.

THE RELIGION OF THE FUTURE.

In the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of February last there appeared a most interesting article by Edouard Schuré on "An Excursion to the Grande-Chartreuse." The author, in describing the mountain called the "Grand-Som," which rises above the monastery, writes thus:—

The Chartreux have placed there a white marble cross, which, stretching out its arms over this summit of the Alps, brightened by the Eastern sun, and facing the west, appears to me the joyful symbol of an enlarged Christianity, the sign of that universal and eternal religion of the Spirit which opens boldly all the springs of knowledge, and cries out, "Light! more light still! light within and without! God is wherever there is light."

Natural, intellectual, and spiritual truth is one.

It can eclipse itself in the darkness of the soul, blinded by the fumes of matter; it comes out again radiant each time that the true conscience of mankind speaks; each time that the soul wakes up to its higher life and rises to its own sphere.

Is it not again a remarkable sign of the present day, this reversion of the European mind to the old doctrines of the East, as the venerable source of transcendent truths? All the great Orientalists have felt instinctively the inner unity of religious faiths.

And this primordial unity, is it not the promise of a possible synthesis, that science may become religious, and religions scientific?

And I said to myself, May the old and ever new truth of the spirit, conqueror of matter, rise again on the intellectual heights of our times! May it radiate its rosy light and beauty on younger generations! May it awaken that charity which originates from true charity! May it proclaim, above our dissensions, with a growing certainty, the faith of the immortal soul, conscious of itself, and of the spiritual unity of the human race!

A SUGGESTION.

The current number of the *Blijde Boodschap*, The Hague, propounds the following question: "How is unity to be obtained in the practice of Spiritist doctrine, considering the important differences of teaching that come to us through the spirits?" and proposes as a solution of the difficulty that in the midst of the confusion thus brought about we should hold, and bear in mind, the thought, "God rules." The author in support of his argument likens the present to the early days of Christianity. The founders of that religion started with the firm belief that their doctrines would be the germ from which a new world-religion would grow. In this they resembled the present Spiritual movement. Our workers, of no matter what phase, are firmly convinced that they are assisting in developing the babyhood of another world-religion, of a more advanced nature than any of those that have been hitherto evolved.

The next point of resemblance is found in the wide differences of doctrine that prevailed during the early centuries of Christendom. Jewish tradition, Greek philosophy, Buddhist missionaries and practices, Persian ideas, as well as the preaching of the Apostles, were sources whence teachings of the most divergent nature issued. Out of all these sources in process of time was the Christian religion framed as we now see it. It was a faith that was suited to the peoples among whom it was propagated; it was more or less elastic, so that many phases of it could exist side by side, and its adherents could choose whatever form seemed most suited to their own peculiar needs. This state of affairs continued for several centuries, until ultimately the Roman and Eastern Churches began to absorb or crush out all the Gnostic sects, and a new state of affairs arose. Through all "God ruled," and a religion resulted that was best calculated to serve the purposes of the nations among whom it was destined to exist.

In the present state of the modern Spiritual revivifying movement we have among us many phases, as they had. Theosophists of Indian origin; Re-incarnationists of Latin nations; Spiritualists of Saxon derivation; mystical writers of all races; Hermetic interpreters of ancient mystic writings; as well as the phases of thought that were warring one with another 1,700 years ago; all presenting for the consideration of their brethren that aspect of truth which appears to them to be alone reasonable. The resemblance, therefore, seems to be very close indeed; and the only way by which unity appears possible is by everybody bearing in mind the dictum "God rules," and forbearing to be intolerant to those who contemplate truth from a different point of view.

At a Spiritualistic meeting two months ago, in London, a speaker actually rose in his place and affirmed that a person who believed in Re-incarnation was not a Spiritualist. If gentlemen of that exclusive type are to be teachers of the new dispensation, one may easily fear that not much good will be derived from their efforts. If the gentleman who made that speech should read these lines, I hope he will remember that "God rules," and is the Judge; that all men are brothers and children of God, no matter how much their religious or philosophical views may differ; that the true test of a Spiritualist is spiritual-mindedness, not belief in certain doctrines, nor knowledge of certain facts; and that intolerance, exclusiveness, invective, and bitterness are symptoms of lack of spirituality.

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

THE LONDON HYPNOTIC SOCIETY.—The next meeting will be on Wednesday, July 2nd, at 8.15 p.m., in the Fine Art Gallery, 9, Conduit-street, Regent-street, when a paper will be read by Dr. Wyld on Clairvoyance, followed by some experiments by Herr Carl Hansen. Spiritualists, by sending a stamped and fully-addressed envelope to A. J. Carden, 129, Holland-road, Kensington, will receive a card of admission.

JOTTINGS.

The *Religio-Philosophical Journal* (Chicago) in its new dress is a distinct improvement. It is handy in shape (similar in form, but larger than "LIGHT"), well printed on good paper, and well-arranged. It is issued on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the *Journal's* birth, an occasion on which we tender to Colonel Bundy our hearty good wishes for the future and our felicitations on his work in the past.

"Topics of the Times," with which the first page is filled, is a series of short notes not unlike our own "Notes by the Way," only they cover a more extended area, not being confined as "M.A. (Oxon.'s)" are, to subjects definitely bearing on Spiritualism.

The declaration of principles and purposes which follows is an outspoken utterance. The *Journal*, its editor says, "has always been an independent, aggressive paper." It has regarded Spiritualism as having to do with both worlds. "Spiritualism is the philosophy of life." We call attention to this attitude, first to endorse it, and next to welcome the constructive work that is indicated for the future.

Dr. Heber Newton and Rev. M. J. Savage send cordial letters: and the purpose in view is briefly put thus:—

The primary purpose of the *Journal* is to promote psychics; its ultimate aim is to help men to a correct system of ethics, thereby bringing justice into complete away, and rendering happiness the normal condition of mortals; and, finally, to be one of the many evolutionary agents in forming a universal church, THE CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT, with some such simple statement of belief as this:

God is the Universal Father; Man is the universal brother; and the Spirit of Love Wisdom is the life of both. This life brings immortality to light; and through spirit ministration and intercourse man is assured of the continuity of personal existence beyond the grave.

We learn that Thomas Lake Harris is now "a grey-haired man, aged and infirm, apparently awaiting the final summons. His talk seems strange, his voice weird, and they tell us that his mind has long since lost its healthy tone." There have been signs of decadence for a long time. How changed is he from the author of those noble poems that remain in the literature of Spiritualism as some of its brightest ornaments. When he passes from this life, the "Brotherhood of the New Life" will probably collapse, and its property will revert to the State of California.

Mr. B. F. Underwood (of the *Index*) has joined the staff of the *Journal*, and will write for its editorial columns on such subjects as may be in harmony with his views and those of the editor.

Other contributors to this first number of a new series are Mr. Henry Kiddle, Mr. Emmette Coleman, Mr. Richard Hodgson, Mr. Warren Chase, and others well known. If the standard thus reached can be maintained, we have a very considerable and valuable addition to our Spiritualistic journals.

Mr. Hodgson is of opinion that the evidence in the case recorded by Mr. E. Dawson Rogers is weak; at least, he wants something much stronger. He lays down much law as to what will satisfy him, and leaves on our mind the impression that nothing would really suffice to exclude the preposterous hypothesis which he puts forward. Methods of his kind may secure a little perfect evidence which he will probably then proceed to pick apieces, but it will exclude most that is really valuable.

Mr. W. Emmette Coleman thinks that we are not doing enough in constructive work. He is, he confesses, iconoclastic first of all, but he wants to build up as well, only with careful discrimination. He desiderates among Spiritualists a life in accord with their beliefs. There we are wholly with him. Theoretical beliefs are dead if they bear no fruit in the life. We welcome Mr. Coleman on this line of thought. His perennial attacks on Theosophy were becoming a little wearisome.

Dr. B. W. Richardson, in the *Asclepiad*, expresses an opinion that "we are passing through a mental epidemic of hypnotism." These mental epidemics are, he thinks, much akin to those purely physical. "They recur in regular series, appear, disappear or nearly disappear, then reappear in full force, arrest the attention of the world and once more subside."

