

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 resume this series of observations on current topics, which have been intermitted during the time of my absence. Most men want a holiday and are the better for it. I seem to want several, and should be the better for them, by reason of a good deal of lack in times past. But there is opportunity now of resuming relations with my friends (and I like to think of my readers as such), and to excuse myself for any deficiencies that may have crept into my paper. I have not lost sight of it, but I may be pardoned for the possible deficiency that absence causes. I hope that my friends will note what I have written as to records of facts, and that they will send me short and careful accounts, attested by names and dates, as frequently as they can. It is vitally important that these facts should not die without record.

If I had been at home when Mr. Myers's letters were addressed to "LIGHT," I should not have allowed them to pass without a word of appreciative comment. For I am much in sympathy with what he says: and, editorial note notwithstanding, I maintain that attitude. I had in mind, when I wrote that note, the dealing with Eglinton which is not at all chargeable on Mr. Myers. I think it exactly accurate to say, as I have said, that "the Society for Psychical Research has elected to approach all evidence [which we offer] from the attitude of the scorner." I may go further and say that they sift their evidence so finely that they exclude a mass of fact that is valuable. It should not be necessary to tell a rational man that first hand evidence is better than that obtained at third-hand. To say this seriously is much like the repetition of a platitude from a copy-book. No sane person doubts it. But there is another side to the question. It is possible to sift your evidence on *a priori* principles so as to exclude all that does not make for a preconceived idea. This is what Spiritualists think that the Society, in whose name Mr. Myers writes, but which he imperfectly represents, is doing. I do not now remember how long the Society for Psychical Research has been nibbling at Spiritualism, but I do know that it has made nothing of it. And I entertain an opinion that it never will on the methods it elects to use. That does not matter. There is so much in what Mr. Myers has written, so large an appreciation of the truth which I am concerned to set forth, that I frankly except him from whatever censure I feel bound, being what I am and knowing what I know, to pass on the methods adopted by the Society for Psychical Research. He is not repre-

sentative of that body, and he is to be congratulated on that fact, so far as his attitude to Spiritualism is concerned.

I am very far from desiring to attach any undue importance to the action of a Society which occupies the place of this Society for Psychical Research. It lacks the first qualification for the position that it occupies. It has no knowledge. If its leaders were brought into personal contact with the phenomena of Spiritualism the attitude of the Society would be changed at once. Those of us who know how powerless we are to interfere with the external agency that acts upon us, know that we cannot bring evidence to convince unwilling minds, or even unprepared minds. To tell a man who has lived twenty years in the midst of such evidence of the agency of spirit external to himself, that he is under "hallucination" is as foolish as it would be to attempt to bring home that evidence to a mind unprepared to receive it. That is why Societies fail. They cannot conduct their experiments as the chemist does. They can collect stories, and they do. But they can so winnow their grain as to reject the best part of it, their sieve being too fine; and they can treat it, after they have selected it, in such a way as to render it worthless. This is the other side of the shield which Mr. Myers exposes. If I have any influence at all on those whose servant I am, I would ask them to look at both sides of the shield. One side has been shown to us by Mr. Myers with that facility which belongs to him. He has told us that we are not careful enough in the selection and recording of our evidence. That is true. No care can be excessive that is applied to recording facts of such eminent importance. They should be verified by abundant testimony, and recorded with scrupulous care.

There is now the other side. We shall never get the average Spiritualist to record facts with scientific accuracy. It is not to be expected. Surely it is the business of the investigator, represented *ad hoc* by the Society for Psychical Research and other similar bodies, to sift evidence and put it into shape. The ordinary person will not do so; he cannot. But this way danger lies. There may be, as there is in the case of the Society to which I refer, a tendency to exclude evidence that is valuable. The screen through which the rubbish is sifted has too fine a mesh. There is a hyper-critical attitude which is very apparent. In the desire not to believe too much, there comes—as by a slow disease which perpetuates itself—the critical attitude which regards everything as questionable. It is quite possible for a perfectly honest man to bring himself to look at unfamiliar phenomena, which (observe!) he has no means of correlating with events in his ordinary life, from a point of view which will do them no sort of justice. This is almost inevitable. But Spiritualists must protest against such treatment as Eglinton had. It was not such as men acquainted with Spiritualism could brook. And there remains in the minds of those for whom I assume to speak a belief that if the leaders of the Society for Psychical Research could have one tithe of the evidence that I have

had (for example), the attitude of the Society to Spiritualism would be greatly changed. For what they have done in attesting and giving prominence to elementary facts such as telepathy and hypnotism, I have always expressed my gratitude.

There remains a question. Is it the highest aim of science—for the Psychical Society is nothing if not scientific—to grub among psychical dust and drag out “facts”? Suppose that any amount of facts are so gathered, what is the good of them? They are as absolutely worthless, without correlation, as bits of glass or old buttons picked out of a dust-bin. It is fair to say that the Society for Psychical Research has made an attempt to correlate the facts to which it has paid attention. It has done that in ignorance or in defiance of the knowledge which Spiritualism has brought to those who have studied it. The powers of the incarnate human spirit have been ignored by Spiritualists, but they must not be made responsible for all that occurs in the intercourse between the two worlds. There is as much danger in defect as in excess. *In medio tutissimus*. I do not by any means confound the attitude of Mr. Myers with that of the Society in whose name he writes. He is ahead of his following, and, notwithstanding all the learned folk represented in that Society, he is best known and trusted by the outside public. He is nearer to us than others are. A Spiritualist *malgré lui*. I would not ticket him with an opprobrious epithet (which I regard as honourable), but there is a marked differentiation between Mr. Myers and those with whom he is associated. I have no doubt that he feels, as I do, affinities with people with whom he is not in perfect accord, and is disposed, as I am, to make the most of that affinity. I, at any rate, want as much harmony and as little discord as I can get.

I am amused to find how occult subjects permeate literature. Not to mention the serious monthlies, I find the *Table*, of which I confess my ignorance hitherto—yet the number before me is 22 of Vol. IX.—deviating into Graphology, which is its prize competition, and advising its readers “How to Hypnotise.” There is nothing in the crude *résumé* of recent articles that merits any notice. The compiler is at sea, and wonders whether the new discovery will “give the world more benefits than it inflicts wrongs.” Would it not seem that the solution of that problem will depend on the way the world uses the “new discovery,” which is, by-the-way, not new at all. Men are apt to treat these subjects as they treat a new metal or a new chemical combination. Perhaps, when they are wiser, they will consider “the intelligent operator at the other end of the line” who has to be reckoned with. There is abundant evidence of this intervention in our lives, and we can study it without neglecting the evidence for the unconsidered powers of our own spirit.

SCEPTICISM.

(From the *Tocsin*.)

The subjoined article contains some truth that is necessary to be remembered in an age that poses as nothing if not sceptical. It is worth remembering that there is a wholesome scepticism which is a transition state and not a permanent one. If a man cannot attain to the positive state of negation or affirmation his mind is at fault; he is that namby-pamby thing, a halter between two opinions, or he has been so fortunate as to find an unsolved problem which may, by its solution, make his name famous. If he cannot make up his mind, he can at least tell us what prevents him from doing so:—

Those who are sceptics by choice and conviction may be, and indeed often are, just as enthusiastic and fanatical as the most credulous of dogmatists, and in any case they believe

just as much in the truth of their negations as do any other sectarians. With people of this class, however, we do not propose to deal, but we are anxious to draw attention to that type of person whose scepticism represents, not a set of opinions, but a certain frame of mind, a certain phase of development. They neither assert nor deny, they are simply *disillusioné*, and just in proportion as their illusion has once been complete, so now is the completeness of their recoil. As we all know, it is almost impossible to be deceived by a person or by a doctrine (no matter whether it will be religious, social, or political) without losing faith in all things which bear upon that doctrine, for the time being at all events. Once thoroughly duped and misled, we feel that we have not only lost confidence in others but also in ourselves; our judgment having once egregiously failed, how can we trust it again? Thus we learn by bitter experience that it is much easier to destroy than to construct, and, moreover, we have the uncomfortable conviction that the more we dislike to doubt and deny the more likely it is that truth lies in negations. In other words, if we reluctantly come to a disagreeable conclusion, it seems more likely to be correct than if we had been biassed by a desire to think so. When we are in this frame of mind, the difficulty of holding this or that set of opinions is no longer our chief trouble; what concerns us most is the feeling that it is impossible ever to be convinced of anything again with regard to this one subject about which we have grown sceptical. We can conceive it possible that some theory might be presented to us which would seem true enough, so far as we could see, but only so far, and the futility of searching for absolute truth renders us weary of all opinions whatsoever. At first sight this kind of scepticism appears to be merely a morbid condition, or a crisis through which all have to pass, like a childish complaint. But surely this is a very superficial and almost vulgar view to take. If we consider the subject a little, we can scarcely help seeing that this “morbid phase” is in reality the fringe of a great truth, and should rank almost as a great discovery. Stripped of sentimentalism and disassociated from the personal sufferings we have undergone in finding it, this scepticism has led us to see one fact which outweighs almost all others in importance—the fact, namely, that there is no such thing as human infallibility, and that we are far happier and freer without it.

In a sense, of course, this is no new discovery at all, but a platitude of which everybody is aware, yet it is one of those platitudes the truth of which we rarely realise until it is forced upon us by many severe mental defeats, and then it is that we make it our own.

