

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

I have received the *Inquirer* (May 31st) containing a sermon preached at Little Portland-street Chapel, by the Rev. J. C. Street, on the occasion of the annual conference of the Unitarian Association. It is one more sign of the times. As I keep an eye on these signs I should like to reprint the sermon. It is worthy of perusal throughout. But I have not space, and a fastidious public that has grown accustomed to having its mental food minced would shy at a sermon. So it may be better to treat it as a subject for note and comment in these fragments of thought that I purvey. First of all, I am not dealing with theology. I do not concern myself with that husk. I do concern myself very seriously with religion. For I believe that the stagnant waters of the soul need troubling to keep them sweet, and a sense of what we call religion does it. Theology, such as we have known it, freezes them up. I do not want to be frozen. Matthew Arnold once said in effect that we were living in an age of change, and that the most needful thing for every nation was to discern its own condition, and to apply the best remedy. Mr. Haweis, in a well-known discourse, told his people that it was essential to restate old truths in terms of modern thought. That has been the process of which the Bible is the record. It has been done regularly as soon as an epoch closes and the men of the day have outgrown the swaddling clothes of their infancy. For no statement of truth is finite. Man has at a given time only so much as he can grasp. That should be a self-evident truth. Compare the grasp of truth shown in the Pentateuch with that revealed in the Gospels, and then think that for all these 1,900 years there has been no improvement on that which Jesus Christ taught us. What a tremendous advance was that!

We have grown to understand it better, because we are better ourselves, but the old truth is as good now as it was when first taught. I do not think I am wrong in regarding Mr. Street's sermon on a great occasion as remarkable. I may fitly give some account of it: for these matters enter largely into our Spiritualism, or they ought so to do. One of the reproaches of Spiritualism has been that it has been iconoclastic, destructive and not constructive. The time of destruction we must have—it is all around us—but miscellaneous hewing down is not to be encouraged. It is easy to blow up a priceless relic of architecture that is dilapidated and to erect on its place a mud hut. It seems to me that all worthy efforts to conserve the old faith are to be encouraged; and I claim for Spiritualism that it does more to that end than all the wordy efforts of the pulpit. It does not matter what we teach. We will look to that hereafter,

when we have cleared the ground. Meantime we prove that which no one has proved before. Men have believed because certain truths have been revealed. Men have declined to believe because they did not accept the ground of revelation. It has been reserved for us to demonstrate survival after death by scientific methods. That is something, but we propose to do more. We desire to read the lesson of this life into the future, and to show men how the religion of Spiritualism should enter into their day's work. Mr Street had nothing of this in his mind: yet he did it well

With the special Unitarian arguments and comments I have no concern. But he took a wider view. What, he asked, is the outlook, "as creeds have tottered and authority has been shaken to its foundation"? His answer is impressive. Instead of inquiries about theological dogmas men ask, "Can you tell us anything about God?" Is there a God, and do you know anything about Him? As you have swept away the idols of the world, have you left us any Almighty Father? More still. They say:—

"Here we are toiling, suffering, dying; our children slip away from us in sickness to the grave, our household treasures drop from our side; death is ever making havoc among us, and we ourselves are hurrying to the tomb. Can you tell us, is there any life beyond? May we look for any light after all this darkness? Answer us—answer us, and let us be at peace!"

They press upon us again with their eager inquiry. They say, "We are living in a tremendous maelstrom of noise and struggle, and in the thick of clashing interests, where every man seems to be fighting for his own hand, and selfishness is triumphant. Can you tell us, is there any true principle to guide us? Can you see a way to bring all this under some righteous law? Is there anywhere to be found justice, and goodwill, and love?"

We find men searching for God, inquiring about immortality, and pressing social problems upon us of supreme magnitude, and asking us what we have to say. These are the questions of the day. Science, literature, humanity demand from every true man some answer, and men who have eyes to see, and ears to hear, can see the upraised, imploring hands, sometimes wringing in agony, and can hear the pleading multitudinous cry, like the noise of many waters swelling up from the troubled experience of innumerable souls.

Men think nowadays, and this is the outcome of their thought. Moreover they think honestly. The days are past when men set to work to disbelieve. The Bishop of Manchester lately said that Agnosticism was giving place to some more distinctively religious form of thought. Yes and no. Yes: in the sense that men wish to believe. No: in the sense that they will not swallow the husks. We want a restatement of truth, and a new setting forth of what God has given us without what man has added to it.

In the days not so long past it seemed that iconoclasm was to be triumphant. But it has turned out that the lath and plaster daubed with the untempered mortar of man's devices is all that has gone. The material of the Divine Builder is of a more enduring character. He is conterminous with nature. We are ever and everywhere in the Infinite Presence—feel the pulsations of His being in all life and power—hear His voice in every

breeze and from every sunlit bush, and catch the inspiration from His spirit in every uplifting thought and every kindling emotion. To me all this has come with a power and majesty absolutely irresistible, and Paul's words, "in Him we live and move and have our being," are charged with an ever-increasing fulness of meaning. And my experience is the experience of others. Out of the clouds has the Infinite come in a splendour and glory hitherto unknown. As I realise all this I find myself in the presence of God. I lack only the right word to speak. I cannot name Him. I cannot define Him. I cannot comprehend Him. But He besets me behind and before. He lays His hand upon me. His love enfolds me. I can lean on His bosom. I can trust Him to the uttermost. I am the creation of His love, and I am safe wherever I go. As I thus realise God, I feel that He does not belong to me only, to my Church, to my nation, to my age; but that He holds the universe in His embrace, and is the father of all life, and so of all mankind. I may have lost my creeds and the lessons of my books, but I have found my God, and I am safe in His arms. This blessed message I can preach to all the world.

And this is a higher conception of the Supreme than any anthropomorphic idea that was yet devised.

Passing to another question, "Is there a life after death?" the preacher spoke very plainly:—

Doubt and denials are in the air. The old sanctions and supports are gone. There is no authority left to decide the matter for us. No gleaming message is written in fire-letters across the sky—no majestic form rises above our human race with a proclamation from the unseen world—and no voice speaks out of the awful silences of the world to tell the story to our souls. But are we left answerless, adrift, hopeless? I think not. What of the cry itself? Can you imagine so agonising an appeal, coming so clearly from the heart of man, so general, if not universal an appeal, and not see in it the prophecy and the promise of an answer? Is this vast longing a delusion? Are we the playthings of the Infinite? Can we think that desires are stirred within simply that we may be deceived and cheated? One great lesson which modern science has taught us is that in nature there is no such thing as annihilation. What then of this human identity—this life of many phases and experiences—passing through an endless variety of changes, but preserving itself ever the same throughout? May a grain of sand not perish, and an individual soul cease to be? Is it conceivable that while the lesser holds on to the eternal, the greater, nay the greatest, passes away like a dream? It cannot be. And when you think of it, do you find no assurance in the knowledge that the greatest souls the world has seen—the mountain peaks of humanity—are the very ones who are clearest in their hope and their seeing? To them mortal life was only a phase, onwardness into the beyond was necessary, was normal; they needed more room than earth could give, more opportunities than time could furnish. Powers grew, possibilities multiplied, there was enlarging fitness for Divine things, immortality was stamped upon their natures and necessitated by their condition. It seems to me that any answer to the great human cry, any response to the struggling, sobbing human heart, other than that of affirmation, would be not simply illogical, unphilosophical, and unscientific, but would be the bitterest cruelty, and the most wanton play with all that is most sacred and holy.

It is so. The instinct of the race is not in error. But races develop slowly, and it is only now that the demand of a scientific age is receiving a satisfactory answer to that question. Some souls survive death. We prove that. Then we argue to others and to the future of the race. We are not, perhaps, able to talk as glibly as some do of immortality, but we prove the survival of man, and demonstrate that death does not kill.

Once again the preacher turns to the life that now is. And here, venturing no personal opinion, I permit him to speak for himself. The problems with which he deals are perplexing: the skein is tangled. The solution is not in my mind, and before the vexed question is solved I shall expect further perplexities:—

Having found God, and got hold of the reality of the life

eternal for man, I can look with clearer eyes over this diversified life of the world to-day. I can see the fighting, the suffering, and the sorrow, I can hear the sounds of woe. The selfishness of the strong, the grasping of the rich, the tyranny of the classes all come to me with dreadful vividness. I see the grinding of the faces of the poor. I note how the lives of men, women, and children are sweated away. I see the parasites of the world fattening upon the misery of their fellows. Vicious trades exist which thrive upon immorality, human lives are sacrificed to human greed, the few grasp the heritage and the birthright of mankind, the poor perish, the weak are driven shrinking to the wall; health, virtue, chastity, love, are sacrificed to the fell spirit of greed, lust, ambition, and power. For a long period the stifled cry of the sufferers has hardly been heard; a yoke has been laid upon them so heavy to bear that they had hardly strength to speak; the world has been full of contrasts, but the sufferers have been silenced. The day of enfranchisement is at hand. Men are rising. Labour is organising. The multitude are finding a voice. Unheeded in the past, they will be heard now. They are asking many questions. Are we getting justice? Is labour fairly paid? Have we no rights upon the land which God made? May men thrust upon us trades which tempt our children, which destroy our weak, which lead us into wrong when we are overwheeled with the burdens of the day? Look at our homes—are they fit for us? See how we are fed and clad—ought these things to be? Do you not know that here in England nearly a million of us are in the workhouses, and that millions more are on the borders of starvation? Many of us are made drunkards—many of us are drawn from our labour and made to fight—most of us have a hard task to live—in this fair and prosperous land, where God's sun shines, where churches abound, and where we profess such piety and holiness—dare you say to us, as children of God and heirs of immortality, that there is any justification of these things? These are the pressing questions of the day, and they must be answered. No Church has any title to exist that cannot answer them. "If we could dethrone that brute-god Mammon, and put a Spirit God in his place" (Carlyle), we should move a mighty step in advance, and be on the way to the solution of our great problem. But at present we echo the words of the Laureate:—

" Ah! when shall all men's good
Be each man's rule, and universal peace
Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,
Thro' all the circle of the golden year?"