The truth of this prophecy will largely depend upon the intelligent attention that such men as Dr. Richardson give to facts

brought under their notice. Dr. W. B. Carpenter called Spiritualism an "epidemic delusion" and thought he had done for it. Instead of that he did for his own reputation. Dr. Richardson with loose talk about epidemics is in danger of following suit.

The Rev. M. J. Savage in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* :—

THE MYSTIC HOPE.

What is this mystic, wondrous hope in me,
That, when no star from out the darkness born
Gives promise of the coming of the morn;
When all life seems a pathless mystery
Through which tear-blinded eyes no way can see;
When illness comes, and life grows most forlorn,
Still dares to laugh the last dread threat to scorn,
And proudly cries, Death is not, shall not be?

I wonder at myself! Tell me, O Death,
If that thou rulest the earth; "if dust to dust"
Shall be the end of love and hope and strife,
From what rare land is blown this living breath
That shapes itself to whispers of strong trust
And tells the lie—if 'tis a lie—of life?

The *Journal* of the Society for Psychical Research (June) gives a very brief account of a remarkable paper by Professor Oliver Lodge, F.R.S., recording some experiments made by him at Liverpool with an American trance medium, Mrs. Piper. Mr. F. W. H. Myers invited her to this country in November last on the recommendation of Professor William James and Mr. Hodgson. She seems to have converted Professor Lodge. A full account will appear in the October *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research.

In the same number of the Society for Psychical Research *Journal* Professor Barrett gives a brief account of some experiments conducted by him with a trance medium—the wife of a country practitioner. She was put into a hypnotic trance by her husband holding her hand, and in that state conveyed information about illnesses of absent friends which Mr. Barrett is "quite sure he had never known." No knowledge was shown concerning the dead.

Body and Soul, to which we have briefly alluded in acknowledging the receipt of No. 2, is edited by Dr. Charles Williams, a qualified medical practitioner at Cardiff. He is the resident medical superintendent of the South Wales Institute of Massage, Medical Electricity, and Hypnotism. His journal is published monthly at Moira House, 1, Moira-terrace. Dr. Williams is also President of the Cardiff Psychological Society.

In the *Banner of Light* E. W. Capron, in the course of his reminiscences, states that W. Lloyd Garrison was one of the earliest investigators of the phenomena that occurred in the presence of the Fox sisters. In one of his anti-slavery tours he stopped at Rochester for the purpose of investigation. His candid mind placed him completely *en rapport* with the invisible friends and the directness and fulness of the answers made to his questions were very astonishing. He never varied from his belief in Spiritualism to the day of his death.

The *Inquirer* (June 14th) has an article on "The Charm of Occultism," in the course of which the writer betrays a singular inaptitude to grasp what Spiritualism broadly means. He sets forth the creed that Mrs. Britten has circulated and says that Unitarians "never found it difficult to arrive at similar conclusions without the assistance of any occult power." Perhaps so. But have Unitarians demonstrated survival of existence after physical death? Can they prove that death does not extinguish individuality? Can they translate faith into knowledge as the Spiritualist does? *Therein* is Spiritualism triumphant.

We are informed that the sole survivor of the original four who first introduced the Mattei specifics into England about twenty-five years ago is M. Leopold Surville, B.A., Paris. He is the holder of the certificate of Count Mattei, and learnt the system direct from him. He has a consulting practice at 37, Larkhall-rise, Clapham, S.W.

Lucifer opens with an article on "Black Magic in Science." It is an indictment of Hypnotism as practised to-day. It dwells on "the now scientifically recognised dangers of the science." The writer thinks that "amateur Hypnotists of Science dig with their own hands the graves of many a man and woman's intellect." "Hypnotic experiments lead to and virtually are Black Magic."

"Edison: From a Theosophic Standpoint" is an appreciative article on the great inventor of the age. Our correspondent, "Nizida," writes a very interesting article on a fruitful subject.

Mr. Tindall concludes his "Follies and Fallacies connected with Spiritualism," or rather he does not conclude his diatribe, for the Editors unkindly cut him short, leaving him "between two stools, to make the best he can of his uncomfortable position." We do not desire to add to it. The paper was uncalled for and, with no sort of wish to write unkindly, we are compelled to say that it is worthless and misleading. So much we must say in our public capacity. Beyond this protest against what we regard as misrepresentation we do not go.

The Editors of *Lucifer* state that they excised two-thirds of this article as being merely "a personal attack against the *Medium and Daybreak*, its Editor, and other Spiritualists." They very properly declined to allow their magazine to be made the vehicle for such personalities. There was no reason at all for Mr. Tindall to write his paper: there was still less reason to allow him to make personal attacks on people with whom he does not agree. We have had far too much of that already.

Lavater's letters are continued. The Editor thinks that the "Spirit writings," "as invariably in almost all such cases," are "far inferior to what the medium, if at all intellectual, might write himself." We do not quite know what is "invariable in almost all such cases," but we are very distinctly of opinion that we know many cases in which this invariable law is conspicuously absent.

The June *Theosophist* (Madras) opens with an article by E. D. Fawcett on "Looking Backwards" and Socialism. He draws attention very appositely to Ruskin's "broad and simple rules" in his *Stones of Venice*.

1. Never encourage the manufacture of any article not absolutely necessary, in the production of which invention has no share.
2. Never demand an exact finish for its own sake, but only for some practical or noble end.
3. Never encourage imitation or copying of any kind, except for the sake of preserving a record of great works.

Dr. Bowles Daly gives an account of the library at Adyar which is very interesting. It contains many Oriental works of value, and in the department of Buddhist literature is richer than any library in India. It is also well found in Sanskrit literature and ancient Indian philosophy.

Colonel Olcott makes a very temperate, but none the less effective, protest against a plagiarised version of his *Buddhist Catechism*. The case seems a bad one, though legal remedy is difficult.

The *Theosophist* also contains a notice of Mrs. Cotton's *Palmistry and Its Practical Uses*, which reproduces a good deal of our own notice of the book with due acknowledgment and some kindly words, for which we make our bow. The Editor has arranged for some papers from Mrs. Cotton in the *Theosophist*, and others from "the famous Brahman author and astrologer, Mr. N. Chidambaram Iyer."

The *New York World* (June 2nd) contains a long and sensational account of "the most extraordinary exposure of a Spiritualistic impostor [but it spells the word "imposter"] known since the introduction of the materialisation phase." This is a large order. But there seems to have been detection of fraud by *World* reporters. Mrs. Cadwell, of 244, Lexington-avenue, is the incriminated medium.

The *Progressive Thinker* (Chicago) has an instructive article by the guides of Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond on "Mediumship."

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CRIMINALS.

The Paris correspondent of the *Lancet*, writing this week, states that the French authorities have in contemplation the creation of a superior council of medical jurisprudence at the Ministry of Justice, to be composed of medical men and magistrates, who will be required to furnish their advice on the subjects of the responsibility of criminals in connection with the questions of suggestion and hypnotism and of heredity. In fine, it will be a kind of Commission of psychology and criminal anthropology placed at the disposal of the courts of justice.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

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

Light:

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

SATURDAY, JUNE 28th, 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.

SPIRITUALISM.

Spiritualism, which may be interpreted as the intervention of intelligences unembodied in the affairs of earth, is so far from being an affair of the last forty or fifty years that it is found in the history of all nations and has existed in the most remote ages. The most unchanged nations, China, Japan, and India, all have their beliefs in what Spiritualists hold as matter of knowledge. And if we turn to our own sacred records and the times succeeding the life of Christ we have the angels who came to Abraham and Jacob, to Moses and Elijah, the spirits who spoke to Daniel and Ezekiel, the varied portents that attended the life of Jesus Christ, the "signs following" the Apostles, and subsequently the miracles of the post-Apostolic age. No epoch has been left without witness, unless we must except the days preceding the remarkable outburst of Modern Spiritualism, when darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people, by reason of the fact that persistent efforts had crushed out the spirit in man's faith and had made of him a mere physical machine. Men killed off the witches, and wondered that there were no psychical phenomena for them any more. Men nowadays are equally foolish. They think that the fugitive phenomena which depend even more on an uncontrollable and unknown operator than they do on an erratic and highly sensitive medium, who may be "jangled out of tune" by the slightest cause—men think that they have only to subscribe a few shillings and reach this source of information, or at any rate to command the phenomena that minister to their curiosity.