To exchange the absolute confidence of one who knows and cannot err, for the state of one who feels that a thing is only “true so far as he can see,” may appear but a doubtful blessing at first sight, but on second thoughts we find that we have gained one precious thing—freedom—and that is a boon worth suffering for. There is the intellectual freedom of feeling that no one, however honoured, can dictate to us, and there is the personal freedom of feeling that we may carve out our own path through life unshackled, and in the full belief that with every “if” there is always a grand “perhaps.” In the desolation in which our emancipation from “infallible” guidance at first places us, our scepticism is like enough to make us feel a little crazy, and the futility of research, or of reasoning to discover absolute truth, seems to weigh upon us like a pall. But as a matter of fact, however, this condition of scepticism and doubt is, after all, quite as much a form of belief as any other, for inasmuch as one doubt may sometimes be sufficient to make us lose faith in a theory, so also one argument more may be sufficient to furnish faith. Do what we will, in belief, disbelief, and in doubt, we cannot choose but to believe in ourselves; if it were not so it would be as difficult for us to be dismayed as to be confident, and scepticism itself be no more real than the rest. These reflections lead us into a labyrinth of psychological problems which are perhaps more interesting than profitable to enter upon, and we are content if we have been able to point out that no one should be one whit less sure and confident because he knows that he may be mistaken. In the second place, the idea that because we have once felt sure of a thing and have been mistaken, we can, therefore, never feel sure of anything again is no more logical than to say that because we have once doubted something which turned out to be true, we could never know doubt any more.

DISAPPOINTMENTS are the sunken piers on which are rested the bridges to more rational hopes and achievements.—LONG-FELLOW.

COINCIDENCES.

No. XI.

We continue the series of coincidences which we have printed. Our correspondent, "C.C.M.," objects very rightly to the term as applied to some. Perhaps the same objection would apply to all. We want, of course, to sift the occurrences that people call coincidences, and to find what they really mean. We again urge our readers to send to us any records within their knowledge or experience, with such complete attestation as is to be had:—

In July, 1880, my wife died. My younger daughter was then at school in Germany, but so rapid in its course was her mother's illness that it was impossible to communicate with Germany in time for her to arrive before death supervened.

We were in some dread of announcing the terrible news without any warning, so simply telegraphed, "Come home at once; your mother is very ill." A close friend had arranged with us to meet my daughter at Queenborough and tell her the sad truth.

The effect on the girl at school was curious. She was aware that I am apt to take pessimistic views of things, and thought that I had very likely given way to unnecessary alarm. She has since told me that her schoolfellows all thought the telegram to be of much more serious import than she did herself. Her mother's death was not in her mind at all.

The journey from Frankenthal is long, and there are many stations, and the way in which the thoughts of the girl were gradually brought round to the real meaning of the telegram was, I think, instructive.

At Bingen the statue of "Germania" is visible from the station. A child in the train asked its mother what the statue was. She was told. "I thought it was a tombstone," said the child. A few stations further on two men were seen carrying a coffin close to the line; and a station or two beyond that a lady in deep mourning was on the platform carrying a funeral wreath of white flowers.

These three consecutive presentations so impressed my daughter that when at Queenborough our friend met her, she was in a large measure prepared for the bitter news he had volunteered to carry to her.

π.

Historical coincidence:—

"What does the Pope mean," said Napoleon to Eugène, in July, 1807, "by the threat of excommunicating me? Does he think the world has gone back a thousand years? Does he suppose the arms will fall from the hands of my soldiers?"

Within two years after these remarkable words were written, the Pope did excommunicate him, in return for the confiscation of his whole dominions, and in less than four years more, the arms did fall from the hands of his soldiers. . . . "The weapons of the soldiers," says Ségur, in describing the Russian retreat, "appeared of an insupportable weight to their stiffened arms. During their frequent falls they fell from their hands, and destitute of the power of raising them from the ground, they were left in the snow. They did not throw them away, famine and cold tore them from their grasp." "The soldiers could no longer hold their weapons," says Salgues, "they fell from the hands even of the bravest and most robust. The muskets dropped from the frozen arms of those who bore them."—*Alison's History of Europe*, c. 50, 9th edition (quoted by the late Cardinal Newman, in his *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk on Occasion of Mr. Gladstone's Recent Expostulation*, sec. 3.) C. C. M.

This bears on a case already published. The Editor remembers one in his own experience. When at school he was going up for a scholarship at Oxford. The head master read with him privately three passages from Pindar; of these one was in the examination set for translation, and allusions in the other were useful:—

SIR,—Thinking that the following account of a peculiar coincidence may be of interest to the readers of "LIGHT," I venture to forward it.

At a recent examination at which I was a candidate, one of the subjects was a work by a Latin author containing over 500 lines of poetry. Owing to pressure of other work I had only been able to obtain a very superficial knowledge of the book, and on the day preceding that on which the ex-

amination began I had remarked, "Now it would be of some use if I could only be told the passage we shall be set," meaning, of course, by the aid of Spiritualism. However, I thought nothing further of this until the evening of the same day, when I said to my brother, whilst returning home, that I had a strong impression to sit for automatic writing, which I did. I obtained no writing, but during the sitting I received a decided impression that the passage beginning at line 100 would be set for translation. Now at that time I had not the remotest idea whether line 100 was in the middle of a sentence or to what it referred, but I saw that the lines 100-117 were probable, so prepared them. What was my astonishment on entering the examination room the next day to find that the identical passage had been set!

It would be of interest to know what is the mathematical probability of a person guessing, without reference to a book, that a certain passage beginning at a certain line out of 500 would be thus set.

H. V. H.

This also is from a correspondent at first hand:—

My sister Jane, when a girl, fell into a well, and was saved from drowning by a companion laying hold of her by the hair of her head as she was going down the third time. That same sister, when in her teens, was given up by the family doctor to die soon of consumption. By a very simple remedy, taken from Culpepper's *Family Herbal Book*, she quickly recovered, married, was the mother of five or six children, and lived to over sixty years. The doctor said her recovery from consumption was a miracle. On the 9th inst. that same sister came to me through a medium whom I had not seen before, and through her showed me the manner of her passing over, by a severe fit of coughing, to which she was subject.

My own wife, some years ago, about to walk under a scaffold in a street in London, was turned about suddenly to look at something in an adjoining window, clear of the scaffold, when instantly the scaffold fell and the mason with it, who appeared to have been killed by the fall. Was my wife's preservation a mere coincidence, or an interposition by the angelic ministers who are ever near us?

Plymouth.

E. M.

This is sent at first-hand to us:—

In the autumn of 1888, M. E. came on a visit to us. She and my daughter went one day for a botanical ramble, and the former had the misfortune to drop a silver shawl brooch.

She was vexed because it was given by a near relative (still living) to her mother, who had never given it to her, but allowed her to use it.

The crier's aid was invoked, and the brooch was picked up within a few days, but not in the spot where she thought she had lost it.

In the autumn of 1890, M. E. again came on a visit to us. She and my daughter went one day for a botanical ramble, and the latter had the misfortune to drop a silver shawl brooch.

She was vexed because it was given by a near relation (still living) to her mother, who had never given it to her, but allowed her to use it.

The crier's aid was invoked, and the brooch was picked up within a few days, but not in the spot where she thought she had lost it.

M. W. G.

HANOVER ROOMS.

The second series of services will conclude to-morrow, September 28th, when a lecture on Angelology will be delivered at the above rooms, Argyll-street, Regent Circus, by Mr. A. E. Waite. It has been decided to continue the services permanently in a different locality, and under a more private form, combining with them opportunities for the practical study of occultism. A small but earnest circle of inquirers has been formed by this somewhat novel conjunction of Spiritualism with Anglican orthodoxy of a rather pronounced type.

MISS LOTTIE FOWLER.—We beg to acknowledge the receipt of £2 from Mr. T. Grant towards the cost of Miss Lottie Fowler's return to America.

THE secret of the so-called lucky man's luck will, with some exceptions, of course, be found in something he has thoughtfully, calculatingly done, and not in a jumble of accidents.

APPARITION AT TIME OF DEATH.

The San Francisco "Chronicle" gives the following, which we transfer to our columns as it is narrated:—

The old saying that truth is stranger than fiction found a startling exemplification in this city on Friday evening. The ghostly vision in the melodrama of the "Corsican Brothers" is scarcely more fruitful of grisly reflections than the tale which was told to a "Chronicle" reporter by a gentleman who would be at once pronounced the last person in the world to become the prey of superstition or the victim of delusion.

Early on Friday morning Edwin Russell, an Englishman, well known as a real estate agent, was walking near the corner of Sutter and Mason streets when he sustained an apoplectic stroke, from the effects of which he died shortly before noon. He had resided in the city ten years, and was well and favourably known in the commercial world here.

Mr. Russell was a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and also the possessor of a rich bass voice. This made him a welcome addition to the choir of St. Luke's Church, and brought him in immediate contact with the Rev. W. W. Davis, vicar of the church, and with Harry E. Reeves, the recently appointed choir leader. Mr. Reeves is a nephew of the distinguished English tenor of the name, and conducted the musical services at the funeral of President Chester A. Arthur.

It was to Mr. Reeves that the very sensational and startling revelation now to be recorded was vouchsafed. Mr. Reeves was found at the residence of his sister, Mrs. Cavanagh, 2,121, California-street, by a "Chronicle" reporter. He became evidently agitated when asked if it were true that he had seen the apparition of Russell before hearing of the latter's death.

"I will tell you all about it," said Mr. Reeves, "and if you allow me I will illustrate the matter by showing you the positions I occupied during this strange affair. I want to say at once that I am not a Spiritualist, and have always been very sceptical about all stories of post-mortem appearances and ghosts generally.

"I last saw Russell alive on the Saturday night previous to his death. Russell came to the choir rehearsal. I said to him: 'Do you know where I can get a good cigar?' and he recommended a place. I went there with him, and then took such a fancy to him that I invited him to come to my house, or rather my sister's house. We agreed to postpone his visit till the following Saturday, and he said: 'Well, I'll call on you next week anyhow.' The matter passed from my mind until Friday afternoon, about three o'clock. I always make it a point to look over my music for Sunday a day or two before, and on this occasion I was sitting in the parlour and took up two 'Te Deums' to make a choice. One was Starkweather's in G, the other a composition of Kroell's. Just as I had taken one in my hand and was going upstairs to my room to look over it I heard the front door bell ring, and recognised that some visitor whom I did not then know had called. I afterwards learned that it was young Mr. Sprague, who can tell you his story when you ask him.