In this, be it noted, there is nothing new, but there is much that is true. There is much that touches the problems of the day, even if it does not solve them. The recognition of the majestic character of the Christ is a cheering sign, for He towers above all humanity. He taught us more than we know. His doctrine of love to God and man, His recognition of woman in her fitting place in the world, His gracious tenderness, and His limitless love have been a pattern to all ages since He adorned the earth. Nor need this prevent our recognition of the other great teachers, only we know Him better and we love Him, therefore, more. In proportion, I firmly believe, as we translate into action the precepts of the Christ we shall live worthy lives. And that I say with a full recognition of the fact that some of the precepts so given to us are not workable in the wear and tear of this world.

The *Scots Observer*, which is quite one of our best weekly Reviews, abler, fresher, and less jaded than the older weeklies have become, has an article on "Dead Men's Dreams." Mr. Myers, "in one of those flashes of inspiration which occasionally illumine his philosophical discourses," has so defined a ghost. Just as the living being can project himself to a distant scene, and, meeting with favourable conditions, can appear and make his presence felt objectively, so "the defunct, lying in his six feet of barren earth, or, like imperial Cæsar, stopping a chink with his clay, can ponder over the events of his mortal career, and transport himself in thought to the spot endeared or embittered by a memorable emotion of joy or pain: and should a duly sensitive medium chance to be

about, the result—for the sensitive medium—is the apparition of a ghost.” That is the way in which one of the most recent speculations of a very speculative society seems to strike the *Scots Observer*. It is, perhaps, a fitting sequel to the writer’s summary of Mr. Myers’ ideas, as they strike him, that he should desiderate some “spiritual kickshaw, at once indigestible and palatable, which is capable of inspiring the least imaginative corpse with nightmare,” so that it may dream and “walk.” It is interesting to notice that it is the “corpse,” “lying in his six feet of barren earth,” that is to do all this. The *Scots Observer* has not got so far as spirits. It must strike the least observant reader as curious that the writer has grasped apparently the truth of telepathy and thinks it the property of a corpse.

A CONVERSATION WITH A MORAL.

(Continued from p. 261.)

“What, then, do you think produces this laxity of Church attendance?”

“That the mental attitude of the age is in advance of the theology taught by the Church.”

“Surely not generally—not amongst the multitude?”

“Perhaps not quite; still it is wonderful in what out-of-the-way and lowly places you find advanced and far-seeing intellects, and hearts desiring to understand the truth, who can no longer subscribe to the theories taught in their youth. I have just now come from the death-bed of such an one, and a few months ago dealt with a similar case—men in both instances who had been strictly trained, but who had wandered far afield in wrong doing of various kinds. Both were laid low with incurable diseases, and, though they no longer believed the old theory of expiation and redemption through the death of another, they could formulate no definite, strengthening substitute in its place, and were in a terrible state of mental perplexity and anguish. Both at once accepted my convictions; and daily grew eager and expectant as their journey neared its close.”

“What, if I may ask, are your convictions and wherein do they differ from the orthodox method?”

“Well, you see, these men saw what I have long seen, that there were two directly opposite statements confronting each other in the Gospels; one of a Mediator, Sacrifice, Atonement, which the clergy enforce constantly; the other that the sowing and reaping are inevitable, and that we must render an account of all we do, and are to be judged in the end by our words and actions, according as they are good or bad. Practical experience, combined with common observation, shows the last named method indisputable. Reason at once acquiesces. Justice echoes the sentence. But if the one is true the other cannot be, and is moreover unnecessary.”

“Well, there seems reason in what you say. I was always taught that the proper thing to do was simply to believe the story as the minister told it, and it would be all right.”

“Yes, I know, they call that ‘faith,’ but it is more than I do. The gold miner may, through that kind of faith, spend years in digging and getting nothing in return. Knowledge is the best and surest foundation for faith, as for everything else. Knowledge is power, and those who understand the signs and colour of the strata can predict with certainty where to dig, with hopes of satisfactory results. We have ample proof of the value of such knowledge in our increased weekly gold returns. Knowledge can tell us how and where to bore for water. Through the ages of antiquity it has been running, pure and undisturbed, deep beneath the surface of the earth: it is tapped in its course and rises at the call of science, a well-spring of joy and fertility in the very heart of the African Sahara. And what religion requires to-day is a scientific basis, such as that contained in the ‘sowing’ and ‘reaping’ process. The age is ripe for it, and it is slowly coming. The Bible itself, when intelligently interpreted, contains the germs of spiritual evolution on scientific principles. From beginning to end it is interspersed with accounts of various forms of spiritual phenomena—oasis spots, that indicate the capacity beneath well-springs ready to spring forth and refresh and feed our mental and spiritual natures as surely as artesian fountains do the Sahara Desert. ‘Now we know in part, but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.’ Science echoes what the Bible says: ‘Prove all things: hold fast that

which is good.’ It is curious to watch what the Church has hitherto called her foundation-stones being pulled out from under her, one by one. Evolving reason applies the pick of critical science to each stone; if it moves or is displaced in the least it is not based on eternal principles, and out it must come. The clergy protest and wail, but an unceasing impulse, an inflexible force, makes straight through all and over all towards a clearer apprehension of truth itself.”

“What do you mean by ‘foundation-stones’?”

“Such essential dogmas of the Church as ‘that the world was created in six days, of twenty-four hours each’: that Adam was created in a state of innocence and fell through his own weakness and the temptation of his wife, Eve: also eternal damnation in a material hell of fire and brimstone, presided over by a personal omnipotent devil; moreover, the doctrines baldly stated in repellent crudity of dogma that Christ was offered to appease an angry God, that His blood washes away our sin, and that only through His death are we forgiven, He being our propitiation; and many more minor points of a similar character. Contrast the teaching of our leading ministers to-day on these points with those of ten years ago, and great is their change of front.”

“It is all true, I suppose. Not that I pay much attention to these subjects myself. My reading is confined mostly to a good novel, and even there they are beginning to shuffle the cards considerably on these very questions I observe.”

“They are indeed. Every avenue of life and thought and emotion is open to them and, it is a significant fact that our leading novelists on religious subjects are mostly women. And the Scriptures point to a time when ‘your women shall prophesy.’ It strikes me now is the time, and we are in it; only no age recognises its own position. It is looking back from increased heights that enables one to trace the road travelled.”

“Do you know, I feel curious to hear what your ‘summing up’ of the road travelled would be. I thought the Bible was the Word of God, and what we read there to be accepted and believed.”

“In a sense I hold that what we there find is true in a deeper and more universal sense; for absolute truth must always be truth, and have its origin in God, no matter in what region discovered or by whom proclaimed. A thing is not true because the Bible says it is so; the Bible only says it because it is true inherently. So in nature. Each country has its own Bible, and the spiritual altitude of its thinkers will give an estimate of their appreciation of its truth. Inspiration to-day is upon the same principle that it ever was. The highest truth is seen, the most ideal and perfect lives are lived by those who have spiritual understanding. I take that to be as natural a stage in creation’s process as the difference between the lower and higher mammalian orders of creation.”

“You surely don’t place man’s creation on the same basis as that of animals.”

“Undoubtedly I do. There seems no difference, physically, very little structurally; so much so that the brain of man passes through various stages of development from that of the fish through the reptile, the bird, the mammal—till it completes its progress on the plane of humanity. In such a large proportion is man inferior to the animal, in point of cruelty, injustice, perfidy, that he seems to me almost a lower order of creation. And were it not that even at his worst he has faculties in such a stage of preparedness that the process of spiritual development can take place—which inevitably proves him on a higher plane of progress—I should, out of reverence for the lower animals, hesitate to call him a brute.”

“Ah, well, that is all accounted for by the fall. I suppose you admit the truth of that?”

“Which account of the creation or fall, as you call it, do you base your belief upon? In the description contained in the first chapter of Genesis or that in the second? for there are two distinct accounts of creation given; the first, short, sharp, graphic, and in accordance with what has been discovered so far regarding the natural sequence of vegetable and animal life, while that contained in the second chapter reads like an allegorical legend, and never, I think, could be accepted as a description of the creation. If it is an allegory I consider it a pearl of great price, and feel astonished that a people so rude and crude in all their ways could ever have arrived at the conception of the thought that underlies the allegory. It seems intended to treat of the dual nature of each individual, or body and soul, represented by the man and woman, and the growth of the woman out of the man on a strictly progressive or evolutionary system.

First, we have the man, a human creature, in a garden of Eden, or garden of his being, with its various trees of mental attainment, with a central tree of life, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil close by. The man had to dress this garden and keep it in order, and so cultivate it. This cultivation in the end produced conditions suitable for the production or bringing forth of the woman. The man was asleep, his animal side quiescent, intellect reaching meditative growth, then this complement of himself, this woman or soul, was created in him and out of him. This woman reaches forth beyond the intellect, and invades spiritual precincts, partaking of that which is distinctly stated to be 'good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise!' And what could the fruit of this tree be but conscience, once partaken of surely bringing in its train a sense of delicacy and refinement. The eyes of both of them were opened; necessarily they were inseparable, and partook, the one through the other, of the fruit: for delicacy and sensitiveness are steps of spiritual growth. There must have been a time when all native races had no conception of lack of clothing, mentally or physically; and tracing up the development of man through the ages of antiquity, scientists tell us that the earliest remains of man show him without implements of any kind and incapable of realising the idea of cooking his food. Age upon age yields its natural God-written testimony that man has been gradually and steadily ascending, approaching triumphantly towards the ideal type. There can be no doubt on that score, for though the man, or physical organism, is to rule over the woman—or soul-principle—it is only for a time; and though meanwhile her suffering and struggle are to be great, still she is to be victorious, and the children born of her, imbued with her nature, will be ultimately successful; for the legend goes on to state the fact emphatically and distinctly that the man only was turned out of the Garden. And the angel of conscience has a habit to this day of flickering a very bright and shining sword, this way and that, when the man or lower animal tendencies assail us."