Nothing more foolish was ever formulated. As a matter of fact we cannot command these phenomena at will: and those who pretend so to do night by night are mere pretenders in most cases. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that a medium may be so developed as to be a vehicle for spirits available at any moment. But the case is rare, and the conditions of a promiscuous circle are not the best. When we are wise enough to take care of our mediums, to seclude them from contamination, and to regulate our circles, we shall achieve results which we do not reach now.

It is of vital importance that care should be exercised in this matter. Perhaps it is of still greater importance that the study of the phenomena attributable to mediumship should be temperate, careful, prolonged, and free from prejudice. There is quite as much prejudice amongst Spiritualists as there is among their critics. The latter usually know nothing about the subject on which they so dogmatically speak. The former know too much, or they think they do, and are inclined to pose as more or less omniscient. It is a most useful piece of mental discipline to devise our opinions, to tabulate our facts, and to really find out what we do actually know.

It will be found to be much less than some early Spiritualists have laid claim to. It will also be found to be more

than anyone outside of our ranks can pretend to. We know what many have believed, and we can prove what is the most tremendous factor in the hope of humanity. But we cannot prove what some Spiritualists loosely talk of; what, in the early days of that which we call Modern Spiritualism, they laid down *ex cathedra* as dogmas of the faith.

It is well to be modest and accurate in these matters; the two qualities usually go together. The most amusing criticism comes to us sometimes from people who generally forget to sign their names, and who obviously have not thought out what they write about. Aspecimen may illustrate our remarks. "H. M. B." is what Dickens would have called "rather a h'arbitrary gent." He is "much surprized" (*sic*) at a paragraph in our paper as to the after life. He opines that we "distinctly state that we have no proof as to future existence." His excuse is that we had replied to a correspondent, who wished for some reliable account of life in the world to come, that we had none to furnish. Accounts, we said, were very various, and, in the nature of things, were not verifiable. Whereupon "H. M. B." comes down on us, "You will please explain. Your attention will oblige." Well, it is not much use explaining to "H. M. B.," and *his* attention to what he failed to understand would also "oblige."

The fact is that we cannot have the secrets of the world to come translated into terms of our present consciousness. All the talk about the Summerland is loose and allegorical, where it can be interpreted at all. The change that death makes must necessarily be of a nature that we cannot now comprehend. The individuality will persist—that we know—but how it will be conditioned we cannot tell. In some cases we can prove that the interests once dominant in earth-life are not at once lost sight of. In many cases we know that love—so powerful a factor and motor in our life here—survives the tomb and vindicates its immortality. Death does not kill the affections, and therein is, as we always consider, the best evidence we have of man's immortality. The husk may drop off, the highest principle survives. The less we claim for Spiritualism the more we prove.

What do we prove? This: Man survives physical death. He retains his memory of his life on earth and can demonstrate that fact. We have our earnest of the future in our communion with those who have gone before. We have our guidance, if we will follow it, on lines of sane reason from their teaching. Is not that something to have in our grasp?

SPIRITUALISM AND ANGLICAN ORTHODOXY.

The first of Dr. Maurice Davies's special services and address came off at the Hanover Rooms, 7, Argyll-street, Regent-street, last Sunday, and was well attended. The service was an adaptation of the old "Missa Sicca," which, Dr. Davies explained, dated back as far as the thirteenth century, before our division into Catholics and Protestants. The lesson was taken from *The Perfect Way*; and the address was entitled "Our Misnamed Dead," being based on the passage in Tennyson's "In Memoriam":—

But trust that those we call the dead,
Are breathers of an ampler day
For ever nobler ends.

Dr. Davies pointed out how the new revelation supplemented the teachings of Scripture and the creeds without militating against a single text of the former or doing away with a solitary clause of the latter. The subject for next Sunday is "The Enfranchised Spirit," founded on another passage in Lord Tennyson's poem:—

Dare I say,
No spirit ever broke the band
That stays him from the native land,
Where first he walked when clasped in clay?

COINCIDENCES.

No. II.

Pursuing the subject of coincidences, to use a non-committal term, we desire *in limine* to invoke the aid of our readers in recording similar cases within their own experience. It is only by securing a large number of records that we can justify the presumption which we confess to entertaining of more than mere chance coincidence. We believe that such occurrences happen in the lives of most men. So far as we know, no organised attempt has been made to tabulate and analyse them: if an exception must be made, it is in favour of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* (Chicago, U.S.A.), which published a number of cases some time since. On these we shall venture to draw as illustrations of fresh cases which we shall print. There have also appeared in *Notes and Queries* some cases to which we shall refer. But broadly the question that occurs at once to a mind accustomed to deal with similar problems has never been answered on adequate grounds. "Are these occurrences the result of mere chance, or are they governed by a law which we can discover?" No evidence bearing on this question is too trivial to be recorded: and we appeal to our readers to help us by brief and precise records, without unnecessary comment, of incidents within their own knowledge or reading. The object we have in view is not to establish any pre-conceived theory, but to accumulate authentic facts.

The following records come to us from our correspondent "C. C. M.":—

[July 2nd, 1887.]—This morning Mrs. P. called on me here. In the course of conversation I wished to tell her the name of the author of an article signed "Pilgrim" in the American magazine, *The Path*. He was a gentleman very well known to me, at whose house I had dined, &c., though I had not seen or heard from him for several months. But I could not recall his name, and was vainly endeavouring to do so during the remainder of the lady's visit. On returning to my rooms in the evening I found his card, he having called this afternoon when I was out, and within a few hours of Mrs. P.'s visit.

[July 4th, 1887.]—In a letter I was writing to-day, I referred to Mr. Selater-Booth, the new peer, taking the title of Basing (a place where I once lived), and said I should think the Marquis of Winchester—descendant of the Marquis whose defence of his castle of Basing against the Parliamentary army is a famous episode of the Civil War—would be rather disgusted. An hour or two later I read in the evening paper the death of the Marquis of Winchester, of whose illness I had no knowledge.

[June 10th, 1890.]—I was walking along Victoria-street to-day, and a certain association of ideas caused me to think of a lady with whom, and with whose family, I had formerly been well acquainted in the country. I have not seen her for many years now, nor any of that family, nor had she been at all recently in my thoughts. My recollection was almost entirely of her as a girl, some twenty to five-and-twenty years ago. Just as I was thus thinking of her I happened to raise my eyes, and to my astonishment, just coming towards me on the pavement, with another lady, was a young lady of exactly the face and appearance of her whom I was at that moment remembering, and of about her age at the remote time to which my memory had reverted. I half stopped, not immediately realising the impossibility of its being the same person. They passed me, of course, without any recognition, and I stood for a minute staring after them. I am able to say positively that there could be no near relationship between the replica—whoever she was—and the original, though perhaps the coincidence of the meeting at a moment when my thoughts were so occupied would be equally remarkable were the person I met a daughter or very much younger sister of the lady I knew. That, however, could not have been so.

WHIST COINCIDENCES.

[May 28th, 1890.]—(1) My left hand opponent having made the cards for me to deal with next time, I observed that the Queen of Hearts was the bottom card (so that it could not be cut), and I re-shuffled, saying, jestingly, that I would not be

deprived of my chance of turning her up. When my deal came, I did turn up that card.

(2) As I was making the cards, my partner being about to deal with the other pack, I dropped from the pack I was shuffling the Ace of Hearts. I had an immediate impression that this would be the card turned up by my partner. Directly afterwards, my partner lifting the pack when cut to him for the purpose of dealing, I saw the bottom card, and it was the Ace of Hearts, which he turned up immediately.