"I went into my room (illustrating the action as he ascended the stairs and opened the door into a well-lighted and comfortably furnished sleeping apartment, with a lounge and parlour organ). I lay down on the lounge for a moment, then by an impulse I cannot account for, I walked to the door. The head of the stairway was somewhat dimly lighted, as you see it now, but not so dimly but what I could at once see what appeared to be the figure of Russell. It was so real, so lifelike, that I at once stepped forward and stretched out my hand, and was about to speak some words of welcome.

"The figure seemed to have a roll of music in one hand and the other over its face, but it was Russell's image. I am quite sure of that. As I advanced to the head of the stairway the figure seemed to turn as if about to descend, and faded into the air."

Mr. Reeves' manner during the recital was precisely that of a person with well-balanced mind who had seen something horrible and startling, but was willing and ready to accept a rational explanation if any were forthcoming. He went on to say:—

"I remember trying to speak to the figure, but the tongue clung to the roof of my mouth. Then I fell against the wall and gasped out, 'Ah! My God!' just like that. My sister and niece, with the other folks, came up. My niece said, 'Uncle Harry, what's the matter?' I went on to explain

what it was, but was so scared I could hardly speak. My niece said, 'Don't you know Russell is dead?' Well, that flabbergasted me; it only made matters worse, and I nearly fainted. Then they told me that the Rev. Mr. Davis had sent Mr. Sprague to tell me of the sad news. I was terribly startled by the affair, and feel shaky even now, but I am not given to superstitious fears, and I suppose it can be explained. Mr. Sprague had been waiting nearly half an hour before I saw him and obtained corroboration of the news of Russell's death. It is very strange; very strange, indeed. I saw that man Russell after he must have been dead three hours at least, as plainly as I see you in that chair."

In an interview with Mr. Sprague the essential features of this strange story were confirmed. It is a significant departure from the routine ghost story that all the persons connected with this case are unconnected with any Spiritualistic organisation, are of well-balanced mind, thoughtful and sceptical on all sensational matters. Mr. Reeves is not only a man in the prime of life, of temperate habits, and in good health, but he is also a person of strong nerve, a man of the world, a Master Mason, and the last person in the world to be scared by a ghost or a mediumistic imposition.

[We do not see why a Spiritualist should be necessarily untrustworthy in these matters. As a matter of fact he knows more about them than "a Master Mason," records them more accurately than the uninstructed vulgar, who are apt to lose their heads and talk nonsense. Moreover, "mediumistic impositions" are best detected by persons who know what they are about.—Ed. of "LIGHT."]

SPIRITISM IN CHINA.

FROM *Neue Spiritualistische Blätter*.

TRANSLATED BY "V."

Under the above title, the Berlin "Local-Anzeiger" gives the following interesting account:—

While in Germany the teachings of Spiritism find but scant acceptance, and its followers are looked upon with suspicion and even ridicule—whether with or without justice, is not here the question—in China, the realm of culture from the remotest times, Spiritism has flourished luxuriantly during thousands of years. Certainly, in accordance with the views of Western Christianity, this Chinese Spiritism falls under the nomenclature of idolatry, but anyone who is at all acquainted with the phenomena of so-called modern Spiritism, recognises at a glance in the Chinese geomantists, clairvoyants, and pencil-writers, undoubted Spiritistic mediums, as they are here and everywhere called. It is especially evident that the so-called pencil-writers (*Griffelschreibern*) differ in nothing from the writing-mediums of the present time. The pencil-writer takes a pencil or style in each hand; these should be crossed one over the other, and the pencils should not be held firmly, but loosely between the two middle fingers. Anyone who wishes to question the "spirit" must be a firm believer, otherwise he will obtain no answer. If he looks upon the matter as a jest, or has any mischievous intentions, the "spirit" withdraws from the medium. Sometimes the spirit has not time then to answer the question put to him, or is otherwise occupied, when he will appoint a more convenient opportunity. He will not answer all questions which may be put to him, such, for instance, as "When shall I die?" or "Shall I become rich?" but he readily replied to such questions as the following: "Do I belong to the class of good or bad men?" "What will happen to me when I die?" or "What medicine ought I to take in such or such an illness?" When a suitable question is put, the "pencil-writer's" arms become agitated, and the pencils or styles begin to move rapidly without any volition on his part. The writing may be on sand, paper, table, or slate; a third person deciphers the written signs, and transcribes them in a book. The "pencil-writer" must exercise his office without any payment or other recompense, otherwise the "spirit" immediately abandons him, and seeks another instrument. He who accepts payment is an impostor, for then it is not a spirit but himself who performs the writing. The last detail carries with it a significant moral.

So far the article. The "Local-Anzeiger" is not only the largest journal in Berlin, but is the most widely read in Germany, as it has a circulation of over a hundred thousand copies. That Spiritism is indeed coming rapidly to the front cannot be doubted, when it is becoming a subject of discussion in the public papers.

TELEPATHY AND PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

We have briefly referred to Mr. Fotheringham's important utterance in the *Atlantic*. What we now give more fully will repay perusal even by those who may disagree with some parts of it:—

As to telepathy—supposing it to be proved, as many do—it points in two directions; first, towards some immaterial property in the individual, by virtue of which he survives bodily dissolution; or, second, towards a general force, which, like air, is intangible and constant, and which, on certain conditions hitherto unascertained, lights on a few heads—a cosmic energy whereof souls partake in consequence of some peculiar attribute.

The first supposition looks in the direction of a spiritual essence, indestructible by physical decay; not the product of muscle, or nerve, or any physiological combination whatever, but rather setting these at naught, with their implications of space and time. This essence may be resolved into some primary elements by chemistry, but thus far it is not decomposable. It is a quality that defies distance, is instantaneous, is not dependent on terrestrial states, is most apparent in our least conscious moods and in our least wakeful hours, is strongest in the most undeveloped intellectually, is conspicuous in the moments when organisation is dissolving, in the hour of death—is certainly as near to our conception of soul as a thing can be. If there be a power in man that transcends the senses, it may well escape from the tomb.

Of course this is not all the immortality the Christian believes in. It does not imply even conscious existence; far less does it involve social relations, or hint at the possibility of communication with those yet in the flesh; but it furnishes a basis for personal continuity, and it provides a foundation upon which faith may build.

..... The second point shows the tendency towards a form of Theism. Not the old-fashioned Theism, with its doctrines of Providence and prayer and moral government, but rather, I should say, towards that noble Pantheism which enchants the most poetical minds of this generation. The recognition of another power, universal and steady as gravitation, exalts the Divine Majesty, and raises the soul to new heights of wonder and worship. The reign of law is extended and established; and the nearness of law, its personal influence, is illustrated. Such a power possesses attributes such as gravitation does not claim; for that deals with ponderable matter only, while this manages imponderable elements, mind, the relations of spiritual things, as we deem them. Thus, as the former is an example of a supreme force, so the latter is an example of a supreme power, and introduces us to the region of living sympathy. The "Power not ourselves" receives a new impressiveness. It becomes human. It lays hold of the heart strings. It renders more intelligible the name Father. There may be no suggestion of direct purpose, no hint of explicit design, but the thought of a more completely organised universe is forced upon us, making it easier to conceive of a presiding Deity. This kind of Pantheism appeals to the imagination, filling it with ideas of wealth, of fulness, of tenderness; touching the sensibilities, enhancing the vision of unity. The older Theism addresses itself to the individual, his lot, his experiences, his private concerns, his moods, his emotions. This goes directly to his soul; fosters its aspirations after disinterestedness, purity, serenity, peace.

The effect of psychical research is thus to increase the mystery of the world. Such is the effect of all scientific investigation, even the most rudimental. The ancient simplicity disappears, to be succeeded by another sort of simplicity, resulting from the combination of many complex phenomena. The elements may be fewer, but the ingredients have multiplied. The old world has no mystery, properly speaking. The mind of the Eternal was unfathomable, His intentions were past discovering, but His outward creation stirred no profound awe. The laws of nature did not exist. There were, here and there, students of stars, flowers, animals, and the more obvious phases of creation. There was an occasional investigator of more secret existences. But the close, systematic, organised examination of phenomena was unknown. The real mystery of the world dawned on men when physical science was born; it has deepened with every step of its advance. The subtle inquiries of the Society for Psychical Research open abysses that ages will not ex-

plore. The substitution of facts for fancies, of observation for surmise, of theory as an instrument of investigation for theory as a final dogma, the dismissal of all idols whatever, marks a revolution of discovery. No doubt a great number of other superstitions have been exposed along with multitudes of baneful chimeras, like witchcraft and demonic possession, but reverence, awe, wonder have increased. We need not fear lest the universe should become prosaic. Imagination already has enough to do, and fresh demands will surely be made on it. A religion will grow out of the revelation of physical science, by and by.

In regard to the other point—the mystery of the brain—psychical research is throwing floods of light upon that, disclosing powers hitherto unsuspected. What masses of nebulae have been resolved into stars! What visions, illusions, delusions, hallucinations, have been traced directly to the cerebral organs, and shown to be products of nerve cells! They may be effects of disease; they may be results of temperament. They may be abnormal; they may be normal. At all events, they are inside the constitution. The tricks of the brain are known to be innumerable and most perplexing. The brain of man cannot be examined directly, and surmises are hard to verify; but it is certain that cerebral organisation plays strange pranks with us, and of such kind that its agency in matters beyond our present knowledge is gravely suspected. Some years since, a man suffering from decomposition of the brain saw reptiles on the ceiling, serpents on the floor, and creeping things on the sofa where he sat. So real were they that though, being an educated person, he was sure they must be semblances, he dared not move lest he should excite them. In a few moments they vanished, to return at some new paroxysm of his disease. Medical books abound in similar examples, and they suggest indefinite possibilities of nervous achievement; just as Lord Ross's telescope led to anticipations that the nebula of Orion would be disintegrated.