"Amazing! I always thought they were both turned out."

"Most likely, it is a common mistake; people are apt to read their Bibles very superficially."

(To be continued.)

"THE WHIRLWIND."

We have received a prospectus of what is described as "a lively and eccentric" newspaper with the above title. If the paper is half as lively and eccentric as the advertisement of it, it will be cheerful reading. It is born as the organ of the Hon. Stuart Erskine and Mr. Herbert Vivian. Of course, it supplies a long-felt want. These gentlemen seem to have long wanted an organ, and now they have got it. Eccentricity is always a boon, and these gentlemen are decidedly eccentric. Among other things that they propose to do is to cry out for "frequent Parliaments, proportionate representation, and the referendum." They are against "Female, Childhood, and Doghood Suffrage." They are Legitimists and Jacobites. They call Macaulay and Carlyle "mendacious historians." They are going to be "breezy and terse" with "audacity unprecedented." They propose "to interview or lampoon" all great men, and they advertise themselves as "original and indiscreet." When we add that they are going in for the occult we shall have justified the use of that last adjective. It is, perhaps, one of the most remarkable items on a very remarkable advertisement that these eccentric gentlemen invite a confiding public to send them a "lump sum of £5," on receipt of which the paper will be delivered free for life. Query, *its* life or the life of the confiding subscriber?

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

The closing meeting will be held in the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall, on Thursday next. Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald will discourse on "My Experiences in Spiritualism: A Word with Sceptics and Spiritualists." At this meeting members have the privilege of inviting their friends. Cards can be had from Mr. Godfrey, and those interested in the meeting and desirous of attending it, but who are not personally acquainted with a member, can obtain information as to facilities for so doing by applying to the President.

JOTTINGS.

Colonel Olcott returns to the Barisal Gun in the *Theosophist* of May. It is a mysterious atmospheric phenomenon. The Asiatic Society of Bengal has spent two years in investigating it, but it remains as inexplicable as ever. It may be well to tell shortly what the problem is.

At Barisal on the Delta of the Ganges have been heard at times sounds like loud cannon-shots. The sound is unique; not like any natural sound but more like gun-fire. Men of science have attempted to explain this phenomenon on purely scientific principles. It is the surf beating on the shore (sixty-five miles away as the crow flies). It is the firing of bombs by natives (who never fire any). It is a mysterious seismic disturbance. It is atmospheric electricity. The only thing that remains is that they do not know what it is. Colonel Olcott attributes the noises to occult causes. What a magnificent form of rap!

"Sorcery in Science" in the same number is a vigorous protest by the late Dr. Anna Kingsford against vivisection, with some picturesque and rather imaginative accounts of what a particularly brutal person may do in the way of experiment. These accounts are not true, in the sense of being fair descriptions of what usually is done. A wife-beater who kicks his wife to pulp is not an average husband. Let us have some moderation and temperance in language as well as in stimulant.

We regret to learn that Madame Blavatsky is seriously ill. She has so worked for many years past, sitting at her desk ten or twelve hours a day, that a predisposition to disease has been aggravated. Why can we not manage to dispense with this body which causes most of our torments and diseases?

We tender our best wishes for the recovery of one who has done so much to stimulate inquiry into occult matters. That we are not always at one with her does not prevent us from recognising the value of her services.

East and West (No. 2, New Series) comes to us. It is published at a shilling, by W. Heinemann, 21, Bedford-street, W.C. It contains a novel (or rather an instalment) by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps and H. D. Ward; also a part of a novel by W. E. Norris, "Miss Wentworth's Idea." There are also some pretty lines by Violet Hunt. Stepniak is as violent as usual in his article on Russian atrocities.

The *New Review* has a Roumanian ballad, by "Carmen Sylva," called "The Soldier's Tent"; some articles, all good, which do not concern us, and one on Hypnotism, by Dr. Milne Bramwell and Mr. Lloyd Storr Best, which does. Mr. Rider Haggard and Andrew Lang continue their "World's Desire."

We shall refer to the article on Hypnotism hereafter. Here it is necessary only to say that it marks a distinct advance in the observation of these phenomena, and also emphasises what we have always held to be the dangers inseparable from them.

To what lengths may suggestion go? These writers tell us of the production of stigmata by suggestion. "A quarter of an hour after you wake there will be a V on your arm on the place I point out, and from that place you will bleed . . . Count up to ten and awake at seven. She counts to seven, starts, and goes on to ten." Her arm on being examined shows a V traced in blood.

This, which we propose to set forth more fully, is a power which may well give us pause before we use it. What, by the way, has become of the suggestion that it could not be used for harm? We have heard nothing more of that.

The *World* is also full of hypnotism. The man who writes on Goole and Dr. Milne Bramwell avers that "Hypnotism occupies my every thought," and he expands what he considers his thoughts over two columns and a-half of that journal. He might have condensed them to a short paragraph. They are founded on an account already noticed in the *British Medical Journal*, and the only novelty in them is that the writer seems to think that hypnotism must always be used for the most beneficent purposes.

In another point he has our entire adherence. Dr. Bramwell, he says, "objects to experimenting on patients except for the purpose of their cure." For that purpose it is not necessary to put them into a state of unconsciousness: and this should never be done. To destroy the self-hood of a man in order to make him play fool's pranks on a public platform should not need to be condemned. It is self-condemned already.

In the *Carrier Dore* Charles Dawbarn adverts upon some remarks of the Editor of "LIGHT" as to Palmistry and his experiment thereupon with Mrs. Louise Cotton. He wants to know whether we "mean to leave the inference that the lines in a man's hand are a record of his life history." We do not: because we do not know. We detailed facts with clearness and accuracy, but we carefully refrained from drawing conclusions from them. We can't tell, for instance, whether psychometry may come in, or whether the mysterious psychical communion between two people may give the clue to the history of the life.

But the fact that we cannot tell how or by what means there was read from our palm the history of our life with remarkable accuracy does not interfere with the fact. Mrs. Cotton, it will be observed, did not refuse to admit the possibility of psychometry: but she distinctly stated that she worked by rule and read what she stated from the lines in the hand. She had no knowledge of our private life.

Almost all the objections made to a new thing can be concluded within the simple statement that we do not comprehend it. We know so little ourselves that we are willing to study carefully what seems most unintelligible, keeping a keen eye on fraud.

A confiding correspondent of the *Better Way* "is anxious to procure some evidence of a future state as made known by Moses in his day." We are much more interested in evidence given in our day.

The *Progressive Thinker* (Chicago) makes an appeal to Spiritualists to deal gently with the Fox Sisters. "It will not hurt you, and will certainly do them good." There is no resisting that suing *in forma pauperis*. We should be good to everybody. But would it not be desirable that people should be good to us sometimes?

We observe that it is stated by this journal, reporting Henry J. Newton at the Adelphi Hall, New York, U.S.A., that "the apostacy of Maggie Fox Kane, and partially so of her sister Katy . . . created great excitement." It may have done so in America. Here we knew too well the cause.

Mr. Morae has an address in the *Better Way* on "Woman, the Problem of the Future." We do not see why he should limit himself to the future. He might include the past. It is a good and very direct utterance. Those whose eyes are open, children of the new age, see these things more clearly than our ancients; and by that term we do not mean only those who are old in years.

For "Angels" read "Spirits," says the *Banner of Light*. We wish everybody would. Spirits are round us: we seldom make acquaintance with Angels.

The Missionary number of the *Two Worlds* contains matter that is intended to deal with questions that exercise outsiders. The Editress writes of Spiritualism in its relation to Christianity; its uses: the nature of mediumship, and various collateral questions. Our correspondent Miss Marie Gifford, has an instructive article on the "Investigation of Spiritualism." Alderman Barkas discourses on Mediumship, and the management is so content that it proposes to issue a second missionary number.

In the *Golden Gate* there are two articles worth notice, "The Higher Aspects of Spiritualism" and one called "Render unto Cæsar." The latter has some well-timed remarks on Mediumship, and especially on its commercial aspects.

The same issue has an article from the pen of Mr. Albert Morton on "Spirit Phenomena," which we cannot quote, and which does not bear condensation. The paper (May 10th) lies on the table of our reading-room. The article originally appeared in *Psychic Studies*.

Hudson Tuttle discourses in the *Golden Gate* on the question whether there is marriage in Heaven. Has not that been settled? And, if not, do we know or can we know anything about it?

The latest *Lucifer* is prefaced by an announcement that the Editress in chief is too ill to attend to her duties. We have, therefore, an old and unpublished article on "Elementals." We do not comment on it, for no good can be gained. There is in life of all orders that which is low and that which is higher. The more we raise ourselves, the more likely we are to reach a higher company.

But this laying down of the law! What proof is there for these statements? A man once offered to show us an "Elemental" in a bottle, preserved in spirits. Spirit in spirits! Where Spiritualists and Theosophists part company is where proof is wanted. Till then they have much in common.

Mr. Tindall discourses in *Lucifer* on "Some of the Follies and Fallacies connected with Spiritualism." We suppose that follies and fallacies are connected with all things, except, perhaps, exact science. They are certainly not unconnected with Mr. Tindall. But it would be impossible for anyone to deal with such a subject as Spiritualism without exposing surface to criticism. Mr. Tindall's account of "Modern Spiritualism" is, however, curiously inaccurate. He says that he "has taken upon himself an unthankful task" in discussing in the pages of a magazine that is not, to put it mildly, congenial to Spiritualism, that subject; and it may be well to say briefly that his discussion is out of place in the pages of a magazine that generally has something that one reads with acceptance, or the reverse, but which is not intended to be an exposition of Spiritualism. What is to be made of this as criticism? (It is almost unkind to quote it.) "How is this to be harmonised with the teaching found in the *Two Worlds* that life is immortal from the moment of conception, passes understanding; as surely little or any spiritual past has then been built up to go alone."

We might pursue the criticism, but it is not worth while. "Minds formed of baser clay," and the general tone of comment on a subject with which the writer is obviously imperfectly acquainted, are tempting. But no good end is gained by attempting to controvert statements such as those made by Mr. Tindall. They are doubtless made in all sincerity, but without knowledge of facts. And we do not war with such criticism. We only protest against it lest it should be regarded as true.