[December 16th, 1886.]—This evening, dining at the Club with S— and I—, something in the conversation (about the London Library) made me remember an old member of the club, whom I had not seen for a long time, which surprised me, as he had been a daily *habitué* of it. I asked S— and I— if they knew what had become of Mr. B—. Neither had seen him lately, and were, like myself, surprised at his absence. On the waiter coming with my dinner bill, I asked him if he knew if Mr. B— had been at the club lately. "He has just come in to dinner, sir," was the reply, "he has not been here for some months before this evening." I had not thought of him before this, and the coincidence is not to be attributed to any "telepathic" influence on my mind, as the suggestion to ask about him clearly arose from an ordinary association of ideas.

The following letter is addressed to "C. C. M.," who has kindly placed it at our disposal:—

Please verify the following standing coincidence. *A priori*, it would be the most unlikely thing in the world to happen. But if you will turn to the *Cambridge Calendar* for 1844 you will see the thing for yourself.

I dare say you know the old rule of both Triposes—that the class lists are in order of merit; but when two or more names are bracketed as equal they stand in alphabetical order, and *Æq.* (i.e., *Æquales*) is appended to the bracket.

Now it is a fact (which you can verify) that taking both the Triposes which were in existence in 1844, there are but two cases of brackets, in which the names in each begin with K and W. These are both in the Classical Tripos, and in the years 1825 and 1844, and what is so remarkable is, that in both brackets, the W stands before the K, while in every other case in either Tripos the alphabetical order is uniformly observed.

Looking at the *Cambridge Calendar* of 1844 you will see:—

Classical Tripos, 1825.

Second Class.

Williamson } *Æq.*
Kempthorne }

Classical Tripos, 1844.

First Class,

Wratislaw } *Æq.*
Keary }

In the *Cambridge Calendar* of 1845, the latter misplacing was corrected—and so the names have remained ever since:—

Keary } *Æq.*
Wratislaw }

But the former case was uncorrected in the *Cambridge Calendar* of 1884. I have taken care the transposition shall be made in this year's *Calendar*.

Valentines, Ilford.

C. M. INGLEBY.

November 13th, 1885.

P.S.—The *Times* of Wednesday last called attention to a coincidence—the jury in both the Stead trials retired to consider their verdict at twenty minutes to four!

This is also addressed to "C. C. M.," and is curious:—

What we were talking of occurred a long time ago, in 1860, and except the date the text is from memory only. I was practising near Gundayeir, on the Murrumbidge, N. S. Wales. I was called to the residence of a squatter to attend Mr. W., a stranger on his way to Sydney, but a connection of my friend the squatter. Mr. and Mrs. W. had stopped en route, he being seized with violent hæmoptysis, or bleeding from the lungs, September 26th. It was a case of life and death. He stayed till March 21st, 1861, the bleeding recurring when he seemed getting better.

Mr. W. was a well-to-do squatter, having succeeded in life. Two brothers of his had also come out to the colony. They had descended in the social scale, and at the time were simply

teamsters—bullock drivers. At that time goods usually were conveyed by bullock teams.

A few days after I was called to Mr. W., and as he was improving, news came from another district that one of his brothers whilst driving his team had died suddenly, throwing up a large quantity of blood. They did not tell Mr. W. till they had consulted me, fearing any excitement in his then state.

By March Mr. W. had so far regained strength that they ventured to proceed by easy journeys to Sydney. On the road there was a difficult mountain pass. Just at this pass Mr. and Mrs. W. rested a day, and that day Mr. W.'s other brother was on the ascent from Sydney with his team, and then and there he dropped down dead, throwing up a large quantity of blood.

The brothers were not twins, or of same age, though the three so nearly died of the same thing within a few months of each other. My patient must have died but for the advantages his money gave him.

About a year afterwards, I was dining at a house in Sydney, and sat next a lady, who talked about Mr. W., the squatter, who had nearly died from loss of blood, about October, 1860, this being about the date my patient was taken ill. I said I had attended him. She said: "Not that Mr. W. I know him, too; another of the same name who also had a similar attack at the same time, but is no relation." C. INGLIS.

The following letter, slightly abbreviated, is clipped from the *Phrenological Magazine* :—

A COINCIDENCE. (?)

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Phrenological Magazine*.

DEAR SIR,—This morning, at a little before four o'clock, I awoke as the outcome of great mental distress and grief through which I had just passed in a dream, my body trembling and in a cold perspiration. I had been walking with my little boy, aged 5½ years and some friends; a heavy rain overtaking us, we stood up for shelter, and, venturing forth into a maze of streets, I missed my two friends, who, threading among the people, had turned into a side street without my notice. Looking for them, my boy slipped from me, and was lost in the crowd. I became bewildered by the strange labyrinth of streets and turnings; and, quickly taking one of them which gave an elevated position, I looked down on the many windings, but could nowhere see my boy. It was to me an unknown locality; and running down among the people, I was soon sobbing aloud in my distress and calling out the name of the child, when I awoke. With wakefulness came a sense of relief and thankfulness. Gladly realising that the whole was only a dream and still scarcely awake, I was startled by a cry of terror and pain from an adjoining bedroom, such a cry as could not be left unheeded. It came from the same child, and pierced me with a distinct sense of pain. I was immediately by his side. My voice calmed him. "I thought I was lost," was all he could say; and doubtless he was soon composed and asleep again. To me, the coincidence was too remarkable and without parallel in my own experience. Later on, at breakfast, the child gave further his dream, that he had been out with me and was lost. I am only familiar with such things in my reading. . . . I am not of the spiritual type, with only a thin parchment separation between this life of realities and the great beyond; of those who, privileged to live in close touch with the future, are the subjects of premonition and warnings. . . . What is the underlying cause of the coincidence? Which of the two minds influenced the other, if either?

Clapham Common, April 20th, 1890.

G. Cox.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

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

Modern Spiritualism. By CHARLES WILLIAM DYMOND, F.S.A. (J. Burns.) Price Twopence. [A good and concise exposition of the subject treated. There are added some notes on conditions of the spirit-circle which are useful and good, and a list of some books which an inquirer may read with advantage.]

Hints to Inquirers into Spiritualism. By J. J. MORSE. Price Twopence. (The Progressive Literature Agency, 16, Stanley-street, Fairfield, Liverpool.) [A small handbook of value. It guides the inquirer through the miscellaneous literature of the subject, pilots him through the difficulties that beset personal investigation, and does what can be done to put him in the right track.]

In polemical literature the lion couchant is always a more formidable beast than the lion rampant.—SIR HENRY TAYLOR.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Circle of Eternity.

SIR,—It is so far from my desire to cross pens with the learned pundits who hurl heavy word missiles at each other in your pages, not always to harmonious conclusions, that it is with some diffidence I offer the word "circle" as explanatory of pre- and continued existence. Time being only a point touched by us in the circle of eternity. There must be some occult meaning in the repetition of the spherical form that meets the eye everywhere—in sun, moon, stars, and earth, until at last it has wrought itself into our language as the symbol of perfection—as when we speak of our life being "rounded." If our psychic germs proceed from "God Who is our home," pre-time existence seems as conclusive as futurity. The question only remains as to the nature of the form of our consciousness in the eternal circle. I offer this as a hint only. I don't pretend to explain or assert. The word "circle" was inwardly suggested to me as I was reading Dr. Wallace's letter. I have too often found the value of these suggestions to disregard them, so I hand this on; others may make something of it.

To "F. O." I would reply that it has been explained to me that previsions arise from our being permitted to catch the echo of conversations concerning us carried on between our attendant angels just as we are emerging from sleep. With regard to the burglary incident, I am reminded of what Mark Twain once wrote somewhere—that when he thought he had discovered something wonderful he was mortified to find everybody was finding it out at the same time! Telegraphy is evidently at work on thought as well as on wire! BERYL.

Mind and Matter.