The truth is that psychical research is yet in its infancy, and must be for a long time. Its task is extremely difficult, requiring, as it does, keen powers of observation, trained judgment, perfect candour, honesty, courage; in short, the rarest mental gifts. Men of this stamp are few. In this country, they are for the most part professors, physicians in large practice, clergymen with heavy duties. They are more numerous in England, where the two great universities, Oxford and Cambridge, keep up the supply of disciplined men; and an old country affords more leisure. The work is expensive, too, as it involves a good deal of travelling, an extensive correspondence, a liberal supply of time—costly commodities, all of them. It was necessary, therefore, to make the American Society a branch of the English one, which is not only ably managed, but powerfully maintained; men and women, lords and ladies, members of Parliament, authors, philosophers, experts in science, possessors of wealth, mind, cultivation, energy, being actively devoted to the quest.

The first report of proceedings by the London Society was published in October, 1882. In the short time of eight years how much has been accomplished! Considering the elusive nature of the facts; the delicacy of the insight demanded; the inexactness of testimony; the all but impossibility of procuring precise accounts; the association of the phenomena with delusion, deceit, nervous derangement, some kind of eccentricity, with the consequent unwillingness to assume personal responsibility or to allow the use of names, the result has been very remarkable. If the promise of the past is at all justified in the future, we may confidently hope to find some clue to the enigmas that have so long and cruelly baffled us. But, be this as it may, we cannot withhold our admiration of the patience, industry, devotedness, of those engaged in this inquiry. These qualities are of permanent value, and deepen the impression of earnestness which scientific men make.

MAN's life is born into a bootless world.
If he strives not, how base! and if he strive,
What weariness and grief, whilst evermore
Recedes the earthly goal! We plan and act,
Our little wisdom runs before our deeds
Led other way by fate: and all our days
But mock the visions of our yesterdays,
Till every purpose seems as shaped by dreams,
Futile, and waking voided.

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Light:

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

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27th, 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 IN 1707.*

PART II.

The communications given through or to John Lacy are not of an instructive character. They purport to be given directly from the Almighty, and are singularly inappropriate to the source from which they are said to be derived. It may be well to give a specimen, and we have selected one that will least jar on the good taste of readers:—

A VISION—WITH THE INTERPRETATION.

Wednesday, July 30th.

The several subjects of the following discourse were each of them represented to Mr. Lacy in vision, gradually, in the proper order and just before the utterance of the words relating to them respectively, viz. :—

1st. The sun rising as expressed. 2nd. A black smoky darkness over the whole hemisphere. 3rd. A delicious prospect of florid fields and stately buildings in a fine country. 4th. A church door, the wicket whereof only opened at first, and soon after the great gates laid wide open. 5th. A park-pale, whereof a small part broke down and sheep running from all parts into it. 6th. The fire and fog, as expressed in the discourse. 7th. Two armies: one drawn up and the other in a disorderly march. 8th. A prospect of a beautiful country changed into a barren waste. 9th. Some fine cities and a white flame falling upon them that consumed them. 10th. A glowing furnace of about fifty feet wide. 11th. A sweet grove, the country round about it burnt up. 12th. A stately piece of architecture with several rows of pillars and walks. 13th. A mount railed in: many people at first standing without the rails, and soon after let in; the top of the mountain luminous. 14th. A large stately building, gardens round descending. All these particulars were much more fully shown than are here before expressed.

1st. The sun is risen upon the earth, attended with some few clouds which interrupt his rays, though yet visible. 2nd. Darkness of horror spread over the world of the ungodly; my people had need to speed away from among them, lest they partake with them of this judicial darkness in the mind, and outward in the air shall be notorious and exceedingly plain. 3rd. This placid, beauteous scene cannot appear, no, not to my children in its brightness, until the interruptions of my severe storms are over; some glimpses of it they shall have, most of them at second hand; I will show it to thee. You ought to give praise when you see my judgment. No pity should intercept that acknowledgment I expect from you whom I receive into the nearest relation I am able. 4th. The entrance into my Luminous Palace is a strait door at present, but the main port, the wide gates, shall be cast open. 5th. Behold, my wandering scattered flock shall be received

* "Spiritualism and Spirit Phenomena in 1707"; taken from "Lacy's Warnings." Selected by Geo. S. Pidgeon, San Diego, California, January, 1890.

into my park inclosure; they shall run from all parts into it at the aperture. I'll make it the fence; ay, run without their shepherd driving; and when they are all received and sealed, then follows the severest horror that ever the earth knew—the flood of waters was not so dreadful; that terror was of one kind, but this shall be of many kinds. 6th. Fire from above, fog from beneath, both mixed, fire and smoke. 7th. Armies, ministers of my will. 8th. Fruitful and cultivated land turned into a wilderness. 9th. All the works of man in some countries quite burnt up. 10th. A furnace worse than Nebuchadnezzar's. 11th. A shady grove, a verdant walk, a cool air, will I be to those that retire for shelter thither, while all is a torrid zone round about them. 12th. Those that come within my alcoves, cloysters, fair and spacious palace of rest, will find a roof that none of my thunder will strike through. 13th. I'll take my people, within a barrier now, round the mount, the mount where I appear, and all that are without shall feel the terror—they, they only sweet repose. 14th. My mansions are prepared; are not like the buildings of men; all the sides thereof are open, no need of enclosure, as, in that manner, no hurtful air, no thief, no beast, no nauseous insect, no sort of annoyance can attend them for want of it. Arches beyond the rules of men's architecture; pillars are all there needs for supporting them. Odours of a garden round shall without interruption present themselves.

Most of the messages are worthless from the point of view of instructiveness, and are dressed in a bad imitation of Biblical phraseology. A spirit who describes himself as "a pure Spirit, not mixed with a body," comes and talks in a way that leads one to desire communication with one more "mixed with a body" and less mixed in mind. Another message commences in this startling manner: "I sit as Judge alone. Whom I approve man cannot punish. I shall leave you to be the laughing-stock of the world." This is cold comfort any way, and is, to say the least of it, abrupt. At another time, "during the agitations of Jean Allut," a seeress "discerned an evil spirit which Mr. Lacy, being immediately seized with the Spirit, prayed over in extasy." We are not told whether the prayer, which is oddly mixed with objurgation of the evil one and commands that he should depart, was or was not effective. What has been written and the specimen quoted above are enough to give an idea of the character of the communications which are in themselves quite unimportant, except as they illustrate a curious phase of mediumship.

The concluding "Relation of the dealings of God to His unworthy servant John Lacy, since the time of his believing and professing himself inspired" (printed for Ben Bragg at the Black Raven in Paternoster-row, 1708, price 3d.), is very curious. The writer sets himself to show that all Prophets have been rejected and persecuted, and have, from Job and Malachi, never given what it is now the fashion to call "tests," but "being assured of their own sincerity and the testimonials they had of God speaking by them, persisted." That would hardly satisfy the Society for Psychical Research or even a modern sceptic. "Neither," he goes on, "is there any mention of Miracles as a Test to try prophetick Spirits by." Mr. Lacy plainly thinks much of Old or New Testament methods as contrasted with what a more stiff-necked generation is disposed to exact. The Prophet who is assured is not to be expected to qualify by test.

"In the Apostolick times" he finds people "praying by inspiration with unutterable groans," and so justifies his own practice. He scouts the notion that inspiration ceased with the time of the Canon of Scripture, which he seems to imagine to have been a connected body of prophecy over which man exercised no supervision. It does not seem to occur to Mr. Lacy that the Canon of Scripture was settled and arranged by purely human methods.

However, "God has not concluded Himself," and Mr. Lacy is of opinion that he has had direct dealings with Him and is inspired even as the Prophet Caiaphas or the Prophet Agabus, and others oddly selected. Accordingly

he "thinks fit to give an account more at large of that supernatural state which befel him on June 12, 1707," which account "I deliver with the same awful solemnity frequent with the Apostle"—Paul, we presume. He proceeds accordingly to detail his sufferings and persecutions by "numerous defamatory pamphlets," by desertion of friends and "dissatisfaction of near relations" (a very likely contingency), by "the censure of persons pious," by "the hissing of profane" (*sic*), by "difficulties arising to a man's secular affairs," and (to omit much) "by the exposing and misprinting of my private letters." That sounds bad enough, yet he enjoyed "a Canaan of rest," in spite of the fact that "fortitude was none of my talent before."

We come next to a record of his "agitations." He warmly protests that "when my arm, leg, or head is shaken, I must be allowed to know whether it be voluntarily from myself or not." And when "that Agent does so, if I think to suppress the same, he does continue so to start and twitch my limbs, and, by more interior uneasiness over my whole body, to solicit my obedience, that I can have no rest till I suffer the same to take place." Under this alien influence "I felt my fingers forcibly contracted and moved to write . . . my body was removed ten or eleven foot without any concurrent mixture of my agency . . . the respirations of my breath lath (*sic*) for sundry days beat various tunes of the drum, sometimes six hours in a day . . . I have experienced sometimes a voice so strong and clear, sometimes so harmonious, as my natural one never did or could furnish . . . I have been carried on my knees several times round a room, swifter than I could have gone on my feet." All this, he thinks, shows him to have been "under the Agency of another distinct Being, in which tunes the tongue also is at the direction of that foreign Agent." He parallels his own experiences by similar ones "with some variations in two or three hundred other persons in London."

He speaks, moreover, of seeing apparitions and visions, which "represented no trifles; the images were very distinct; the figures were lively; in fine they did leave on my soul constantly, for some days ensuing, a tincture, disposing it to the Fear and Love of God."