There is nothing that demands a more exact habit of thought than Spiritualism from a man who writes about it. And it is right and fair to say that there is more exact thought and writing within our ranks than there is among those who loosely criticise us.

At Nuremberg a man is reported to have mesmerised a waitress, so that a medical man had to be called in, who had the utmost difficulty in rousing the girl. He got eight days' imprisonment, and he deserved it. We are so afraid of this increasing practice that we speak strongly against its misuse. Its use is clear.

Let us put this case before our readers:—

At a supper party in Paris one of the company hypnotised a girl, and was unable to rouse her. She was consequently taken to the house of a medical man, and after a time she recovered consciousness. The whole party were taken into custody by the police, and were not released until next day. Even when hypnotism has been practised by competent medical men for remedial purposes, unpleasant accidents and ulterior consequences have again and again occurred; so much so that an order has been issued by the French Government prohibiting surgeons in the army and navy from practising it. It ought to be distinctly understood, both by the profession and the public, that hypnotism is not devoid of danger at the time, and not infrequently has permanently impaired the moral and emotional control of patients. A medical man is bound, before recommending hypnotism for a patient, to weigh the question as carefully as he would that of the advisability of administering an anæsthetic.—*Science*.

The *English Illustrated Magazine* comes to us with "Crossing the Bar," set to music by Dr. Villiers Stanford, very interesting, and a variety of articles that do not impress us. The Laureate's lines are so beautiful that, whether the music is good or not, they will shine.

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

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Light :

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

SATURDAY, JUNE 7th, 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.

MODERN-DAY SPIRITUALISM.

How far does Spiritualism penetrate into current topics of the day? It has not concerned itself with politics nor with theology. It may be assumed that in proportion as it did so it would provoke more opposition than it now does. For it would be apt to deal with both those questions—man's present and man's future—in a drastic way. We might say, perchance, that religion was a matter of daily life and not of Sunday: not inherited, but evolved; we might talk dreadful heresy about politics, and go so far as to say that because politicians sit on the right or left hand of the chair in the House of Commons they should not assume right-hand or left-hand politics to be indubitably true. That, however, we do not say, though we find in the politics of the hour much that interests us.

For politics stands for that which concerns the people, and we are concerned with all that makes for the highest development of the race. It is an unfortunate fact that party politics run so high that to talk or write of them is dangerous. We propose no treading on tender corns. We are not partisans. We care nothing about parties, except in so far as the parties advance our interests. And so we absolutely disclaim anything like partisanship.

There are, however, questions in politics indefinitely delayed, because the glut of business in the House of Commons will not afford time, which seem to us important. We might, for instance, try to deal with the various questions which affect the poor. Should it not be impossible for a man who has led a self-respecting life to find himself in a workhouse at the close of his years?

We think it should: and we think, too, that the indiscriminate charity given in the streets of London, if properly applied, would prevent what we call a national disgrace.

Where politics really touch us Spiritualists is on the question of freedom. Every new idea has to fight its way through suppression up to freedom. What is wanted in these days of free-thought is that everybody should say what he pleases and take the consequences. If he infringes any right, i.e., if he hurts the public sense of morality, or if he traduces any one, he should be punished. But if he expresses only opinions that do not offend the sense of

morality or hurt the individual (who has his rights) then he should be protected. And if he introduces party feeling, posing as advocate of one or other party, then, in our opinion, he should be muzzled at once. But it is absurd to regard the questions that most interest humanity as outside of the consideration of those who concern themselves with what most influences the development of man. The question is wholly a question of treatment. We could not allow a party politician to air his politics here. We have repeatedly refused a theologian a place in our columns. We have never refused any correspondent a place who had anything to say for the good of the body politic, who had anything to say or even any theory to ventilate that was reasonable, and we do not propose to deviate from that rule.

But Spiritualism is permeating. It is informing opinion. It is found everywhere, and we must take account of that fact. We must grow as it grows, and run the risk of introducing into our sphere of work some new elements.

THE PROPHET OF NATIONALISM: HIS MESSAGE AND ITS POSSIBILITIES.

By J. J. MORSE.

A paper read before the Liverpool Psychological Society, at Daulby Hall, on Monday evening, May 19th, 1890.

For good or ill the name of Edward Bellamy has become a household word in two hemispheres. His book, *Looking Backward*, has delivered his message, and the prophet of nationalism has had an audience world-wide in scope, and embracing every grade of intelligence and appreciation. Whether his ideas will ever become realities, time alone can tell. That they find an attentive ear, is attested by the facts that 200,000 copies of his book have been circulated in America since January, 1888, and upwards of 100,000 have been sold in this country during the last twelve months. New thoughts or new presentments of thoughts that are old ever command attention. And while human misery, hunger, and poverty continue, there will ever be room for profoundest cogitation on their cause and cure, whether indulged in by student, thinker, or novelist. Under which of those heads Bellamy is to be classed is still a moot question. Perhaps he belongs to all—and in himself combines them all.

Social reform has had its champions for many generations, from Jesus downwards. Theories in plenty, but successes—how many? Alas! few, if any. Robert Owen and New Caledonia are still remembered dreams in Lanarkshire; Ann Lee and the New York State Shaker communities, from which so much was hoped, are steadily diminishing in numbers and contracting in volume; the Rochdale Pioneers are traders mostly nowadays; co-operation in Rochdale or on the Tyne at Ouseburn scarcely fulfils its first promises; the Familistere of M. Godin, at Guise, France, is possibly as brilliant a solution of some aspects of social problems as we can find; [while, in another way, but scarcely in a way that meets the social need as social reformers desire, Pullman City and Works, near Chicago, U.S., offer us another attempt in the direction of social and industrial reform; and recently an attempt to found another colony in Topolobampa, at Sinaloa, Mexico, has, judging from reports, proved abortive. These are but a few of the attempts made to improve our lot by social reform, but, even though they have not realised their ideals, need we despair? No; for the problem is not insoluble.

A considerable literature has arisen upon the subject of social reform. One of the earliest works upon it, if not the earliest, bore the title *Utopia*, literally "Nowhere," written by Sir Thomas More, and published in 1516. It would, no doubt, be interesting reading in comparison with the latest work, *Looking Backward*. The works of Robert Owen and George Jacob Holyoake are still extant, and doubtless can be found in any co-operative society's library. There is also a work by an American lady, entitled *Papa's Own Girl*, also another work *A South African Farm*, both dealing with social problems, while a new edition of *The Diothas*, under the title of *Looking Forward*, has recently appeared in New York. Nearer home, Mrs. George Corbet, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, recently published a very interesting volume entitled *The New Amazonia*, treating the subjects at issue from a woman's point of view. Interesting

and suggestive as are all the foregoing, yet the comprehensiveness of Bellamy's book invests it with a distinctive claim upon our attention, and easily places it in the front rank of works upon like subjects. In America Nationalism is deemed important enough to have its societies and its journal, and it is quite safe to say that the subject is in the air among progressive thinkers in that land of new ideas.

However, let us turn from what others have said or done or written to inquire the nature of Bellamy's message to us of to-day.

The book is of the class described as the novel with a purpose. The story or plot is practically subordinated to the main object in view, i. e., the delineation of a system of society that shall abolish existing ills, and secure even more than our average most-to-be desired advantages. The purely personal parts of the plot are told with a simple forcefulness that, by its very simplicity, appeals powerfully to the sentiments of the reader. Dr. Leete and his daughter Edith are charming, either individually or in contrast, while Julian West, the hero of the story, acts and reasons as naturally as any real personage would do under similar circumstances. There are three other characters—four in fact—introduced to notice, but they have but little to do, and are practically unimportant. In short, the book is, as Alfred Russel Wallace recently remarked in "LIGHT," likely "in all probability to have important effects on the future of humanity."

The main divisions of the work may be summarised under the heads of (1) a clever summary of our existing social conditions; (2) a comprehensive presentation of a scheme whereby human happiness may be practically assured.

Under the first head but little need be said. The representation of society as a coach, with the wealthy on top, and the poor tugging at the traces, is all too true. No excerpt can do it justice. A perusal of the quaint but powerful illustration is the only way to fully feel and see its correctness. One extract only can be made as to the thoughts of those comfortably seated upon the top of the coach concerning their brethren at the ropes: "Had they no compassion for their fellow beings from whom fortune only distinguished them? Oh, yes, commiseration was frequently expressed for those who had to pull the coach, especially when the vehicle came to a bad place in the road, as it was constantly doing, or to a particularly steep hill. At such times the desperate struggles of the team, their agonised leaping and straining under the pitiless lashing of hunger, the many who fainted at the rope and were trampled in the mire, made a very distressing spectacle, which often called forth highly creditable displays of feeling on the top of the coach. At such times the passengers would call down encouragingly to the toilers of the rope, exhorting them to patience, and holding out hopes of possible compensation in another world for the hardness of their lot, while others contributed to buy salves and linaments for the crippled and the wounded. It was agreed that it was a great pity that the coach should be so hard to pull, and there was a sense of general relief when the specially bad piece of road was gotten over. This relief was not, indeed, wholly on account of the team, for there was always some danger at these bad places of a general overturn in which all would lose their seats!" How true this is may be easily understood when we see those in power, i. e., "on the top of the coach," calling out soldiers to overawe French miners, Blackburn cotton operatives, and Liverpool dockers. That society is in a parlous state cannot be denied, and Bellamy's picture of the consequent brutality, callousness, wrong, and wastefulness, bred from our present conditions, makes one feel ashamed of our race that we have done so little for our real good at large.