SIR,—I should like to say a word on the somewhat suggestive, but not altogether conclusive, arguments of Mr. George Harpur in his letter to "LIGHT" of June 14th. I shall confine myself merely to one point in his letter. He says: "The fact that mind has not yet overcome matter and force proves one of two things, viz., either that it never can overcome them, or that the struggle to do so began in time." Now is that statement correct? It appears to me not to be so. The first alternative I grant, but the other by no means follows.

Postulate matter as the plastic principle and mind as the formative principle, and what have you? You have the formative principle acting on the plastic, conditioned by the necessity imposed upon it by the plastic, namely, the resistance of inertia with which the plastic opposes the force of the formative.

Now I maintain there never was a beginning to this struggle, and, moreover, because both are infinite, i.e., matter illimitable in extent and duration, and mind also in these and in its will force, except as far as it is limited by the necessity imposed upon it by matter, there never will be an end to the struggle.

However, there will be an end within any limited area you wish to circumscribe. Take our solar system, for instance. It seems to me there will be a time when the physical form of matter in our solar system will be converted into the spiritual form of matter, i.e., from being a gross and inapt substance for the manifestation of mind it will grow to be an ethereal and spiritual substance. Mind as the struggle goes on is making matter more susceptible to its influence. Souls and their spirit-surroundings are simply such sublimation from the gross and physical forms of matter to the spiritual, and in their turn to be still more sublimated *ad infinitum*. With this difference, however, that the change in a soul, because of its closer affinity with mind, can be carried on without any such disintegration of its particles as we call death on the physical plane. But when the solar system will have been thus sublimated, and whatever remaining dross which for a time defies sublimation will have been attracted into some mighty furnace to be resmelted again, why, even then and at whatever future date, other systems will only be in their infancy. Thus from no beginning to no ending worlds are being gathered from the primordial matter, or chaos, and by the Will-force of the Eternal Mind they are gradually being evolved into order. Thus it seems to me the most reasonable thing to conceive that there never was a beginning to the evolutionary process of making the plastic principle a manifestation of the formative mind. Illimitable indeed are the worlds already called into order out of chaos and more or less sublimated through the endless struggle of the past, and on the other hand equally illimitable is the chaos outside waiting to undergo a similar process, and simply because of its illimitability there never was

a beginning to the process and there never will be an end. The idea that there must be a beginning to this sublime evolution is a fallacy that arises from the fact that such a stupendous conception is all but unthinkable to our very limited minds. But as soon as you postulate a beginning, what have you? An Infinite Mind existing for infinite duration doing nothing—an Infinite Mind without a thought—a barren sterility indeed. But one fair morning, according to Mr. Harpur and his school, after spending an eternity in a dreamless sleep, the Infinite Mind begins to think and create. I have always been unable to understand how anyone can stipulate a beginning to the creative or formative activity of an Infinite Eternal Being.

To say nothing of other objections, this stipulation at once imposes a limit on the Infinite, an idea which the writers in question, at any rate, cannot tolerate. I should like to consider Mr. Harpur's other question, but possibly you will kindly allow me to do that next time.

17, Kelvenhaugh-street, Glasgow.

OPTIMIST.

The Mystical Interpretation of the Bible.

SIR,—In answer to Mr. Maitland's question permit me to say that I do not deny an esoteric meaning in the Bible, but I regard the exoteric—i.e., exterior or public—meaning as the more important because it reaches the majority, who, like myself, lack any intuitive certainty as to what the cryptical signification really is.

Spiritualism and all religions seem to me to occupy necessarily a borderland where fact and fiction—objectivity and subjectivity—meet, and I would have the "perceptions of the soul" tested in the same manner as those of the senses—by comparing them with the experience of others. By dint of abstract thinking it may be possible to arrive at the everlasting principles of Being; an exact theology; a complete cosmogony; but I doubt if such knowledge has been specially concealed in our sacred Scriptures. "Not specially concealed," it may be said, "but an open secret." Why then should mysticism seek confirmation *specially* from the Bible, for all Nature and every book contain abundant similar analogies? The extent and character of their inspiration is a matter of controversy among Spiritualists no less than among Biblical critics, but if the Bible is to be discredited as history, as science, as doctrine, then to be consistent we must distrust its occultism—which I take to be the last refuge of the apologist.

In what I have said I mean no disrespect to Mr. Maitland, whose works I greatly admire, and I am only concerned to know *what ground* there is for believing that doctrines which he now promulgates openly could not have been as openly given by the sacred writers, if they had wished to impart them. LIBRA.

An Acknowledgment of Timely Help.

SIR,—In answer to the appeal in your valuable paper on behalf of Mrs. Sharington, the following amounts have been received:—£10, Anonymous; £5, Anonymous; £1 ls., Mrs. M.; £1, R.; £1, H.; £1, P.; £3, P. O. and A.; promise of 4s. per week from B. A.

To the kind donors for their generous help, and to yourself for your great courtesy in this matter, Mrs. Sharington and myself beg to express herewith our sincere thanks.

I only wish that all the friends could have seen the look of joy and relief that lit up the usually sad face of Mrs. Sharington, when I brought her this good news, I am sure they would have felt amply rewarded for their kindness towards this poor helpless woman.

PAUL PREYSS.

An Electrical Experiment.

SIR,—Perhaps the following experiment may interest some of your many readers.

It was discovered by myself a few evenings since, when happening to comb my hair in the dark I was surprised to observe several large sparks pass between the comb, an ordinary black vulcanite one, and my hand.

I found that by passing the comb through the hair once or twice, and then drawing the knuckle along the teeth of the comb, a succession of brilliant sparks resulted, the same effect in a slightly less degree being obtainable by touching any part of the body.

I have since mentioned the fact to several medical friends, all of whom were somewhat incredulous, but who, on putting the matter to the test, were able to reproduce the phenomenon at pleasure.

64, Berwick-street, W.

P. HEATHCOTE-SNAPE.

Individuality and Pre-existence.

SIR,—In view of the point at issue between yourself and Mr. A. R. Wallace, on the one hand, and Mr. Paice, on the other, I should like to recall attention to a consideration I urged in "LIGHT" of August 17th of last year, upon the same subject, as it has been quite ignored, and yet seems to me to deserve an answer. It is, that upon those who believe in a "soul," as distinct and separable from the body, rests the *onus* of proving origination with the body, and not upon those who uphold the doctrine which Lessing described as "the oldest, and one which the human understanding, before sophistication had distracted and weakened it, immediately adopted." For every logical Spiritualist, I submit that the *a priori* presumption must be decidedly against origination of the human soul or individuality at birth, because directly we recognise the soul, or principle of conscious individuality (however else we choose to name it), as distinct and separable from the physical body, we have to show cause why an association which does not imply dependence of the psychical upon the physical, nevertheless does imply origination of the former in or by the latter. The reason why the presumption has been reversed is perfectly simple and obvious. It is the old and almost universal mistake of confounding manifestation with existence, and condition with cause. The individual consciousness is first manifested to us at birth; we see its subsequent manifestations as growth *pari passu* with organic development, and its mature expression as consequent on physical maturity. It requires an unusual effort of imagination to conceive the lisping infant, just learning to name the commonest objects, as masking an individuality itself the moulding principle of the organism which is to relate it to this earthly stage of thought and action, and which it informs as the operation proceeds. What we see is for a long time predominantly physical, or related to the physical life, and undoubtedly as it seems to me, if we make the psyche totally identical with the earthly personal consciousness, we should postpone the moment of its independent essentiality, and therefore the power of surviving physical death, to a period of marked differentiation from mere human animality. But if defect of manifestation is no proof of defect of existence, I am at a loss to understand why the beginning of manifestation should be assumed to be the beginning of existence.