Furthermore, he claims the gift of tongues and of healing, of which latter kind of mediumship he gives some cases which read much as Mr. Milner Stephen's records might, only that they are not attested. Some are very naively told. "Mr. John Moulton, in Watling-street, having a contraction of the nerves of one hand, not curable by all means used for ten years past, had, in January last, a promise from the Spirit of being healed thereof. Little effect yet remarkable." Another who was promised cure of the King's Evil is summarily and curtly dismissed. "No effect yet remarkable that I know of." Some cases, on the contrary, are declared cured. The whole record inspires a sense of sincerity on the part of the writer. His judgment may, however, be mistrusted when he mentions that, as an evidence of the return of Christ to earth, the Spirit would "raise Dr. Emes from the grave the 25th of next month, above five months after interment." It does not appear that this was done, for Lacy says, "Unless some appearances of Divine attestation, far above what has yet been, do intervene, my faith will not suffice to obey the Spirit in going thither where the body lies."

Mr. Pidgeon has done good service in placing within our reach these extracts from a book no longer procurable. The record is at once entertaining and instructive. It seems that the usual phenomena which we call psychical were known and rife in these old days; and, if we must admit that our knowledge is not materially advanced by the messages, it is a rare and valuable confirmation of what people, wise in their own conceit, have scornfully rejected to-day, to find these confirmations as far back as the early days of the last century.

JOTTINGS.

"Free Thought" (San Francisco, Cal., U.S.A.) has two articles on Du Prel's "Philosophy of the Mystic," which are entitled, "The Scientific Evidence of the Existence of the Soul." The writer is Dr. Jerome A. Anderson. They are marked by great ability. The conclusion arrived at is that "physiology, biology, psychology, and philosophy all require a higher ego to satisfy their respective phenomena."

"Strange Messages from the Next World: Posthumous Authorship with a Vengeance" is the way in which the "Pall Mall Gazette" expresses its fright at Mrs. Susan G. Horn's fifty-six essays from the illustrious dead. It is, it concludes, "a most remarkable production."

Our lively and absurd contemporary, the "Whirlwind," has been printing a series of "Letters to Absurd People." The absurd person this week is—who will guess?—the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster. Absurd! "Oh si sic omnes."

Charles Fox, M.R.C.S., delivered on the "18th of the ninth month," at St. George's Hall, Ramsgate, a lecture on the Great Pyramid. The lecturer is about to publish a work on the inexhaustible subject.

Mrs. Cora Richmond's discourses keep a sustained interest. The three last numbers of her "Weekly Discourse" are before us. The earliest was delivered at Mount Pleasant Camp; the next at Vicksburg Camp; and the latest at Cassadaga Camp.

The subjects are "A Flight of the Soul"; "One World at a Time, or the Answer of Spiritualism to Agnosticism"; and "The Angel of Immortality." All are well treated and worth perusal.

"The Harbinger of Light" (Melbourne) completes its twentieth volume. We wish it all success in the future. It does "M. A. (Oxon)" the honour to reproduce his address at St. Nicholas Cole Abbey Club, on "Personal Experiences of Spiritualism, with some Deductions Therefrom."

A companion paper is "My Experiences in Spiritualism," a lecture by Mrs. Harris in Melbourne, which is full of interesting experiences clearly and gracefully recorded.

"The Review of Reviews" is as good as ever. Two articles in it touch our subject. "The Progress of Theosophy" from the "North American Review," with a good portrait of Madame Blavatsky; followed by that lady's protest in "Lucifer," against what she regards as the hypocritical treatment of Russian atrocities by writers in the "Fortnightly and Universal Reviews." The other is entitled "Another Mattei Miracle." It records from the "National Review" another cure of cancer.

Perhaps we should include "The Horrors of Hypnotism: How to Limit them by Law," from the "Arena" (U.S.A.). The character sketch is Lord Wolseley, of whom an excellent portrait is given.

The beautiful little poem, "There is no Death," is the work of Mr. J. L. McCreery, of the United States. It has been credited to both the Lyttons, father and son, and to other known writers. Mr. McCreery is the author of "Songs of Toil and Triumph," and in that volume the poem appears. It was quoted, our readers will remember, in these columns, but we did not know to whom we ought to credit it.

The "Banner of Light" continues its full and interesting accounts from the various Camps. It has apparently been a successful season, with good weather and large audiences.

A word of appreciation of the greatly improved appearance and contents of the "Better Way." (Cincinnati, U.S.A.)

We have before us the first number of "Justice," which is described as "The Voice of the Toilers." It comes from Auckland, New Zealand, and costs twopence. It purports to be the expression in New Zealand of opinion on the questions which Henry George has made his own. These do not come within our scope.

In the "Buddhist Ray" (Santa Cruz, Cal.), Captain Pfounds has an article on Buddhism, to which the Editor

excepts. The article is long, the journal is very small, and Captain Pfoundes is "to be continued." Madame Blavatsky is said by the "Microcosm," quoted in this journal, to be "not less than four or five hundred years of age." The Editor chaffs mildly. He saw her come out of the ark. What nonsense some enthusiasts talk!

"The Progressive Thinker" (Chicago) tells us that "The Religion of Man and Ethics of Science," by Hudson Tuttle, and "From Soul to Soul," by Emma Tuttle, may be expected about October 1st. Price one dollar up to that date, one dollar and a-half after.

The same journal gives the first instalment of Hudson Tuttle's "Narrative of the Summer Land"; a thoughtful paper from Charles Dawbarn on Occult Phenomena, and the information that "the occult knowledge of Olney H. Richmond probably excels that of any other man living." There is virtue in that "perhaps."

Hudson Tuttle, in "The Better Way," says that the "State of New York stands before the world guilty of judicial murder—a crime that has horrified the civilised world." He refers, of course, to that execution by electricity, respecting which we have already expressed our opinion.

He thinks that this glorification of the executioner's art, combined with the hideous bungling that has so revolted the public conscience, will make it impossible to secure from a jury a conviction in any case of murder. He also holds that the State has no right, though it may arrogate it by enactment, to take the lives of its citizens. We do not go so far, but we think all such enactments will become obsolete.

"I would far rather," says Bacon, "believe all the legends of the Talmud and Koran than that this universal frame is without a mind." The question, however, is as to the mind. Have we the evidence requisite to enable us to express a confident opinion as the great Churchman did, or as the great Cardinal refused to do? To Liddon all faith revolved round the dogma of atonement by an Incarnate God. To Newman all was possible of belief on the authority of an infallible Church. Some of us see God everywhere, and regard Nature as the phenomenal manifestation of Him.

IS THERE A TO-MORROW FOR THE HUMAN RACE?

Ingersoll has been giving his view on the subject. For an avowed Materialist—which he is *not*, any more than Huxley is—the sentiments do honour to his head and heart. He was speaking at the anniversary of the New York Lotus Club, and said, among other things that deserve to be attended to, if only to disagree with them, and to learn how life strikes a man who is not afraid to look facts in the face, what here follows:—

Sometimes I think, and especially when I am at a meeting where they have what they call reminiscences, that a world with death in it is a mistake. What would you think of a man who built a railroad knowing that every passenger was to be killed—knowing that there was no escape? What would you think of the cheerfulness of the passengers if everyone knew that at some station, the name of which had not been called out, there was a hearse waiting for him; backed up there, horses fighting flies, driver whistling, waiting for you? Is it not wonderful that the passengers on that train really enjoy themselves? Is it not magnificent that every one of these under perpetual sentence of death after all can dimple their cheeks with laughter; that we, everyone doomed to become dust, can yet meet around this table as full of joy as spring is full of life, as full of hope as the heavens are full of stars? I tell you we have got a good deal of pluck.

And yet, after all, what would this world be without death? It may be from the fact that we are all victims, from the fact that we are all bound by common fate: it may be that friendship and love are born of this fact; but whatever the fact is, I am perfectly satisfied that the highest possible philosophy is to *enjoy to-day, not regretting yesterday, nor fearing to-morrow.*

But there is one splendid thing about the play called life. Suppose that when you die that is the end. The last

thing you know you are alive, and the last thing that will happen to you is the curtain, not falling, but the curtain rising on another thought, or that, as far as your consciousness is concerned, you will and must live for ever. No man can remember when he commenced, and no man can remember when he ends. As far as we are concerned we live both eternities, the one past and the one to come; and it is delightful to me to feel satisfied, and to feel in my own heart that I can never be certain that I have seen the faces I love for the last time.

When I am at such a gathering as this, I almost wish I had had the making of the world. What a world I would have made! In that world unhappiness would have been the only sin; melancholy the only crime; joy the only virtue. And whether there is another world, nobody knows. Nobody can affirm it; nobody can deny. Nobody can collect tolls from me, claiming that he owns a turnpike, and nobody can certainly say that the crooked path that I follow, beside which many roses are grown, does not lead to that place. He doesn't know. But if there is such a place, I hope that all good fellows will be welcome.

THE MESMER FESTIVAL IN DRESDEN.

From *Neue Spiritualistische Blätter.*

TRANSLATED BY "V."

All the leading Dresden journals give an account of the unveiling of the first Mesmer memorial in Dresden on May 26th last.

As already announced, twelve o'clock on Whit-Monday was appointed for the unveiling of a memorial to Dr. Franz Anton Mesmer, in the front garden of the infirmary of Professor Hofrichter, magnetiser, Chemnitzerstrasse No. 18. The heavy rain, which, at the time appointed, descended in a very unfestive manner, did not prevent the assembled company of Mesmer's adherents from carrying out the proposed ceremony; but, filled with enthusiasm for the spread and culture of the odic-biomagnetic treatment of disease, inaugurated by Mesmer, they braved the heavy downpour, and even twelve white-robed maidens cheerfully took part in the ceremony. A congress of Mesmer's admirers from every country had been convened on the previous day, and some scientific addresses were delivered on the morning of the day itself. Professor Hofrichter spoke on the treatment of cancer and other diseases, without the use of surgical instruments; and Herr Wittig, from Zwickau, on the magnetic treatment of epilepsy and St. Vitus' dance. A large number of persons of distinction of all classes were assembled; and doctors, lawyers, theologians, artists, &c., contributed representatives to this unique festival. The ceremony was inaugurated in the gaily decorated garden, with the singing of Kreutzer's hymn, "Das ist der Tag des Herrn" (This is the Lord's Day), by members of the noted choir of the Dresden Royal Opera Company; after which, on a platform, adorned with a bust of his Majesty the King of Saxony, Professor Hofrichter gave a short sketch of Mesmer's life.