One might aptly quote, as a fitting motto for the second division suggested for the work, "Out of evil cometh good," for by a series of singularly graphic arguments it is clearly shown that the alleged evils of giant combinations of capital, in the form of firms, monopolies, syndicates, and trusts, point to the real trend of the stream—which is towards the right, and not wrong. Starting with the idea that many men can do more than one man, by systematic combination, so many sums of money united under one head can conjointly do more than each sum individually, he shows how, naturally, the small concern must become absorbed in the larger, and to the public good. The little dealer is obliterated, but he becomes a partner in a larger concern, actually with less personal responsibility, but with increased certainty of returns. It is further argued that for mere safety and mutual support capital is now concentrating and consolidating itself, until ultimately a few huge combinations of

capital—syndicates—will control the manufactures of the world, or, at least, of each country. Competition will thus be reduced to its lowest point; economy and efficiency of production will stand at their greatest development, and the producers, knowing the area of the market and the extent of its demands, can regulate supply without fear of recurring panic, either in the departments of capital or labour. All this is the definite organisation and solidarity of capital, on the basis of personal profit, and simply continues the workers as engines or tools, to be worked at the highest and remunerated at the lowest rate. This recognises the "mighty wealth-producing principle of consolidated capital," but, further, asks Bellamy, "is there no way of commanding it, without bowing down to a plutocracy like that of Carthage?" His answer is that the key to the problem lies in the natural evolution of the capitalistic idea of aggregation already detailed, by the "final consolidation of the entire capital of the nation. The industry and commerce of the country ceasing to be conducted by irresponsible corporations and syndicates . . . for their profit" are "intrusted to a single syndicate representing the people, to be conducted in the common interest for the common profit." From such a basis naturally flows an entire reorganisation of the system of labour, alike in quantity, term, and remuneration, and here is involved the opposite of the capitalistic organisation, in the complete organising of the workers of every sort, industrial, professional and administrative.

But, as capital now belongs to the nation, what becomes of the question of interest? As workers are now in the hands of the nation, likewise, what is said as to wages? To-day "wages" and "interest" represent, in the main, the methods upon which we depend to keep the wolf from the door. Leaving aside the question of interest, which is virtually "wages earned by money," let us consider what Bellamy says on the question of wages. Of course, we must remember that the same principles of organisation and solidarity are now involved in the working forces of the nation, as are operation in the wealth-power, and consequently better service, less waste, and higher results may be predicated, all of which, one thinks, would naturally tend to increase the value of the worker. But, surprising as it is, Bellamy utterly discards wages, as understood by us! You ask what substitute does he provide? This: the wealth of the nation belongs to all, since all do their part in producing it, consequently it is duly divided among every man, woman, and child. Again, to quote Bellamy, and to make the point clear, Julian West inquires of Dr. Leete, "By what title does the individual claim his particular share? What is the basis of allotment?" To which the doctor replies, "His title is his humanity. The basis of his claim is that he is a man." But all in the nation are expected to do each his best in whatever line he labours. And, as our author argues, it is not wise to reward a horse for pulling a heavier load than a goat, so a man who can do more than his neighbour ought to do so, and be punished if he does not. Wages and interest, then, are discarded. A national credit note is handed to each individual, is his annual income, and all he needs, food, clothing, shelter, recreation, education, &c., are procurable from the nation's stores, and their value is then marked off the credit cards of those procuring them. But, unlike ourselves, service is demanded from all; and again, unlike ourselves, the period of service is strictly defined and limited to twenty-four years. It commences at the close of the educational period, at twenty-one, and terminates at forty-five, thereby assuring some thirty years of comfort, ease, and leisure, for the credit given the citizen continues from the cradle to the grave. The sick, insane, and vicious, are all placed on an equality with the rest, *they*, too, are men, and thus charity entirely disappears.

The nation builds its cities, towns, villages, hamlets, houses, stores, railways, telegraphs, telephones, &c., and own them for the people who "pay" for them by their credit notes. As no one can pledge their credit for a friend (outside minors), each is bound to secure himself from danger of loss, for credits are not extended save under very exceptional circumstances, so no one buys more things, or rents larger dwellings than, individually or collectively, may be required.

The organisation of the industrial army is noteworthy, for labour is compulsory on all. Its primary corps includes all that we now describe as the common, or unskilled labourers, into which all enter, and remain for three years: hours of service being adapted to the irksomeness of the work. At the end of three years the worker has unfettered opportunity for selecting such line of work as he feels bent and inclination for, but his

best, in any department selected, is the standard always kept before him. The worker, being free from anxiety as regards his living, has ever the stimulus of honour behind him, compelling him to just service, and the consequent esteem of his contemporaries.

But next comes up the perpetual problem: Women! And, here again, Bellamy presents a solution. They, too, receive equal credit upon the nation's books with men, and are, at last, put in the only just, safe, and secure position, that of financial independence. Hence, in industry, they are not a disturbing element. Domestically their lives are unperturbed by the thousand petty cares that oppress women to-day. In marriage they are not compelled to form unions for sake of homes; in fact, they are free to follow not the demands of necessity but the dictates of their souls.

One thing that will gladden many is the fact that the amateur musician and vocalist are to be relegated to the past. For Bellamy states that only those with real cultivatable talent become musicians or vocalists, and as it is possible to receive music from centres by telephone to all houses in a city, the orchestra and singer can be "turned on" as needed.

In brief, then, there is now presented a rough outline of the message of the prophet of Nationalism, or in sober terms, the conditions of life in the New Boston of A. D. 2000, as so eloquently and graphically portrayed in the pages of *Looking Backward*; and, as the book ranges over all the perplexing problems of our day and century, the imperfectness and brevity of these comments may, surely, be readily excused?

As showing how ideas that are "in the air" are breathed in—inspired—by receptive minds, it may be interesting to state here, in January, 1886, the idea of a somewhat similar work was suddenly impressed upon the present writer's mind, while in the city of Boston. The work, entitled *Wilbram's Wealth*, was written during the following months, and, in December of the same year, was put into the hands of the John W. Lovell Company, of Vesey-street, New York for publication. It remained with that firm until May, 1889, unpublished, when it was withdrawn, sent on to the *Banner of Light* publishing house, in Boston, and during June and July of that year was issued as a serial in that journal. It is now in process of republication in this country as a book, and no doubt may become an interesting contribution to the subjects it discusses.

In conclusion, with Bellamy it can be said individualism is dying. Competition is cutting the throat of capital. Hunger, cold and ignorance have been borne all too long. Injustice and selfishness are passing evils no longer to be endured. If a Government can make laws that all abide by, it can become a truly national servant in other things as well. And if we can destroy "the love of money" we may be going a long way towards the removal of "the root of all evil." Wages are doomed, as also interest, and the efforts of the present and the hopes of the future are centred on doing that for mankind at large that shall realise the spirit and purpose of Bellamy's message in the conditions of human life. For surely the present wasteful, murderous, and soul-deadening methods of life are not fit for savages, let alone the cultured creatures we claim to be?

Revolution or evolution are the alternatives of progress. Let us trust evolution and she will not betray us. Bellamy has shown the application of evolution prevents revolution, and, by-the-by, the nationalism he preaches, and which seems so strange to-day, will appear so reasonable that our descendants will marvel at the life we lived without it. A fruitful message this of Bellamy's, and our thanks are due to him for its inspirations and suggestions.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

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

We have received the *Art Interchange*, originally published in New York, U.S.A., and now also in London, by W. Heine-mann, 21, Bedford-street, W.C. It is a guide for amateurs, and is excellently got up. The illustrations are very good indeed, and the whole paper—a large quarto—is throughout good. The same publisher sends us *East and West*, a shilling magazine, issued in an enlarged form, with very good appearance. Max O'Rell writes, and Mr. W. E. Norris has a novel running; so also have Miss Elizabeth Stuart Phelps and Herbert D. Ward in collaboration.

Struggles in Africa, and how I Transported a Steamboat on Wheels 1,600 miles across Country. By JOHN THORBURN.

Our Babies: and how to take care of them. By FLORENCE STACPOOLE. [Interesting both, but hardly in our line. African struggles (especially in mines) are frequent. Our babies are always with us, and we are not sure that Spiritualists take care of them any better than other people.]

We have received the official report of the Paris Congress of Spiritists and Spiritualists. It runs to 450 pages and is closely printed. (Paris: Libraire Spirite, 1, Rue Chabanais.) The report lies for reference on our table.

HYPNOTIC EXPERIMENTS.

A correspondent of the *Times* has had an opportunity of visiting the Hospice de Salpêtrière in Paris, and witnessing some experiments on hypnotic patients conducted by Dr. Guinon, who is associated with Dr. Charcot in investigating the phenomena of hypnotism. Dr. Guinon stated to the correspondent that of the 6,000 patients and inhabitants of the hospice but ten were hypnotic; fifty men and fifty women suffered from nervous diseases; while some 400 were afflicted with epilepsy. It was explained that hypnotism in operations is divided into three parts, and the phenomena apparent in each of these stages are peculiar to that stage, and that stage alone. The first of these periods is lethargy, the second catalepsy, and the third somnambulism.

THE FIRST STAGE OF HYPNOTISM.

To illustrate the three periods, a young woman of twenty-four, stoutly built, with a bright and intelligent face, was seated in a chair facing the window of the room in which the experiments were conducted. The girl was a highly hysterical subject, habitually insensible to pain on the left half of the body, but with sensation normal on the right. Evidence of insensibility was shown by the insertion of a probe in the flesh of the left forearm. The slightest prick or pinch on the right side excited remonstrances from the girl, with facial expression and gestures appropriate to sudden pain. Almost suddenly the girl was thrown into a lethargy by gazing intently on a point near and above her eyes, and by Dr. Guinon closing her eyelids by pressing his thumbs on the eyeball until the lids were in contact. So profound was her slumber that the probe was inserted again and again into the fleshy part of the girl's right arm without causing a tremour or a sign of sensation. The last experiment in this stage was to stiffen and solidify the whole body by pressure on certain tendons of the leg. The patient rested with her heels on the ground and her head on the back of the chair, the intermediate portion of the body being without support.

THE INFLUENCE OF SUGGESTION.