For Spiritualists there is no other reason, except the crude and easily answered one (first advanced by Tertullian) of want of memory of a former existence, for assuming psychical origination at birth, than just the unavoidable dependence of mental powers and character for manifestation, upon familiarity with the material and experience which those powers have to use, and on which that character has to react—a familiarity only to be obtained in time and by organic facility. And if anyone will ask himself honestly the question, *why* he believes in the origination of psychical individuality at physical birth, he cannot but answer that it is just because of certain physical conditions of manifestation, and yet he must see upon the least reflection that those conditions, that early imperfection and gradual growth of manifestation, must be precisely the same on the supposition that behind them is a mature spiritual potentiality struggling into expression in this world, and building up its organism for such expression, as on the supposition that "the soul" is a product of parental organisation. I do not exaggerate the importance of laying the *onus probandi* on the right shoulders. The doctrine of pre-existence has too long been prejudiced by an illegitimate demand for extrinsic proof, as if it were a non-natural or extravagant conception. Its great offence really is that to modern Western Spiritualists it is still a novelty. As long as we accepted human immortality merely upon the authority of supposed "revelation," it was natural that the testimony of mere *appearance* as to psychical origin should remain unquestioned, though a similar appearance as to our end was contradicted by the doctrine. Spiritualists believe that they have now independent proof of the fallacy of the appearance at one end of the earthly life; is it not rather strange, logically, that they cannot reverse a presumption due only to appearance at the other end? And is it not still more strange, that having, as they believe, positive evidence of materialisation by the plastic power of already existent and independent spirit, they should be unable to recognise in the phenomenon of birth just a normal and regular case of such materialisation?

Thus much as to the mere *a priori* presumption applicable to the inquiry when we enter upon it. I claim that we who uphold the doctrine of pre-existence have shifted the burden of proof

upon you who maintain the origination of the soul—the surviving principle—at birth. The meaning of this is that you are not entitled to ask us for positive evidence of pre-existence till you have adduced positive evidence to the contrary. You are the plaintiff, we are the defendants in the argument. It is you—so far as you are Spiritualists—who are traversing the apparent presumption afforded by facts which you admit—nay, claim—to be positively proved. And you have formidable authority against you. Authority, it is true, must not decide for us; but having regard to the contemptuous language sometimes used in opposition to the doctrines of Pre-existence and Re-incarnation, it may not be irrelevant again to remind disputants of the statement of the profound scholar, and student of this subject, Dr. Henry More, that every philosopher who, independently of revelation, had accepted the immortality of the soul, had admitted also its pre-existence. Of this opinion also was More's distinguished contemporary, Glanville, who has argued the question in an elaborate treatise. Of the Fathers, one of the greatest, Origen, was with us. You, on the other hand, may console yourselves with the authority of the Fifth General Council (Constantinople, 553), which anathematised our opinion.

One word now as to the specious, if not powerful, argument of Mr. Wallace, that psychical growth or development implies a psychical beginning, and that we may just as logically place that beginning at its apparent point—physical birth—as at some far-removed period prior to it. Mr. Wallace was contending—as you, sir, contend—against the abstract proposition that whatever has a beginning in time is in time perishable. But in applying this principle we must remember that when we speak of anything beginning and ending in time, by these expressions we can only intend changes of modality. To the metaphysical Spiritualist the question of temporal origin cannot concern essentiality, and belongs only to mode and manifestation. The transcendent identity is to be conceived, I submit, as taking up and transmuting its successive phenomenal modes of consciousness, and its growth, progress, or development is not to be conceived *in esse*, but only as a realisation in the experience which belongs to time. That a mode of consciousness originates at birth is unquestionable—if we understand that all “origination” is only relative to the phenomenal order, and particular plane in that order—and every mode, *as such*, is also perishable in the same sense in which it originates. It is only the *objective aspect* of the soul of which evolution postulates origination. Now I can quite suppose either Mr. Wallace or you replying:—“Your meaning is very obscure, but adopting your obscure language, the argument against you is equally valid, for what you call the objective aspect of the soul—which seems to be equivalent to its consciousness—may just as well originate in this physical life as in any previous one.” The answer is that this would be an assumption opposed to the new conception of evolution necessitated by the hypothetical admission of pre-existing spirit, even as mere potentiality. For then evolution is merely a maimed and one-sided doctrine, if it does not take into account the correlative realisation of spirit at every point of the material advance, not only from species to species, but by variation within the specific difference. The transcendental doctrine, to which that of individual pre-existence belongs, attributes to the urgency of spirit seeking adequate expression all the subjective laws, the furthering variations, and the phenomena of physical evolution. If you admit the transcendental for a single moment, at that moment you admit pre-existent spiritual forms and forces, and you introduce spiritual agency into—nay, as the very motive power of—your physical process. And when you have made that admission and introduced that agency, you have made it simply impossible to suggest that individual humanity starts at one and the same time upon its lowest and upon its highest levels of earthly attainment. Such an assumption would then be too evidently seen to be utterly perverse and at variance with the physical analogy and relation.

Mr. Wallace, at the close of his letter, says of the theory of Re-incarnation, that it “is unsupported by any facts or analogies either in the material or the spiritual universe.” Well, I confess I do not know much about the spiritual universe; but I do know that the striking analogies to this doctrine which I find in the material universe were just what first directed my own attention to the doctrine in question. But those analogies can only be appreciated by such as are conversant with the great truth—itsself abundantly illustrated by physical analogies—that whatever in nature happens on the small scale happens also on the large one, and *vice versa*. Then we shall understand the

analogical presumption that the daily life of man, the alternations of his waking and sleeping states, are representative of the larger cycles of his being, alternate objective and subjective conditions; in other words, periods of incarnate activity, and spiritual rest and renovation. Another analogy I find in the tree, or rather in the least twig of the least bough of the tree, which sheds and renews its leaf—understand the objective life—season after season, and draws its nutriment therefrom; the case which perhaps best of all illustrates the distinction so puzzling to many, between the earthly personality—the leaf—and the successively larger individualities answering to twig, bough, branch, trunk, &c., which it subserves, perishing when it has performed this function. Not to understand this distinction is fatally to misconceive the Re-incarnation doctrine as held by its best exponents. (I am indebted to Madame Blavatsky, many years ago, for making me try to think out this distinction for myself.) But to see analogies one must have an eye for them, and they are not perceptible to anyone who has conceived a dislike to the lesson which they might otherwise teach. The usual objection, however, is that analogies are to be mistrusted. I believe, on the contrary, that *real* analogy is the clue to discovery, and the principle of all generalisation; and that the objection is only a misstatement of the obvious necessity of severely examining our supposed analogies to see whether they are really such, or are only superficial and casual resemblances. But for this purpose we must start with some guiding principle, such as I conceive to be the law, or generalisation, that the processes and ideas of nature are similar in very different orders, and on very different scales of her phenomena.

But I have already trespassed too much upon your space.

June 15th, 1890.

C. C. M.

Pre-existence.

SIR,—With regard to the question whether pre-existence is a necessary corollary of future existence, and in view of Mr. Alfred R. Wallace's letter (“LIGHT,” June 14th), I beg to submit a few remarks. First of all, the words *infinite*, *eternal* and *eternity* are inapplicable in the premises, and it is marvellous how lightly they and other momentous terms are used or misused nowadays. Scholastics of the mediæval age were more advanced than we seem to be in that respect. *Eternity* has nothing to do with *time*; it is not interminable or absolute time, but its very negation. *Eternity* admits of only one definition: the *unchangeable* (that alone which has no beginning and no end). The expression given to it by the old schools was quite suggestive, *nunc stans*. Time, on the other hand, as symbolising the abstract idea of motion, its concrete correlate, is plainly indicative of *change*. All that changes holds by time, and can have no part in eternity. Howsoever prolonged our existence may be, the adequate mode of expressing it and all *phenomena*, to whatever order they pertain, is *duration in time*.