Mesmer was born at Iznang on May 23rd, 1734. He applied himself to the study of medicine, and in 1764 attained the rank of doctor. In the exercise of his profession, he discovered the existence of a force in man, which he was able to apply to the use of healing, and he soon obtained successful results as a magnetiser in Vienna. But opposition and ill-feeling so embittered his life in Vienna, that he changed his residence to Paris, but he was not there long before he found bitter enemies among the doctors, though he obtained many adherents among the people, in consequence of his wonderful cures. The outbreak of the Revolution forced him to return to Germany; he settled first at Thurgau in Switzerland, and later on at Meersburg on the Lake of Constance, where he died at the age of eighty-two, on March 5th, 1815, after a life of useful activity. To the music of Beethoven's hymn, "The Heavens praise the Glory of God," the memorial (a bust of Mesmer) was uncovered, while crowns and chaplets of laurel, oak, and linden, sent from all parts of Germany, and even from foreign countries, were placed around it, with appropriate speeches and verses delivered by the white-robed maidens. The dedication address was given by Herr Magnetopath Wittig, of Zwickau, and was characterised by veneration for Mesmer, as well as by poetical beauty. In a narrower circle, a smaller private festival like-

wise took place in honour of the sculptor of the memorial, Johannes Hartmann. The ceremony was concluded by a cheer for their Majesties, the Emperor, and the King, and for the protectors of the country, not only against the enemy, but against the opponents of freedom of thought, and finished with the singing of "God save the King." While the ceremony was in process, telegraphic greetings were received from their Majesties, the King and Queen of Saxony; the Emperor of Austria; the King and Queen of Roumania; the Kings of Wurtemberg, Belgium, and of Sweden and Norway; the Archdukes of Baden, Weimar, and Oldenburg; the Dukes of Sachsen-Alterburg, Coburg-Gotha, &c., and from his Highness Prince Bismarck, from Friedrichsruh, as well as thirty-seven letters and telegrams, among which one from the son of Justinus Kerner, Hofrath Theobald Kerner, of Weinsberg, containing a humorous poem on the unveiling of the memorial, was received with tumultuous applause. The committee of the Mesmer festival of 1890 in Dresden, at the head of whom is Professor Hofrichter, may congratulate themselves on the success of this festival as well as the establishment of the new "Society of German Mesmerists," whose aim—the propagation of healing magnetism in Germany—is quite in unison with the celebration of the Mesmer festival in Dresden.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

A Psychological Puzzle.

SIR,—I have lately seen a sight, at a private interview with a greatly afflicted boy and his guardians, which, in its psychological aspect, renders it, I think, a subject fitting for the consideration of "LIGHT"; and for that consideration alone. Still, some description is necessary, physically considered; for my subject is an Indian youth who has one head, but, unfortunately, two bodies, and is now travelling through the country. I saw the Siamese twins in my early days, but I cannot but consider the present case, in some of its details, a far greater calamity. The two bodies are joined at the chest from the arms and shoulders to the soles of the feet, but the second body "has no inherent powers of motion in itself." It is headless and soulless, but if hurt the boy feels it. And yet, for us, here is the crucial point: There is deep design in this junction. "The second body is attached to the boy by strong ligaments," we are told, and "is hooked on to the boy by ball-and-socket joints, so that the second body can be moved with facility," having no motion in itself.

Now, what have we to say to such a weighty calamity as this? The boy with a soul is most pleasing in manners and conversation, and he speaks English well. "Laloo," we are told "is a native of Oovon (in Oudh); he is seventeen years of age, five feet two in height, his body properly developed, and head remarkably well formed. He is very intelligent and good looking, and his health is excellent." But he is perhaps more afflicted than a leper, though he is as God made him, with a perpetual incubus "hooked on" to him, tacked upon him, with design—an incubus only to be separated by death.

Now, what have we, in a general way, to say to a case like this? "A pretty thing," I heard some one remark, while gazing at his portrait, "to bring such a creature as that to a respectable place like this. I wonder they are not ashamed of themselves." Have we any wiser or more thoughtful comments to make on this sad freak? Have we any psychological hypothesis to propound? We may remember that the Siamese twins were Buddhists; and this afflicted boy is a Hindu; and both their religions agree in the dictum: "We often have our purgatories here."

Now, if the Siamese twins had remained in their own country, instead of ending their days in America, might not the Buddhist priests have justified the Supreme Being in His works, and comforted the twins by suggesting that they may have been twin brothers, bound together in iniquity in a former life; and pointed a moral by suggesting that they were paying the penalty, in a new life, for their former sins, by being unwillingly joined in punishment now; but that, at their deaths, they would be set free simultaneously? And so it happened, at least in part, with the Siamese twins, for they died one soon after the other; and there were very touching scenes at those deaths, which proved that the idea of separating them, during life, was futile. But they may have had a life lesson for previous ill deeds by which they

may profit for all eternity. And so it may be with this poor boy. He and his parasite must live and die together, carnally. There is something very awful in the unequal sufferings of men in the flesh. We doubt not it may be accounted for by evolution. And there is something very awful in the sufferings of some animals, reptiles, and insects, not only through man, but in many phases of their natural lives. This is more difficult to understand, but we think it can be solved by the doctrine of evolution also.

I have spoken of what a Buddhist teacher may have said to comfort the Siamese twins in their trial. And what might a Hindu priest say to this poor boy? Might he not say: Perhaps you had a twin brother, in a former life, and robbed him of his birthright, or imprisoned, or killed him; and now you are suffering the penalty, while your brother's soul is in paradise. There is a story of an iron mask in Europe which a king's son had to wear through life, and it is reasonable to suppose that the actors in that life tragedy have not escaped unscathed, whether it be a cardinal, a queen, or a king himself, in later years, twin brother of the sufferer. And those who robbed the son of Louis XVI. of his birthright, and imprisoned him, may be suffering for it now, somewhere. When I said to this poor Hindu lad: "I hope you will soon make enough money to go home and live happily," how he brightened! He is accompanied here by two immense German boar hounds, always at hand to protect him from the roughs; and from certain curious scientists, perhaps, who are not generally numbered in that category.

AN OBSERVER.

Coincidences.

SIR,—As you have—very rightly, I think—queried the propriety of the term "Coincidences" to denote some of the experiences lately recorded in "LIGHT" under that heading, perhaps you will allow me to suggest a test for that classification.

"Coincidence" is a term of non-committal. We raise the question whether there are natural connections in phenomena of human experience, not accounted for by any hypothesis already entertained. We seek first to ascertain whether coincidences, which seem quite outside the explanatory hypotheses even of Spiritualism, Occultism, or Psychism in general, are of sufficiently frequent occurrence to compel the supposition of a natural connection, even though the converging events have their lines of physical or other antecedents apparently quite unconnected with each other. Should such a connection be substantiated, we are perhaps not far from a generalisation which would offer a magnificent theory of the world and of objective life. We should know better what to say about "Destiny" and "Providence," we should have the conception of a philosophy of history better than Hegel's, and be able to exclude from our vocabulary that term of ignorance, "Chance." Thus the importance of the evidence cannot be overrated, and those of your correspondents who apologise for the "triviality" of their experiences of this kind may be assured that it is just *because* they and we can at present discover no purpose or meaning in them, that the record of them is desirable.

The *exclusive* test, therefore, which I suggest, is this: Should we accept the circumstances reported as evidence of any agency or faculty in which we have already learned to believe as proved or probable? If so, the narrative should not be classed under "Coincidences." For instance: In "LIGHT," of September 20th, there is an account of a dream in which the successful numbers of a future lottery were presented to the dreamer. It is a valuable and important fact as proof of previsions clairvoyance. (So important, that it is to be regretted that the independent testimony of the servant to whom the dream was told, and who was employed to play the numbers, is not added.) But that is not the question raised by the cases whose significance, if any, has to be sought in a wider and more metaphysical law. The same remark applies to the narrative of "H.S.," in the same paper. On the other hand, that which follows (signed "J. R. Colvin") does appear to me to be properly classified, for although it is possible to surmise a special direction, by a spirit-friend or by the sub-conscious self, of the young lady's attention to the very passage she would have to translate next day, or a special interference with the examiner's selection of the passage, to correspond with a preparation by the pupil in itself accidental, yet the objective character of both the circumstances makes such explanations remote, and brings

the case more into line with those in which no subjective element is at all supposable. For this classification we want to exclude individual purposive agency, whether conscious or unconscious, and whether of man or spirit. We want also to exclude telepathy, which is, perhaps, a nearer explanation of the above case, if we suppose such a rapport between examiner and pupil, that the latter's attention to the passage in Schiller guided the examiner to the selection of it, by way of unconscious suggestion. The "Borderland" cases will necessarily be numerous, but under "Coincidences" should not be included such as are obviously referable to a familiar hypothesis.

C. C. M.

[We have endeavoured to place under one category cases that have been called "Coincidences." There are others which are not to be so classified: and there are some which we have called "Psychical Problems." This latter class will receive some attention now from us, for it seems to us that it contains within it much material for thought. It need not be said that all coincidences should be recorded: the more inexplicable the better; even the most trivial are welcome. The letter of "C.C.M." puts very clearly what our own criticism would be on what we have printed. We have not been so careful to sift cases as we might have been if we had been on the spot. We have been absent from London for some weeks, but we hope that the paper has not suffered.—ED. OF LIGHT.]

Re-births.