In the next, or second hypnotic period, that of catalepsy—produced by simply raising the girl's eyelids until her large blue eyes stared with a painful absence of human expression—the patient was a lay figure, a mere automaton-clay in the hands of the medical potter. This is the earliest period at which suggestion is possible, but the automaton can receive but one idea at a time. The simulation of a church bell on a gong produced a smile, an ecstacy, an attitude of prayer, with eyes lowered and head and body meekly bowed. The next experiment was the suggestion of an idea to the patient by the insertion of a piece of red glass between her eyes and the light. When this was done the change of facial expression to one of horror and fear showed that she saw fire, incendiariism, and leaping flames. Gazing through a piece of blue glass she saw the azure heavens. One idea led to another. Her hands clasped, her eyes, which were streaming with tears, beamed with the tenderest affection and delight. She sank upon her knees, and raised her hands as though the beatific vision were in her sight and nearly within her grasp. The introduction of yellow glass as a medium of suggestion produced an idea of tropical sunshine. The odour of sulphur and carbon gave rise to the idea of a filthy smell, and occasioned the gestures appropriate to the purgatory to which her nostrils were seemingly exposed.

SOMNAMBULISM.

The third period, that of somnambulism, was now entered. It was produced by rubbing the hair on the top of the head. Sensibility on one side was at once re-established, and but for her behaviour there was nothing to convince the eye that she was not in her right senses. She became capable of retaining complex ideas. Speech was regained. Reason was laid aside. A file was bitten, and pronounced to be good chocolate. On a suggestion from Dr. Guinon a supposititious bird perched on her finger. She spoke of its coral beak, its bright eye. It was a paroquet. It flew away, and its flight was followed by a mournful eye. My friend, an English member of Parliament, was converted into a Chinaman. His robes, his pigtail, his slit eyes were all described with microscopic exactness. As for me I was a large block of ice with flowers growing on the surface. The girl picked three Maréchal Niel roses from my pencil-case, and in touching me shuddered with the cold, and cried that her hand was drenched. She poisoned the Chinaman with arsenic, and wept bitterly at her crime. In giving him the phantom cup she gasped, "Drink it not; the cup is poisoned." A portrait of Dr. Charcot was seen on a blank sheet of paper. The

sheet was privately marked at the back, inserted far up among other and similar blank sheets, which the girl inspected. When she arrived at the blank sheet, supposed to be Dr. Charcot's portrait, she at once stopped and commented upon it. In short, she had a will of wax; but the form given to it was beyond her own control. Sensations accompanied movement. Paralysis was produced at will by a smart shock, and either localised to a joint or a finger or extended to a whole limb.—*St. James's Gazette* (May 29th).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Mystical Interpretation of the Bible.

SIR,—The "esoteric" interpretation of the Bible ought to make the outer meaning more interesting and significant, and I think that those are mistaken who reject the outer altogether.

(1) As an instance let us consider the reception of his brethren by Joseph, and the "five changes of raiment" given to Benjamin. This passage has undoubtedly a mystical meaning, but in this particular case it is more apparent on the outside than by taking the Kabbalistic computation of the words. (2) Another mystical passage is that concerning the angels found in the sepulchre at the Resurrection. Two of the Gospels declare that there were two angels, two that there was only one. This apparent discrepancy has been used as an argument to show that the whole account is false. Is there anything in this description (*i.e.*, one angel appearing as two) which is not already known to students of spiritual science? (3) There is one verse which to my mind carries with it, in its *outward* form, greater proof of the inspiration of the Sacred Writings than any other in the whole Bible. "And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto the man to see what he would call them." (Gen. ii. 19.) These words depict a state of feeling that is utterly alien to uncivilised humanity. No Jew, at any period of the history of the race, no Christian, of the Middle Ages and even later, could have realised the pleasure here described—pleasure of the Creator in the pleasure of His creature. It is too refined, too innocent, to be the outcome of the perverted, bloodstained, blackened mind of man. That it can be understood in a certain degree now is a hopeful sign that the day-star is near.

LEO.

SIR,—Taking the letter of "Libra" as aimed at myself, I beg to ask him, when he says that he "thinks the exoteric signification of the Bible much more important and valuable than the esoteric," if he really means what his words imply, namely, that the physical, phenomenal, temporary and accidental—namely, events, persons, places and things occurring on the material plane—are "much more important and valuable" than the spiritual, real, eternal, and essential; namely, principles, process, states and attainments, occurring on the spiritual plane, of which the former are but the manifestation; and, consequently, that the body is of greater consequence than the soul. Such a position is, of course, intelligible of, and allowable to, a Materialist. But "Libra" declares himself a "Spiritualist" and an "old-fashioned" one. He may be both of these things, but, if so, he is, clearly to me, not enough of either of them, and in order properly to appreciate what he now rejects or undervalues, he must become as one of those really "old-fashioned Spiritualists," the writers of the Bible. Doing this, and seeing from their point of view, he will, I am confident, no longer decline to accept the Bible's own account of itself, by preferring the letter to the spirit, taking literally what it declares to be an allegory, and insisting that Christ's "kingdom is of this world" of the outer senses. But he will seek and prize above all things that "seeing eye" and "hearing ear" and "spirit of understanding," upon which the Bible from end to end insists as indispensable to the comprehension of its meaning, for the very reason that this is not exoteric but esoteric; and all of which would be utterly superfluous were it not so. His very expression, "transcendent mysteries," contains the refutation of his whole contention, seeing that if the meaning were on the surface, and accessible to reason divorced from intuition—which, be it remembered, is the perception of the soul—they would be neither "mysteries" nor "transcendent." Granted that the intuitions of some mystics so-called, are "illusory," that is only to say that, like other faculties, the intuition is possessed by different persons in various degrees, and to be trustworthy must be sedulously cultivated and

unfolded. But so it is with the reason. As well might we repudiate mathematical science itself because some persons make mistakes in their calculations. And how, if the meaning of Scripture be exoteric, or without, does it come to be said, "the spirit within beareth witness"? Surely nothing can be more obvious than that the everlasting principles of Being are of infinitely greater importance than any particular manifestation of those principles in time, seeing that the latter are valuable only as ministering to our recognition of the former.

EDWD. MAITLAND.

Mr. Maitland's Definitions.

SIR,—The study of the Bible in the Kabbalistic method affords proof, apart from spiritual experience, of the separate individuality of the God-Man, Jesus of Nazareth. I must confess that I am surprised that Mr. Maitland has failed to comprehend the idea intended in the concluding sentences of my letter. Lovers of mystery would not thank me for disclosing the "Open Sesame" of all alchemical writings, but "the waters shall overflow the hiding place." I should be much obliged if Mr. Maitland would give his views on the number 8 which occurs constantly in the Bible (as in the 22nd verse of Psa. cxviii., "the stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner"). This number is independent of and apart from 2 and 7 (see Gen. ii. 23, 24), or 5 and 7 ("rows of gold with studs of silver"). I take the latter numbers to denote the evolution of the human race.

In conclusion, I submit the following allegory for Mr. Maitland's consideration. Let Germany represent the "divinity" of the human race; A and B (Nephech and Ruach) cross the frontier and enter Germany. They are not, however, the Emperor of that country. A and B meet C and D (Neschamath), C and D, nevertheless, are not the Emperor, although they are often taken for him. Ultimately the *Son*, whose *Mother* is among the four, is received with honour by the Emperor. Is the son the Emperor, or does the Emperor exist independently of and apart from him? Common-sense will, I think, give the answer.

LEO.

Capital Punishment.

SIR,—Neither in the petition against Capital Punishment nor in the letters of your correspondents on this subject have I seen the objection which has always most heavily weighed with me. Will you allow me to point it out? It is that in violently taking the life of a fellow-being we are guilty of a most illogical and unphilosophical act. We as Spiritualists hold sacred the inviolability of human life, and yet we punish murder by further murder. We make the taking of life familiar in order to deter others from the same act.

Another point; is not capital punishment, in the worldly sense, too light a sentence for infamous murder; and is not lifelong hard labour without hope of freedom a far greater and more adequate, as well as a more philosophical retribution? As *Spiritualists* we must, to be consistent, oppose the violent removal of any person from this state; and we must believe that a life wrought out here is better for culprit and society than an unnatural termination of his physical existence.—I am, yours,

M. A. J.

Theosophy, Psychological Research, and Capital Punishment.

SIR,—Perhaps the most educational hour in one's experience is the welcome study of the contents of "LIGHT." May you be inspired from within and assisted from without to long minister to intellectual Spiritualism. My remarks, in accordance with your views, will, however, be brief. First as to the remark of Mrs. Besant, namely, that mediumship ministers to lower gratifications; as a public educationalist this lady must be cautious in making loose statements. I am a medium myself, and my testimony is that mediumship has had a most exalting influence upon my surroundings. I have, by the watchful tenderness of my unseen friends, experienced a more perfect individuation of character, a greater expansiveness of thought and endeavour, with a constant seeking after the beautiful in social, intellectual and spiritual life. May such long continue is my ardent and present prayer. It will take Mrs. Besant many years before she comprehends the law of spirit control, and she ought to refrain from lecturing on it until she has made acquaintance with mediumship by experimental methods. It is a long wilderness from Atheism to Spiritualism.

Let me also recommend the whole body of Psychological

Researchers to get one hour's experimental communion with the world of spirit: this would be more effective than millions of scientific inferences. Anyone can obtain these personal experiences by prayer, which is will-force in action. I am also amazed, and saddened too, that a Spiritualist (Mrs. A. J. Penny) should defend capital punishment as a necessity. It is only murder protected by law, the result is the same, and if our philosophy has not taught us all the sacredness of life it has taught us little. Punishment in a penal settlement, however, is infinitely more awful in the abstract. An ex-convict told me (he received his reprieve a few hours previous to his intended execution) that his fourteen years' hardships were worse than a thousand deaths. So that really barring the killing by law, the alternate punishment is worse for the murderer. Therefore, as progressive thinkers, let us plead the sacredness and ultimate utility of even the murderer's life.

W. H. ROBINSON.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.

The Resurrection of the Body.