Mr. Wallace thinks that the fact of our having had a *beginning* “by no means implies that we must necessarily have end.” This is a logic beyond my depth. I conceive that everything that has a “beginning” *must*, as such, come to an “end,” be it ever so far and distant. Mr. Wallace says we cannot possibly think of the universe as finite in time or space. The universe is unthinkable to my mind, as well as “infinite developments . . . ever beginning but never ending.” That is to say, they are unimaginable to me in the light given, that of *uninterrupted* manifestation. But the case alters if, instead of *time*, *space*, a universe, &c., we postulate a sequence of *times*, *spaces*, *universes*, &c. Thus we should have an “infinite” sequence of *finities* (including the human soul), each of these having its beginning and its end; whilst in the aspect of *sequence* there would be neither beginning nor end. And as each new “time” would signify, not a repetition, but a novel order of things, progress might be as endless as the powers of degree—not progress taken in the *absolute* (inadmissible in the thesis), but relatively to the *period*, which would be a link in the chain of the *ego's* experiences; whereas, relatively to the sequence, progress would merely consist in the *variety* of such experiences. Each period would have its archetype.

According to this argument, and the periodicity of cycles, a human soul will come to its end (*i.e.*, the individuality will revert to a potential state) when it reaches a stage—not identical with, but analogous or corresponding to the sphere at which it began; one representing the power, the other its resultant. Hence, if there is an after life, no human soul whatever can have possibly begun its career at the birth into this world of the person

identifying that soul. Consequently *future* existence necessitates *pre-existence*.

As closely connected with what has been submitted above, I may conclude by alluding to Mr. George Harpur's letter ("LIGHT," same date), headed "The Eternity of Matter." His illustration at the end, in the form of a query, is very apt and cogent against such philosophers as contend for its "eternity." Matter cannot be eternal, seeing that at any rate, it is subject to change. What is generally meant by that inappropriate term must be that matter is *increate*. But even this is not strictly correct, for the *increate* factor is Force (yet no more "eternal" than matter, its modes being as changeable) which is the active principle as proximate cause of matter and motion, whether we consider the latter physically or hyperphysically. Let me add that I do not look on Force as inseparably wedded to Matter; but Matter is totally dependent on Force. Nor do I think that at the end of a cosmic period, Matter is reduced to naught; for even then a minimum of Force will be *in actu* as matter in one of its forms. Most certainly, if time "rolled back" it would never reach A (Mr. Harpur's symbol for "no beginning"); but the time specifying the period of this our universe, while *rolling on*, has had, or will have, a turning point on the grand spiral, and, in its fulness, must end, it seems to me, as surely as it began. If so, the matter of that sheet of paper in question and matter in all its other forms is only compatible with a *finite* measure.

V. DE F.

Karma.

SIR,—In early Bible records great precautions were taken "lest man should live for ever." That that which has had a beginning should have an end seems a logical conclusion, *except it be kept alive by a power not its own*, by a spiritual source, which source is itself infinite and eternal. The Scriptures tell us that it is the spirit which does the work of keeping alive that which is in itself perishable, such as, we believe, is all "soul stuff," whether of the lowest or the highest calibre, man included. The Scriptures, which deal in spiritual things, tell us that it is the spirit which quickeneth, which giveth life, and consequently *preserves life*. The Church of England, in its first Article, declares the belief that God, the Eternal Spirit, is not only the Maker, but the Preserver of all things visible and invisible. And so some of us believe, that angels and devils, as well as men, are kept alive by the great Spirit, and for that reason they are themselves called spirits, because kept alive by Spirit. I think, as a general rule, that most men who are Christians or Spiritualists believe that we, that is, our souls, had a beginning at some time, and as such are consequently, I think, mortal. But how is this mortal to put on immortality through God's Spirit? Solomon gives his opinion on that question. He says, "In the way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof there is no death." David had said much the same thing, but perhaps in a less exact and certainly in a less dignified way, in the 16th and 49th Psalms, both of which Psalms are, I believe, generally attributed to that powerfully clairaudient king.

Jesus says: "If thou wilt enter into life keep the Commandments." Again, "If a man keep My sayings he shall never see death." And, speaking in His highest assumption He declares: "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish." So we see He regarded man's immortality as a gift, not as an inheritance. The method of this retention of life is, we believe, and as we have shown, by the great Spirit keeping men alive as spirits as well as souls, thus having spirit, which is eternal, added on, so to speak, to that which is perishable, as is the soul as well as the body in itself; for Jesus says: "God is able to destroy both soul and body" (i.e., the spiritual body) "in hell." Whether He will do so or not in the case of mankind we have, perhaps, no proof. Still, we pray, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from us!" Still we believe, with St. Paul, "If ye be led by the Spirit ye are not under the law." I think he means the law of death.

My object has been to show that, in my belief, both the older dispensations (and I would not that we should be other than children of our fathers) taught conditional immortality; while, in our new dispensation of the nineteenth century, both Re-incarnationists and non-Re-incarnationists, in large proportions, go a step further, and look forward to eternal progress for all men; perhaps on the not unreasonable foundation that it is God Who has made us and not we ourselves, and that there seems room for betterment. How, then, is the hope of a man retaining his character and belief as a Christian to be maintained consistently with his belief in eternal progress for all men, as a

Spiritualist? I give my opinion and belief that this can, perhaps, solely and consistently be done by accepting the doctrine of "Karma," for has not Jesus said, "Many are called but few chosen"? "Few there be that find the strait and narrow way"? "I pray not for the world, but for those whom Thou hast given Me"? The above texts have been, I believe, the main cause of the hundred and one sects of Christianity, each trying and competing, in its own way, to creep into exclusive favour; leaving it for Spiritualists to show them that the only right way is through "Karma"; by which doctrine those rejected after one life may attain the desired requirements for rising into higher spheres in another life, if not the next, or the next, or the next. Jesus says, "Be ye perfect." So man is perfectible. But where do we find perfection here?

I maintain that Karma is not only a Bible doctrine, but the chief Scripture and reasonable doctrine for the future happiness of suffering humanity at large. Of the two leading personages of the New Testament, the greatest is to come again; and the lesser had already come again, Elijah, in the person of the Baptist. Science strives to teach us that Nature's laws are general laws, and what is predicated as the nature and procedure of one man is the nature and procedure of all. Thus progress, through Karma, places a crown on Christianity, on Spiritualism, and on man's eternal hopes.

T. W.

"Looking Backwards."

SIR,—You have hit the mark again in your note to the communication from "S. S.," in which you say "it needs a keen nose to scent politics in *Looking Backwards*."

Your correspondent "S. S." recommends your readers to "read Lawrence Gronlund's description of Godin's Social Palace in Guise who desire the realisation of Mr. Bellamy's nightmare"; but I would recommend *The Co-operative Commonwealth*, by the same writer, in place of it, which deals practically with the subject of which Mr. Bellamy treats in his novelette *Looking Backwards*, and from which I believe he took his first ideas in regard to this most important subject.

As for "S. S.'s" remarks about "the State telling us what we are to do," &c., is not this the practice in every well-organised household, and place of business also? How would either of these fare if every individual were to follow the bent of his own inclination?

There are two sides generally to every question, a higher and a lower one—your correspondent has put forward the lower one; but assuming that "music should be turned on," &c., could not the leisure implied thereby be employed in developing higher and still higher gifts in man of which we have now scarcely any perception? Any way, I believe that to the masses such freedom would be most acceptable, and beneficial also.

T. L. HENLY.

Out of the Body.

SIR,—Some time ago, in the early spring, I lay down at night to sleep, and after a period of darkness I regained consciousness, out of my mortal and in my spiritual body. What a change was that! How light I was and how peaceful I felt! But I had altered; I was very young and much smaller, child-like and weak.

By my side glided or floated a tall and graceful spirit, whom I felt to be possessed of boundless power, and, if needful, of an overmastering will; added to this, so sweet and loving was his nature, that it was a joy only to be near him. I recognised the Divine Master, Jesus, Who, holding my hand in His, led me whither He would. We did not go to, or enter, golden gates, nor did I see people in white and glorified garments; we went to a large, bare room, quite unattractive, full of people standing rounding the sides of the room, dressed in robes of neutral tones, grey and brown, soft and tender in hue; silent, watchful, and still; nothing in their aspect distracted my gaze or turned me from the Master.

It mattered, however, nothing to me, so contented was I and so completely did Jesus rule me, that I had thoughts only for Him. All else was forgotten. Jesus then led me up to a most majestic female figure, draped from head to feet, the face and hands even being covered.