SIR,—In my last letter on re-births, you do me the honour to insert certain Editorial queries. I will do my best to answer them as briefly as possible. You say, "Surely it is not impossible to state concisely a theory that is held to be so illuminative, and to give some reasons for holding it." I perfectly agree with you in that statement, and should propose to enunciate the theory thus:—"The theory of re-incarnation teaches the evolution of a spiritual principle from a latent condition in the mineral world to heights of development and power inappreciable to the conception of man, by the gradual unfoldment of its attributes by means of a succession of lives alternately incarnate and disincarnate."

This theory is not arrived at by the usual method of induction from observed facts. We have received it ready made, so to speak, together with an immense amount of detailed information as to how it works. From a careful study of these details vouchsafed, and their comparison with the facts and theories of the sciences, it is found that the revealed harmonises with the observed; and, further, that it explains many otherwise irreconcilable, or incomprehensible, phenomena and facts, both of everyday experience, as well as less noticeable ones.

There are no facts that are incompatible with the theory so far as we know, and the further we push our investigations the more do new facts sustain the probability of Re-incarnation. Mr. Wallace's latest work, "Darwinism," is an eminent example of this. I have lent my copy to a friend, so cannot quote precisely just at present. But his investigations show that there is a very great amount of variation in every species, and that the phenomenon of representation of one phase of life by a certain species in one spot has its counterpart in other parts. The almost proof of the survival of the fittest; the extreme fertility of the lower orders of life, and their extreme mortality; the phenomena of mimicry; are all facts or theories that find their proper place in the revealed theory of evolution by Re-incarnation. The same remark applies to every science. The arrangement of systems, and systems of systems, together with the disposition of planets, is in harmony with what we hear concerning their functions, in connection with Re-incarnation. The arrangement of fossil life agrees intimately with what we are told concerning macrocosmic evolution by plurality of lives, and with what we should deduce from that theory. Chemistry, Botany, and Zoology deal with the potentialities, and subsequently with the powers of spirit, and their facts in the majority of cases are at once seen to fit into their proper niches; while those whose explanation is not so easily seen are nowhere in direct opposition. And so on with all the other sciences mentioned in my previous letter. All combine to support, and none condemn with their facts, the Re-incarnation theory. Such, therefore, are the reasons why it is accepted; it is not claimed as fact, but theory, as yet un-

proved, but which is rendered more and more probable the further one pushes one's investigations.

Comment is needless on "Colenso's" statements concerning a law that Mr. Wallace hints at, but which he stamps and affirms as evident, on the strength of the two examples he quotes. Such jumping to great conclusions on very slight evidence is not scientific, nor one might suppose does it indicate a great amount of logical capacity.

Lastly, you ask, "Is assertion all on one side?" Probably not, but the idea that is expressed by the advice "assert, denounce, defy, but don't argue," is a fair picture of the state of mind I was deprecating in the writing of the seven spiritual scientists, and should have been taken as a whole. However, my observation seems to show that, between the two sides in this controversy, each of those characteristics is more strongly manifested in the writings of opponents than in those of exponents.

1st M.B. (LOND.).

The London Occult Society.

SIR,—I trust that you will allow me space to inform your readers that the London Occult Society will commence its sixth session on Sunday, October 5th, at 7 p.m., by a course of lectures on "Spiritual Religion," by Mr. Read and myself. We have had great difficulties in securing a hall, but have succeeded in taking the Seymour Club, 4, Bryanston-place, Bryanston-square. This session we intend to make a new departure. Feeling that the higher occult truths are not yet capable of being universally disseminated, and yet seeing the chaotic condition of the masses on things spiritual, we have decided to preach to them, in the form they are most accustomed to (namely, a spiritual service), those fundamental truths of our philosophy which are so fitted to revive the hopes of humanity in an after life. We intend holding a musical service before the lecture, the outlines of which I have received spiritually. As our room is small, it can only be a miniature attempt at what we might do if we were all united. Such as it is, I hope it will please our friends, and that your readers will come to our hall and give us their opinions upon our effort, and also excuse any defects in the hall itself, as I can assure them that the bigotry around is so intense it is almost impossible to get a room at all. I hope our friends will help us either by joining our society or in any way they can. Any wishing to do so will oblige by communicating by letter with our Secretary, 33, Henry-street, St. John's Wood.

A. F. TINDALL, A.Mus. T.C.L., President.

Mr. and Mrs. Everitt.

SIR,—Some ten years ago, on the occasion of our good and generous friends' first visit to Nottingham, I was fortunate enough to obtain the privilege of a seat at a private séance given by Mrs. Everitt. Although I had been reading and investigating for quite ten years prior to this, I must confess that the evidence of active disembodied spiritual identities was, on that occasion, more unquestionably apparent than any I had previously met with. The conditions, too, I must admit, tended to rob one of that powerful and much-hugged objection—"it's their living, there is good pay at the end of it." This was inapplicable with them. Here we had, as your Carnforth correspondent so ably and powerfully puts it, "People who take no money, who care not for our hospitality, to whom, indeed, our hospitality may be an infliction; people well-to-do, and with a good home, who come to the North to mix with all kinds of folks, they know not whom; to stay the night, they know not where; to come in close contact with many strangers, necessarily of the working class, and to hold séances with them," and then with much force, he asks, "Is it likely they have come to deceive?" Then, a little farther on he also asks, "What motive can they have to deceive? Why should they suffer the annoyances of long journeys, &c., just to deceive people, and, perchance, to be exposed?" Then he truly says, "The idea is simply preposterous."

These, sir, were the ideas which I, and many others, entertained after having had the privilege and pleasure of sitting with these worthy workers at the time above mentioned. Holding, then, these ideas, you will readily understand my feelings of gratification in reading in "LIGHT" a few weeks since, that these good friends once more proposed leaving ease, comfort, and all the many friends surrounding them, to follow the voice of duty, and seek out those

workers in the cause, however poor they may be, who may not have had such tangible and unmistakable evidence as is presented through the mediumship of Mrs. Everitt.

Knowing that the society which existed at the time of their first visit had, some years ago, "gone the way of all flesh," and that very few of its members were connected with the present one, I ventured to write and urge the claims of the existing society for a visit on their present tour. Unknown to me this was ably supported by our indefatigable secretary, Mr. Burrell. Last Thursday evening, at the house of their host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. Everitt entertained, and, I think, instructed (which is even better) a few of the committee, and several new investigators, numbering altogether thirteen persons. We were soon made aware of the presence of unembodied intelligences by the raps, which varied from tiny ticks to thuds that caused the floor to shake. By the same means we were informed as to our right positions in the circle; and also requested to read three different passages of Scripture which were wonderfully appropriate to the occasion. Though asked to do so, no one could guess the subject of the third passage, I believe in Genesis, but it, also, was very appropriate. Beautiful flitting lights (on the gas being put out) were soon visible; these would travel along the walls, ceiling, and straight down on to the table. On one of these lights coming down the front of the piano, the writer asked for one of the notes to be struck; this was acceded to, and three different notes were struck. The piano was behind Mrs. Everitt, and quite two feet from her chair back. "Znippy" soon joined in the conversation, and "asserted his own individuality apart from that of any one else." Truly, this is the "most astounding feature" of the séance. The tube was carried over our heads, first patting one on this side the table, then on the other. Hands and fingers were distinctly felt, the writer having his arm twice pinched by "Znippy." All felt deeply grateful for this demonstration of the truth of our teaching.

On Friday evening Mr. Everitt gave a most interesting lecture on his wide experiences, and the astounding phenomena he had witnessed. A large audience were highly pleased, and gave him a hearty vote of thanks for his and Mrs. Everitt's visit. A séance followed, when nearly twenty persons were favoured with a repetition of the facts above described.

J. J. ASHWORTH.

SIR,—On Tuesday, September 16th, the Sheffield Spiritualists had very great pleasure in welcoming Mr. and Mrs. Everitt. In the evening a tea and meeting took place at the Midland Café, Pond-street. The room was full, and Mr. Everitt gave us a most interesting lecture on his experiences with Mrs. Everitt and other well-known mediums. As there were many friends who could not get into the meeting, Mr. Everitt continued his experiences on Wednesday night, and again the room was full. At the close of the meeting a vote of thanks was given to Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, expressing very great delight in having the opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with them during their stay in Sheffield. We have had the usual manifestations, including the direct spirit voice which many of us had not heard before. We had a very interesting phenomenon during the time we were getting our tea on Wednesday. A fly or stamp hammer, which was working in the yard, made a very great noise when it fell; there came the exact imitation on the table, which shook all the things that were on it.

M. HARDY.

"Third-hand Evidence."

SIR,—I asked a chance visitor to read my story of "Finding Water" ("LIGHT," August 2nd) and then, adding nothing to what she had read, begged her to say how many persons besides myself appeared to her concerned in the narrative. She replied: "Three. Your friend, *her* brother, and the clairvoyante." However, according to Mr. Myers, she was "not justified" in answering correctly!

Mr. Myers now concedes that "the case is nearly as good as second-hand," but seems quite seriously to imply that the clairvoyante's testimony would have made it less open to suspicion!

I never said that I could not be expected to tell my stories in "any given way," but only not in the given way of the Society for Psychical Research. This limited assertion of independence is not precisely equivalent to a reckless

defiance of the "rules of evidence commonly accepted in science, law, and business." I never "frankly" or otherwise, "disclaimed external proof." I simply contend that I told a plain unvarnished tale, *not* "loosely," but exactly and carefully; and if the "wider public" (outside the Society for Psychical Research) comes across it, let that wider public be the judge. And let Mr. Myers and "M. B." agree to differ, ours is a very pretty quarrel as it stands.

September 21st, 1890.

M. B.

Creation of Matter.