SIR,—In your editorial note, at the close of Rev. John H. N. Nevill's letter, you say: "Our correspondent's letter is very valuable, but does it embody the doctrine of the Church of England as generally understood?" Will you permit me respectfully to reply to that question, not from any feeling of depreciation of Church doctrine, but simply in the interest of truth? The question is this: The doctrine of teaching of the Church of England respecting the resurrection of the body—has it been and is it now that of a spiritual resurrection as understood by those of Spiritualistic views, or that of a physical resurrection—of the identical body committed to the tomb? We can determine this only by an appeal to historic facts, not by reading into it any modern or advanced ideas which belong to our own consciousness.

The Church doctrines are professedly founded on Scripture. The order for the Burial of the Dead is a clear illustration of this. One of the earliest Scriptures which is supposed to teach resurrection is Job xix. 25, 26, and 27, which is read by the priest on going to the grave. Let any fair-minded reader ponder this passage and ask himself if it does not refer to a physical resurrection. But if the words are doubtful he may turn to the same Scripture as it appears in the Prayer-book of Edward VI.: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I shall rise out of the yearth in the last day, and shall be covered again with my skinnie and shall see God in my flesh: yea and I myselfe shall beholde Hym, not with other but with these same eyes." Surely language could scarcely be more explicit. After the committal to earth these words were said: "When that dredeful day of the general [resurreccion shall come make him to ryse, &c., and receive this bodie agayne to glory then made pure and incorruptible," &c. So also in the Collect, "receivyn agayne oure bodies."

But besides Job we have several other Scriptures which seem clearly to teach a rising again of the actual buried body. Take Matt. xxvii. 51 52, "The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised, and coming forth out of the tombs after his resurrection," &c. This is no spiritual resurrection. Again, in John v. 28 Christ is declared to have said, "The hour cometh in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." Space forbids quoting further passages, but there are many showing, without a doubt that the writers were speaking of a physical rising again. But what of the Early Church? It would take twenty letters to deal with this matter fairly and properly. Every investigator must search for himself. But just a word or two. Justyn Martyr tells us "that although many pure (in doctrine) and pious Christians were of a different opinion, yet he himself and as many Christians as were in every respect orthodox (*ὀρθογνώμονες κατὰ πάντα*) were assured that they who believe in Christ should rise in the flesh." This assurance was part of the belief of the Early Christians in the regeneration (*παλιγγενεσία*).

Justyn's assertion is worthy of attention and reminds us of the two important classes among the primitive churches—the gnostic, and, what are generally termed, the orthodox Christians. Of the first it is generally agreed that they denied a physical and material rising again; of the latter that they included it in the Chiliaistic tradition. The history of the conflict between these two rival camps shows that the gnostics (who undoubtedly represent more nearly the Spiritualists of our day) were gradually suppressed, and the orthodox party rose to power. From

these times the doctrine of a "resurrection of the flesh," of the actual body sown in the earth, can be clearly traced through the following centuries, and this was the belief which has been handed down to us to the present.

It was the faith of Wesley, who is a typical and, moreover, a spiritually-minded Churchman (see hymn 718 in the Wesleyan hymn-book).

The Judge shall call me from the tomb,
Shall bid the greedy grave restore,
And raise this individual me,
God in the flesh—my God—to see.

In this *identio body* I
With eyes of flesh, refined, restored,
Shall see that self-same Saviour nigh,
See for myself my smiling Lord.

And so in many other hymns. The fact is *the belief was general among all Christians* except a few philosophic minds. The old prints show the same thing. The churchyard giving up its dead. It underlay all the funeral rites and customs of burial. Dr. Watts expresses the same hope. See his well-known hymn, "And must this body die?" In this the verse occurs—

God, my Redeemer, lives,
And ever from the skies
Looks down and watches all my dust
Till He shall bid it rise.

The evidence to prove that a physical resurrection of the flesh is the orthodox doctrine of the Church of England, as founded on Holy Scripture and handed down by the Church, is enormous, and to me it is neither wise nor right for those whose minds have been enlarged by other evidence, such as our forefathers never had, to turn round and deny that such is the case. As for St. Paul's teaching in 1 Cor. xv., this differs materially from many other Scriptures. Many have found much gnostic doctrine in the Pauline writings, and it is to say the least very suggestive that while this has been generally neglected for so many centuries, now when physical and psychical science has thrown doubt on the old belief there is an eagerness to make much of the Corinthian epistle. Whether we feel it our duty to leave the ancient creed or not, surely no good can come of denying or explaining away facts.—Yours, &c.,
S. KEYWORTH.

Some Questions.

SIR,—Referring to Mr. Baynes Thompson's letter of May 31st, I should like to ask him the following questions:—

Admitting there is no other source of power than God, is there to be no responsibility at all as to the use of it by man?

Why does not fire purify and the earth attract?

How is force the resultant of matter and motion?

What is matter?

Do filth and rubbish, which are matter only in a state of decomposition or change, at all detract from creative power?—I beg to subscribe myself,

RESEARCH.

A Remarkable Seance.

SIR,—On Monday, May 19th, two friends whom I will call Messrs. B. and C., my wife, and I, sat down in the evening to try and hold some communion with friends of ours who have already passed on.

After a few introductory raps and tiltings of the table, Mr. B. was suddenly controlled by a spirit who seemed in a very perturbed condition, and informed us that he had something of the greatest importance to communicate to me. To my inquiry as to his name, he replied that he must not *tell* me, but I was to find out for myself, and he would assist by giving me a clue. He told me to get a pencil and paper, and write down quickly what he would dictate. I accordingly took down the following, viz:—

When on the earth my life was full of woe, illness, and misery; but now that I live as a spirit, I as a spirit love. List to my tale and mark me well; and lest imagination wanders write it down, indeed assured that I have your interest at aim, making all things sure of knowing who I am. So mark, see you not plainly how I toil and strive, having your welfare in my heart, and to show you how to answer those, who like the stupid ass, know such things are, and yet they *will* not know. Soeptics at heart, they laugh, and jeer and scoff, priding themselves upon their wit, perhaps. Even though they taunt, when dewy eve arrives they tremble. They feel a certain awe rise in their souls, to them 'tis real.

When I had finished, he asked me if I did not know him now. On replying that I did not understand the message at all, he informed me that it was a double cryptogram, which would supply his name; and that as I was fond of puzzles, I could easily find it out. I then said that I would work it out

on the morrow, but his anxiety to give his message was so intense, that he could not wait; and saying that it must be found out at once, gave me the hint to turn it into blank verse, which I did with the following result:—

When on the earth, my life was full of woe,
Illness, and misery; but now that I
Live as a spirit, I as a spirit love.
List to my tale, and mark me well; and lest
Imagination wanders, write it down; indeed,
Assured I have your interest at aim;
Making all things sure of who I am. So mark,
See you not plainly how I toil and strive,
Having your welfare in my heart,
And to show you how to answer those, who like the stupid
ass,
Know such things are, and yet they will not know?
Sceptics at heart, they laugh, and jeer, and scoff,
Priding themselves upon their wit, perhaps.
Even though they taunt, when dewy eve
Arrives they tremble. They feel a certain awe
Rise in their souls, to them 'tis real.

You will notice that the name, which is formed by the first letters of the lines, is repeated in the first letters of the last words of each line.

His joy at our finding out his name was great, and when asked, as a further proof, for information respecting himself, gave the dates of his birth, death, age at death, and number of years since the last event, with great accuracy.

When I ventured to remark that the names of the most illustrious spirits were often assumed by impostors, and that we had frequently heard of Shakespeare manifesting at séances, he appeared very indignant, and stigmatised such tales as "lies," adding that he had never before controlled any human being; and, reaching out his hand, he shook ours in turn, remarking that ours were the first living hands that had clasped his since he passed away.

He then, pulling my head down to a level with his mouth, whispered in my ear instructions which I was on no account to repeat to any person, as my so doing might frustrate his intention. These instructions, he assured me, if carried out faithfully and carefully, would not only relieve him of a great trouble, but would be an immense proof of the truth of Spiritualism.

When asked what brought him to our circle, he replied that I was in sympathy with him, and that it was not his first visit, as he had been in the same room the previous evening, when I had taken the concordance of his works out of my bookcase and consulted it. This, I may mention, was a fact known only to myself, as no one had been present when I looked at the book—at least, no one in the flesh.

I have no doubt the account of this (to us) wonderful séance will be received with doubt by many and derision by others, but the *cryptogram* remains in evidence; and although the composition is not what might be desired, it seems to us very remarkable, when the circumstances under which it was delivered are taken into account.

I may add that this was the first occasion on which either Mr. B. or Mr. C. had sat with us. Mr. B. has been a Spiritualist for many years, but Mr. C. had never investigated before, and was naturally very much astonished at what he saw and heard. I may add that the sitting was held in the light.

A dear friend who passed to the other side some years ago, and who is frequently with us, was present and told us (in the direct voice) that the control was genuine, and was really the illustrious spirit he professed to be.

If I am successful in carrying out the instructions received (which cannot be for many months), I will tell you; if it should turn out to be a practical joke of a frivolous spirit, I will also inform you; but my wish at present is to put on record evidence before the (possible) fact, and not lay myself open to the charge of having manufactured my prophecies after the event.

J. HENDERSON.

Unconscious Creation.

SIR,—Reading in your issue of the 24th ult. the article by Mrs. Penny, I am induced by the mention of the destruction of the sentry-box to recall an incident that I read in the London daily papers some five or six years ago.

As far as I can remember, it occurred in the police reports, and was to the following effect: A woman had been taken up and confined in the cell, and on being fetched in the morning, was discovered to be in a condition of physical distress, and ac-

ording to her account, during the night an old woman came to her and endeavoured to force her to commit suicide by hanging herself with the little shawl worn round her shoulders. On investigation it was stated that there had been several suicides in that particular cell, the first of which was that of an *old woman who had hung herself by means of her shawl*.