To the knees of this grand form Jesus led me, and then it seemed to me that I became smaller still, placing weak, feeble, little hands on the knees of this draped and noble figure which was seated sideways to me. Deriving sustaining power and warmth from the support, I gathered courage to look round furtively at the Master, Who had placed Himself just opposite

to the being I leant against, and who seemed more massive and taller than Himself.

As I ventured to look at Him and turned half round towards the place where He stood, I saw that He was attentively regarding me; stooping somewhat forward I saw a fine, somewhat pale face, full of authority and love, and a slight smile on it full of friendliness reassured me. At once He raised His left arm and put it gently round my shoulders, touching lightly my left shoulder, producing a sort of electric shock, and making me turn swiftly round so as to face Him fully. A while, a short period, I remained thus, spellbound, not able to move or turn my eyes from His face.

Sudden darkness followed; and I remember no more till I awoke next morning. Afterwards the voice of the Divine Master spoke to me, as I was thinking over this singular "dream" as I called it, and that voice spoke thus:—

"No, it was not a dream, it was a reality, I brought you to My Mother."

"To the Virgin Mary?"

The Divine Master: "No."

Myself (disconcerted): "I do not understand."

The Divine Master (calmly): "I can wait till you do."

And so ended this singular experience.

PENCIL.

"Controls."

SIR,—May I be permitted, through your columns, to thank your correspondent "Boryl" for the admirable letter in your issue of the 14th inst., which so ably expresses the ideas I have myself entertained, though lacking the power to set them forth with a like lucidity?

We do, in these days, hear much of "controls." It has at times occurred to me to question whether the most desirable of these may not be Self-control, by the exercise of which man, "Lord of himself," has not necessarily a "heritage of woe."

Hampstead,

June 15th, 1890.

F.O.

KARMA.

The seed ye sow ye shall most surely reap,

Karma says now

With the authority of hoary age

Upon its brow.

Do evil upon earth, on earth alone

Can thy soul for the evil done atone.

No man can sow in rage, and reap in rest,

Nor can he lay

His sins upon a brother-man, to lift

Or bear away.

Each soul wins its own bliss without alloy,

Or must again on earth its powers employ.

Do good; and until all the goodness gained

Has been enjoyed,

No power can draw the soul to earth again,

To be employed,

Upon the mortal plane, beneath this sun,

Though here alone the blessedness was won.

The faintest longing of a mind for truth,

If but a dream,

Is one step higher on the upward path

To the Unseen:

To nurse one wish beyond mere food and rest

Is an unconscious effort towards the best.

Through ages long of many human lives,

Each life a stage,

The entity shall gather the full strength

Of mature age;

Shall grow and learn, and learn and grow again,

Through times of trial and of bitter pain.

To higher and yet higher planes of life

A soul may rise,

By strenuous effort after highest good

May reach the skies;

Though it may sink through sloth, and not attain

Nirvana, where hope is unknown, and pain.

J. G. S.

THE HON. JUDGE DAILEY and Mrs. Dailey are on a short visit to London. The judge is one of the best known American Spiritualists. We should have been most glad to have presented him to our London friends if he had arrived in time for our St. James's Hall meeting.

Most frequently it is to pride that the philosopher is indebted for his refusal of truth, and the silly institutions of society foster and encourage the acquisitive, the approbative, and the pride-creating organisations of man to habituate him to a love of contempt, and an adhesion to errors and fallacies.—DR. JOHN ASHBURNER.

SOCIETY WORK.

WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM, S.E.—On Sunday morning Mr. Veitch gave a very practical interpretation of the Book of Revelations. In the evening Mr. Treadwell's guides addressed a large audience, on "Man." Many strangers present said they were well satisfied. On Sunday morning next, at 11 a.m., our President, Mr. Audy; Evening, at 7 p.m., Mr. T. Everitt and others. Thursdays, at 8 p.m., there will be a junior class, social and educational.—P. AUDY, Assist. Sec.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S.E.—Mr. Clack, who was to have occupied this platform on Sunday, was unfortunately prevented from coming by the passing away of his daughter. The early part of the evening was occupied with readings by the president, after which one of our members gave his experiences in Spiritualism and the reasons which led him to investigate the subject. These proved very interesting. Next Sunday, Mr. Humphries. Séances every Thursday at 8 p.m.—Geo. E. GUNN, Hon. Sec.

ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BEAUMONT-STREET, MILE END.—On Sunday last Mr. Cohen gave the first lecture of a series on "Evolution," dealing with the subject of "Special Creation v. Evolution." A brief sketch of the theory of evolution was given and was listened to with much attention by a large audience which had assembled in spite of the warm weather. The lecture was followed by a discussion. Sunday next at 7 p.m., Mr. Cohen will proceed with the second address upon the "Origin of Species."—C.

MARYLEBONE, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, W.—Mr. Burns delivered an instructive lecture on Sunday on "A Spiritual-Substitute for Theology." June 29th, at 11 a.m., Mr. Goddard, (clairvoyant); at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Members' Quarterly Meeting, hoping to have a good muster; on Thursday evening, at 7.45, Mrs. Wilkins; Saturday evening, at 7.45, Mrs. Treadwell; Wednesday, July 2nd, Lyceum children's outing at Bushey Park and Hampton Court. Any assistance will be gratefully received as our funds are very low.—C. WHITE, Hon. Sec.

KENSINGTON AND NOTTING HILL SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.—Last Sunday afternoon the weather was favourable enough for us to continue our out-door work and Messrs. W. O. Drake and Emms and others addressed a good concourse of people at our usual position near the Marble Arch. Great attention was given and much interest was shown by the audience. Next Sunday as usual, at 3 p.m. The speakers will include Messrs. Uther Goddard, Cannon, Drake, and others. It is hoped that our Spiritualistic friends will lend us their support. Spare Spiritualistic literature for free distribution can be sent to Percy Smyth, 68, Cornwall-road, Bayswater, W.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, CHEPSTOW HALL, 1, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—The annual outing of the Lyceum to Cheam on Tuesday last, favoured by fine weather, was thoroughly enjoyed by the children and adult friends. With a view to enable inquirers to participate in test and developing circles the committee have engaged rooms at 30, Fenham-road, off Marmont-road, Peckham. An open circle will be held on Wednesday evenings, and a circle for members on Saturday at 8.15 p.m. Friends desirous of attending the private circles are requested to apply to the secretary. The library will be opened on Saturday evenings. On Sunday next Mr. R. J. Lees, address and healing, at Chepstow Hall; Lyceum, at three o'clock.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Editor does not hold himself responsible for any opinions expressed by his Correspondents. He declines respectfully to enter into correspondence as to rejected MSS., or to answer private letters except where he is able to give specific information. He further begs to say that he cannot undertake to prepare MSS. for the press. Communication sent should be written on one side of the paper and be without interlineations and underlining of words. It is essential that they should be brief in order to secure insertion. Matter previously published can be received only for the information of the Editor. MSS. cannot be returned. All matter for publication and no business letters should be addressed to the Editor at the office of "LIGHT," and not to any other address. Communications for the Manager should be addressed separately. Short records of facts without comment are always welcome.

SEVERAL letters and communications are again crowded out from pressure on our space.

W.H.—Thank you: Space is very crowded just now. We hold your communication over.

W.S.T.—We do not pursue the subject and respectfully decline an argument that is so obviously one-sided.

A.E. (AND OTHER CORRESPONDENTS).—We are so fully occupied that we cannot undertake to prepare MSS. for the press. We are not asking too much when we request that all MSS. may reach us in such shape that we can hand them to the printer.

H.M.B.—Your fears are needless. We have no doubt whatever as to the survival of the soul. We pointed out only that the secrets of the life to come cannot be revealed to us in our present consciousness. While the fact of the survival is proved, the conditions of the future state have not been revealed. Read what you comment upon again.

OUR character to-day, is both a full record of yesterday, and a full prophecy of to-morrow."—H. GRIFFETH.