SIR,—It seems to me that when Mr. Harpur and so many people talk of believing the worlds were created out of nothing, they are misled by the exigencies of grammar, which makes "nothing" a noun substantive, so that the word becomes the name of an illusory something, and the absurdity of the notion that anything can come of nothing is veiled from being what it ought to be, "self-evident." It is easy to say all things are possible with God; but absurdities are not possible with Him. They are only possible with human aberration such as the case in point, wherein nothing is regarded as something. But as Swedenborg says:—"Nothing is nothing, and to make anything out of nothing is contradictory, and what is contradictory is against the light of truth, which is from the Divine Wisdom; and whatever is not of the Divine Wisdom is also not of the Divine Omnipotence. (D.L.W. 283.)" However, the phrase, creation out of nothing, is not only a method of expressing our ignorance of the origin of matter, but also of avoiding the pantheistic danger which identifies nature with God. Hence a certain adaptability to our faculties may, perhaps, be admitted in the contradictory notion that out of nothing something was taken.

W. W. F.

Christian Science Healing.

SIR,—Will you allow me a few lines in reply to your correspondent "Beryl"? I rejoice that she is studying Christian Science Healing. I know that she will find in it exactly what she is seeking, that which will prove to her that she is "strong enough and spiritual enough to throw all physic to the dogs," to lay aside all medical treatment whatsoever, and to help, not herself only, but others. She asks for "experiences." As one of Miss Frances Lord's earliest students, and one who has been blessed, not only by the reading of her book, but by the kindest personal help and instruction from her, I shall be only too glad if "Beryl," as a sister student, will accept any assistance that my experiences may give her, either through correspondence or an interview. And the way need not be either long or difficult. I was treating successfully before I had studied Christian Science many weeks.

We hope, as the autumn advances, that further lectures will be given on the subject. If "Beryl" would like to attend them, we shall be delighted to welcome her.

60, Endlesham-road, Balham. HELEN EDITH GREEN.

September 18th.

The Kensington and Notting Hill Spiritualist Association.

SIR,—Will you kindly allow me to trespass on your space in order to bring the above association under the attention of your readers? Our open-air labours in Hyde Park terminate next Sunday, and with a view of continuing our work it has been deemed advisable to procure a hall for the ensuing winter. It is plain that the efforts we have strenuously put forth in the past work deserve the sympathy and encouragement of Spiritualists, and we hope that our members and friends will come forward and help us in the work which we propose carrying on in the future with the same energy as this association has displayed in the past. The literature we have distributed (numbering about 8,500 copies) has, without doubt, created so much interest, that, now our open-air labours are over, many inquirers will wish to know of the centres of operation, and thus it is deemed necessary that a hall shall be opened in this district. We can only say that the workers, who have so actively and successfully helped us in the past, are ready to continue their labours. It is hoped that all in sympathy with the proposal will attend a meeting to be held at 68, Cornwall-road, Bayswater, on Wednesday, October 1st, at 8.30 p.m. Proposals, subscriptions, donations, &c., may be sent to the chairman, Mr. H. N. Earl, 55, Ledbury-road, Bayswater, or to the honorary secretary, PERCY SMYTH.

SOCIETY WORK.

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

CARDIFF PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—Mr. Victor Wildes on Sunday morning delivered an able address on "Going Forward," and in the evening he delivered an eloquent oration to a large and appreciative audience on "The Word of God; Where to Find It and How to Read It." Lyceum as usual, 3 p.m.

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, W.—A good address was given on Sunday by Mr. W. McKenzie on "Immortality." He treated the subject ably and replied to questions satisfactorily. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Healing and Clairvoyance; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., members' quarterly meeting. Thursday, at 7.45 p.m., Mrs. Wilkins; Saturday, 7.45 p.m., Mrs. Hawkins.—C. WHITE, Hon. Sec.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S.E.—On Sunday last Mr. Read spoke on "The God Idea in Spiritualism." On Thursday next, 23rd inst., and two following Thursday evenings at 8 p.m., Professor Chadwick will continue his course of lectures on Phrenology and Mesmerism. Last Thursday's address was very interesting, and the experiments were highly successful.—GEORGE E. GUNN, Hon. Sec.

GLASGOW, 29, GREAT WESTERN-ROAD.—On Sunday morning Mr. Hutchinson read an able paper on "The Duties and Dangers on the Road to Socialism." The paper was well appreciated. In the evening Mr. Adams discoursed on matters relating to the Bible. The Lyceum was well attended and ably conducted. On Thursday, 18th inst., a meeting was held at 8 p.m. for development and experiment. Mr. J. Griffin discoursed on "The Value of a Knowledge of Spirit Communion," magnifying the greatness of man and the majesty of God.—J. GRIFFIN, Sec.

WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday morning Mr. Dale gave a good address upon "The Distinction between Lord and God," which gave rise to an animated discussion. A Christian (orthodox) will continue next Sunday morning. In the evening a short address was given by Mr. Veitch, after which followed some fairly successful clairvoyance by Mrs. Bliss. This being her first appearance in public she must be complimented on the evidence of spirit communion which was given through her on Sunday evening. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mr. Dornbusch; 7 p.m., Rev. Dr. Young, "The English Socialism of To-day."—J. VEITCH, Sec.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, CHEPSTOW HALL, 1, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday last Mr. R. J. Lees delivered a very exhaustive address, dealing with the "Bible Mediums," showing from the records that fraud, lies, and deception were rife, as now, and that weeds will grow even in the most beautiful garden. There was a good attendance. Next Sunday morning, questions on the "Bible Mediums"; afternoon, at three o'clock, Lyceum for children; and at 6.30, address by Mr. R. J. Lees, on the "Relationship of Spiritualism to Christianity." On Friday evening, at Chepstow Hall, free public healing, at 7.15 p.m., to be followed by service at 8.30 p.m. All friends welcome. Our quarterly social tea on Sunday, October 12th, at five o'clock. Tickets, adults 9d., children 4d.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec., 36, Kemerton-road, S.E.

KENSINGTON AND NOTTING HILL SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.—Open Air Work, Hyde Park, near Marble Arch. Last Sunday we mustered in strong force to hold the last meeting of the season here, and it proved one of the largest yet held, as there was a good amount of opposition which created great attention, and, together with our blue banner, made our assembly quite an attractive one. Messrs. Drake, Bullock, Hopcroft, and A. M. Rodger each spoke with energy. An orthodox Christian (Mr. Neighbour) widely distributed a tract, "Beware of Spiritualism," and did good service in creating inquiry. Some 500 copies of tracts, periodicals, &c., were widely distributed. The current issues of "LIGHT," "Medium," and "Two Worlds" can always be obtained at the park gates. Next Sunday a series of meetings will be held to celebrate the last Sunday of open air work in Victoria Park, when it is hoped that Spiritualists will muster in good force. The speakers will be Messrs. Bullock, Drake, Emms, A. M. Rodger, Hopcroft, Smyth, Houchin, Cannon, and several others. Meetings at 11.30 a.m. and 3 p.m.—PERCY SMYTH, Hon. Sec., 68, Cornwall-road, Bayswater, W.

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.

IS LIFE WORTH LIVING?

BY LIZZIE DOTEN.

"Qui Patitur Vincit."

The following poem was delivered by Miss Lizzie Doten, at Lake Pleasant, Sunday afternoon, August 17th. Miss Doten stated that it was not to be considered an impromptu poem, but this was its first presentation to the public.

"Who suffers conquers." He who would attain
That perfect peace, which fears not loss nor pain,
Through calm endurance must the victory gain."

Thus said the spirit—and my soul replied—
"With bleeding feet I walk o'er paths untried.
Oh sacred Patience! with my soul abide."

Long had I watched, and anxiously had fed
The lamp of life, for one whose pathway led
Down to the land of silence and the dead.

And now, while midnight, with its shadows, lay
Across the pathway of the coming day,
The tide of life was ebbing swift away.

I knew that Death, with eyes of tender gloom,
Whose hand so often plucks life's fairest bloom,
Watched with me in the silence of that room.

I feared him not, he seemed so calm and still,
Nor did I count it as a deadly ill
The perfect law Death waited to fulfil.

And yet Life's mighty problems vexed me sore,
And ever as I scanned their meaning o'er
The darkness deepened in my soul the more.

I thought of all that made life desolate—
Of cold suspicion, and of cruel hate,
Of hope deferred, and help that came too late;

Of feet, drawn downward to the tempter's snare,
Of lips, that quivered with a voiceless prayer,
Of souls that sat in darkness and despair;

Of patient brows, that crowns of suffering wore,
Of sad farewells, that tender heartstrings tore,
Of sweet young faces, seen on earth no more;

And, as I deeply mused thereon, I said—
"If I were God, and He were in my stead,
I would not rest till all were comforted."

Then through the lonely places of my soul
A sense as of a Living Presence stole,
Strong to sustain and tender to control.

It spake no language, and no voice was heard,
Yet all my soul with eager longing stirred
To catch the import of that living word.

And thus it spake, "Seek thou to do and be,
Life must be lived, before the soul can see
The meaning of the Inner Mystery."

The morning came, and also came the end,
I saw the great white calm of Death descend,
And seal with peace the forehead of my friend.

Then o'er my soul went surging to and fro
A nameless longing, to more surely know
That which my doubting heart had questioned so.

I gently laid my hand upon that head—
White with the snows the passing years had shed;
"Was life worth living? Oh, my friend," I said.

And lo! as kindred souls in silence blend,
He answered, "Be thou comforted. Oh, friend,
Life is worth living. Death is not the end.

What was, and is, and evermore shall be,
Enfolds us all in its eternity,
And blest indeed are those whom Death makes free."

My soul was satisfied, I raised my eyes—
Filled with the tears that would unbidden rise,
And read life's lesson in the morning skies.

Above the mists and shadows of the night
The new-born day climbed up the golden height,
And all the stars went inward, lost in light.

Thus, like the stars, our lives with light shall blend,
And onward still from height to height ascend.
Life is worth living. Death is not the end.

Few people look on an object as it really is; but regard it through some fantastic prism presented by their own prejudices, which invests it with a false colour.