Can any of your readers remember this, or would any of them take the trouble of searching for this item of news? Unfortunately I had not then commenced cutting out records of these occurrences. If any one will do so and publish the date, I for one should be much obliged, as here I have no opportunity of examining the old files of the London papers. There was also a long leading article in the *Daily News* somewhere about the same date, detailing an extraordinary circumstance by which an unknown voice induced the writer of the article (for whose trustworthiness the editor vouches) to rise in the small hours of the morning, in a town he had never been in before, and proceed to a certain locality (which he found with difficulty). Not knowing for what reason he had come he was surprised to find, on knocking at the door, that the resident was contemplating suicide.

This date I should also like to get if possible. F. B. C.
Cardiff, May 28th, 1890.

Spiritualism and Anglican Orthodoxy.

SIR,—Nine years ago I addressed a letter to the then Archbishop of Canterbury (Tait) under the above title. It was published in this journal, and afterwards issued as a penny pamphlet. To-day I am advertising a series of services and addresses under the same heading, because I think the time has come for re-opening the subject; and it appears to me that it can best be treated as part of a religious function. Will you allow me thus to repeat my invitation to such of your readers as may feel interested in the matter? I wish particularly to explain why I ask them to apply to me for a card of admission. It is because I desire to preserve for our meeting the character of a semi-private conference rather than of a public service. May I add that I shall be particularly obliged to those who will join our choir, and thereby help to make the musical portion of our simple office more efficient? MAURICE DAVIES.

The Return of the Departed.

SIR,—I have been expecting to see, among the correspondence in your columns, some notice taken of a sentence in the letter of Madame de Steiger as to capital punishment. ("LIGHT," May 10th.) She says, "There is no doubt that most of the 'returns' made by the astral forms who have appeared in our séance-rooms, or elsewhere, have been those of suicides or persons who have met untimely deaths by punishment, or accident." Does not this seem to contradict the evidence constantly being given from those who profess to hold undoubted proof of communication with friends who have passed away; beloved and honoured in their lifetime, and accounted trustworthy messengers of good tidings from a higher sphere?

Madame de Steiger writes as one having authority, and I should be glad to know how far her statement can be confirmed or supported.

F. O.

Identity.

SIR,—May I venture through the medium of your journal to invite the attention of Mrs. Besant to the following incident? On Wednesday, April 9th, I attended a séance at which only five were present, including the medium (Miss Marsh). Soon after our séance opened, the medium, not under control, said that she saw the name of David Isaacs, the owner of which had not passed away many hours. All the sitters failed to recognise the name as belonging to any of their friends or acquaintances. Directly afterwards the medium went under control, and the control said that the name belonged to a man who was between forty and fifty years of age, and who had something to do with teaching children; we were also told to make inquiries; this I determined to do, and as the name was a Jewish one I visited two Jewish schools and was told that Mr. David Isaacs, head master of Cowper-street schools, passed away on Tuesday, April 8th, twenty-four hours prior to my receiving the information; the death is also mentioned in the *Jewish World* of April 11th.

I have ventured to call the attention of Mrs. Besant to this, because it is a case which is quite unexplainable by any hypothesis other than the Spiritualistic one, the sitters being not only ignorant of the death of Mr. Isaacs, but also ignorant of his existence.

C. C.

Thoughts are Things—A Solution.

SIR,—I think I have found the answer to a question I put in a previous letter, headed "To what does this point?" Since then a rare book, entitled *The Wisdom of the Angels*, by T. L. Harris, has come into my possession, in which I find the following:—

While engaged in singing, with spiritual voice, this interior melody I was conscious only of the intrinsic and interior purity of the theme. Returning, however, to a more external condition . . . to my astonishment I found that the melody . . . which I had endeavoured to express in such verbal forms as spontaneously appeared to unfold in my mind under the influence of the inspiring Heaven, had, in reality, been but the shadow of a sublime poem pictured . . . in the bright, ethereal expanse above us. Then I realised that *thoughts are things*, that spirits speak in correspondences.

Now, if "thoughts are things," this will account for Miss Godfrey having seen the lines she gave me when and where she did, the seer's thoughts being transcript or correspondences of existing facts.

Those who write fiction know how very real some of their creations are to them. I once had a curious experience of this kind. I was writing the story of a suffering woman, a pure art-creation as I fancied, when suddenly I was arrested by the consciousness that the woman, though invisible, was standing beside me entreating me to tell her story. I felt her presence distinctly. I recall this to prove that thoughts are not only things but beings. Since then I have always believed that authors, for the most part, are only mediums for recording existing facts. It is curious to note in support of this idea how with the appearance and establishment of Spiritualism on our earth began that flood of novel writing, to say nothing of other writing which now overwhelms us.

I offer these suggestions scantily and with trepidation lest I should be transgressing any one of your editorial injunctions; but as you have appealed for "more light," I venture to uncover the illumination which, having thrown light on my question, may prove suggestive to others.

BERYL.

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. Communications 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.

F. J. T.—Greatly obliged. Perhaps an interval.

LEO.—Yes. Glad to hear from you at any time.

A. T. P.—MS. sent on. Thanks for your note.

J. B. F.—We never heard of the word and cannot help you to its meaning.

J. T. A.—No use in that argument. There is no reason in trying to force people to agree with what they do not hold. Let us give and take.

M. W.—No: the *Kernel and the Husk* of Dr. Abbott and Matthew Arnold's works are more to the point. But everybody must think these things out for himself.

W. J. W.—1850 is a misprint for 1856. We are not able to say where the last two volumes of the *Spiritual Magazine* and the last three of the *Spiritualist* are to be had, but by giving publicity to your wants we may aid you.

M. R. S.—We do not know that any reliable information has ever been got as to the future existence. The writer of the article is familiar with the book you mention and is not impressed favourably by it. The desire you express has our warmest sympathy, but we cannot help you. What would we not give, all of us?

L. G. explains to us that it is not accurate to say that capital punishment has been reverted to in Switzerland. The Swiss Confederation abolished the death penalty some years ago. Each Canton, however, has the right to re-enact it in its own territory. Our correspondent believes that this has been done only in few cases. Public opinion is decidedly opposed to executions; and the deterrent power is very questionable.

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.]

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, W.—A good address was given on Sunday by the guides of Mrs. Treadwell on the training of children. Next Sunday, at 11 a.m., Mr. Goddard, clairvoyant; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7 p.m., Mr. G. Chainey, "Interpretation." Thursday, 7.45 p.m., Mrs. Hawkins; Saturday, 7.45 p.m., Mrs. Treadwell and Mr. Goddard, clairvoyant.—C. WHITE, Hon. Sec.

ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BEAUMONT-STREET, MILE END.—Captain Pfoundes delivered a very able address on Sunday last, upon "Ancient and Modern Centres of Spiritual Activity." Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Cohen on "Historical Spiritualism." On Monday, the 9th, at 8 p.m., a meeting of this society will be held at 218, Jubilee-street, Mile End, when members and friends are requested to attend.—C.

CLAREMONT HALL, PENTON-STREET, PENTONVILLE (a few minutes from King's Cross).—On Sunday last the service was conducted by Mr. A. M. Rodger, and short addresses were delivered by Messrs. McKenzie and S. T. Rodger. The latter dwelt upon the effect of Spiritualism in breaking up the materialism which had advanced concurrently with physical science during the present century. Mr. McKenzie explained some of the rudiments of Spiritualism for the benefit of strangers. Next Sunday evening, at seven, Messrs. Tindall and Read, of the Occult Society, will occupy the platform.—S. T. R., pro U. W. GODDARD.

KING'S CROSS SOCIETY.—Last Sunday morning a discussion upon "Liberty" was initiated by Mr. Sells, who spoke from the collectivist standpoint. Mr. Read combated the views put forward by the opener. Several friends joined in the debate. Next Sunday morning, at 10.45 a.m., Miss Todd will discourse upon "The Ethics of Spiritualism and Christianity."—S. T. R.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S. E.—On Sunday last Mr. Morall Theobald gave an exceedingly interesting discourse on "Angels' Visits in the Past and Present." Next Sunday, June 8th, Mr. Rodger will occupy the platform. Séances every Thursday evening at 8 p.m.—GEO. E. GUNN, Sec.

WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM, S. E.—On Sunday morning last Mr. J. Veitch spoke upon "Spiritualism and Confession," which gave rise to a good debate. In the evening the Rev. Dr. Young gave us an excellent address upon "Is a Man's Character formed by him or for him?" He dealt with the questions of heredity, marriage, and environment, and claimed that man, though being to a great extent a creature of circumstances, was not a mere automaton, as the disciples of philosophic necessity make him out to be. June 8th, at 11 a.m., Mr. Leach, "The Battle of Armageddon." At 7 p.m., Rev. G. W. Allen.—J. VEITCH, Sec., 19, The Crescent, Southampton-street, S. E.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, CHEPSTOW HALL, 1, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—We had a short address by the secretary, followed by comments from several speakers, at our meeting on Sunday morning last. In the evening Mr. J. Dale and Mr. R. J. Lees delivered very interesting addresses to an attentive audience. On Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., Mr. F. C. Klein; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; and at 6.30 p.m. an address by Mr. T. Everitt. We would remind friends that the latest time for obtaining tickets for the annual excursion to Cheam, on June 16th (Monday), will be on Sunday, 15th, at Chepstow Hall.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION.—A general meeting of delegates from societies, members, and those wishing to join will be held in Claremont Hall, Penton-street, Pentonville, on Sunday evening, June 15th, at 7 p.m., to nominate and arrange council, consider propositions, and other business. All interested in the Federation are invited to attend.—U. W. GODDARD, Hon. Sec., 295, Lavender Hill, S. W.

When will it be that men shall kinder grow
In human intercourse; and not thus savagely
Spring upon each occasion to o'erthrow
Their fellow travellers through mortality?
d hath apportioned us enough of woe
In this brief journey; from within derived,
And from the elements, in which we sicken,
Grow weak and die: let not man be deprived
By man of that poor solace which doth quicken
The flagging heart and the o'erlaboured brain
And temper to endurance, when self-stricken,
Or time and storm-worn. Transient thing, refrain,
Sting not thy brother insect till he perish:
A life brief as thy own, vex not, but cherish.

WADE.