

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT, MORE LIGHT!"—*Goethe.*

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by the Editor.

The "Free Christian" contains a letter signed by Mr. J. C. Hodgson, from Mr. Edward W. Forster, on "The Intermediate State," in which the writer comments on the letter sent by Mr. Hodgson, who remarks on a writer who had written nearly a dozen lengthy papers to prove conscious existence after death. The letter which I quote from the "Free Christian" is long, and has apparently been inserted by the good nature of the editor. It consists chiefly of extracts, and represents only the opinion of the writer. I have not had the advantage of seeing Mr. Henn's letter to which this is a reply, but if Mr. Henn's letter "weighed in the balances of Scripture," and "in the calm dispassionate evidence of every-day life and clinical science" is to be considered worthy of any consideration, that consideration must be little. I observe with regret that "God willing" the same writer proposes to reply in the following number of the "Free Christian."

The jubilee number of the "Inquirer" of July 9th, comes to me. I have been acquainted with the "Inquirer" for many years, and am glad to congratulate my contemporary on its jubilee year. Special articles in the way of reminiscences from the year 1856 to 1888 are published with a Supplement, the most conspicuous contributor being, without disparagement of anybody else, Dr. Vance-Smith. The "Inquirer" has always been liberal in its treatment of current affairs, and generous in its dealing with those with whom it disagrees, except, perhaps, Spiritualists; but we can afford to recognise a free and generous treatment which does not extend to ourselves.

Mr. Maskelyne has been good enough to send to Mr. Haweis a spirit-photograph which he warrants as "not genuine." Of course it is not: nothing is genuine about Mr. Maskelyne, except perhaps his plate-spinning, which is very good jugglery. Mr. Maskelyne has, however, overlooked the fact that it is extremely easy to juggle when you have time enough, but not easy when the investigator provides his own materials and allows nobody to interfere in his investigations. Mr. Maskelyne had nobody to interfere with him, hence the pseudo-ghost. I bought my plates on my way to Hudson's and worked them through myself, hence the real ghost. A very different thing from Mr. Maskelyne's imitation. Mr. Maskelyne had better take a lesson from the Society for Psychical Research, who are confining themselves to Hypnotism, and devote himself exclusively to plate-spinning, in which he is an Adept—not imported from Thibet.

Mr. Haweis sends me, which I was unfortunately too ill to observe, a photograph of himself taken by Mr. Parkes, which he states to be fraudulent, as he has seen the same ghosts produced on other negatives, with other "sitters." It is extremely probable; nothing is easier than to trick in this way; but surely it is the business of the sitter to make any trick impossible. If he does not do so he becomes *particeps criminis*. He has no right after to impugn the honesty of a photographer. As a matter of fact, I took the greatest pains, not because I doubted the integrity of the operator, but because I wished to be able to make to the public a direct statement which they were asked to accept on my word, to the effect that the photographs, which I have published in "Human Nature," were not, and could not conceivably be, anything but genuine. For if Mr. Maskelyne can buy a dozen plates and come to my house and work them through, nobody touching them but himself, and then produce me a ghost, he will do something much above anything he has produced at the Egyptian Hall. Mr. Maskelyne is too silly for serious dealing, and it is time that I should say so. I do not interfere with Mr. Maskelyne's trade as a juggler. Let him confine himself to his own business, which is not Spiritualism. He knows nothing about it. He is the parasite which has lived on it: and then he calls it names. It might be well that the tricks at the Egyptian Hall included less possibilities of fraud, much less than there are at an ordinary seance. By fraud I mean deception, and I make Mr. Maskelyne my bow.

I have received the following letter:-

SIR,—My newsagent here tells me that "LIGHT" is dead. I can scarce believe it, and I wish further information from headquarters. If this is so, it is a serious misfortune both for me and the cause of Spiritualism.

What with new features in shape of illustrations and handsome gifts I thought it was destined to live and be a power for good. Possibly it may be superseded by even a superior sheet, if that is possible.

4 and 5, Acomb-terrace,

Acomb, Hexham.

July 5th, 1892.

C. NICHOLSON.

It is better to deal with people of this kind directly. The newsagent made a deliberate misstatement, and knew, or ought to have known, that he was so doing. So much for the honesty of trade in some cases. "LIGHT" was never more alive than now, never less dependent on the class of unscrupulous agents thus brought to our notice. But why does not our correspondent deal with us directly, and leave his agent to "stew in his own juice?" Mr. Nicholson may rest assured that the combined efforts of many agents to stifle "LIGHT" will be fruitless. "They loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil."

You are struck at the flimsiness of the generality of present writings: it all proceeds from want of study. A sound mind will never develop itself if it has not overcome the difficulties of all sorts of labours, or at least of certain studies which necessitate a steady tension of the will.—GEORGE SANDS' "Letters." Vol. III. p. 336.

LOVE.

[I commend to the readers of "LIGHT" the following, which comes to me from a (personally) unknown source. For myself, I never ask whence anything comes, because I am sure that one or other of the following alternatives must be true: either there is but one source from which all comes; or, if there be two, one good and one evil, I am sure the source of evil would be cunning enough to be aware of the futility of dating its messages from their real place of issue, and would always (so to speak) use the note paper of heaven and the signature of God. Hence criticism is either needless or it is useless. "By their fruits," not by their superscription, "ye shall know them." For myself, I am quite sure there is but one source. I only use the alternative argument for the sake of such as yet have not quite made up their minds. With this I give the following, to me seeming to be suggestive.—G.W.A.]

The poor world—to the outward eye—is full of earnest but, apparently, seldom successful effort. I will sing a song of its purpose, of its striving, and of its ultimate end of all.

Every effort is dual; to gain, and to lose. To gain that which, when gained, will be loss of that which was before gaining. And some in striving are the more conscious of the positive desire; others rather of the negative.

Thus to gain wealth means to lose subservience to self-denial, which arises in not having wherewith to obtain what we desire.

To get happiness means to lose that consciousness of not having happiness, which we call sorrow, or misery.

And behold these two represent the two sides of effort: the effort for outer good and loss of outer evil, and the effort for inner good and the loss of inner evil. And behold, again, some feel the desire for the outer; others only for the inner. Each man goes on in his own path.

And behold yet again, every path leadeth to one end; first by demonstration of error; afterwards by realisation of truth. For by the former alone shall no soul be perfected or filled.

I, who send this to you, was once such an one as yourself: caring rather for the inner than for the outer, for such was my temperament.

But, as to this inner I was conscious of much strife in my members. I was not a one, but a two. Two manner of desires strove for mastery in me, and the elder did not yet serve the younger.

Nay, the elder bore rule and oppressed; so that he trampled the younger under his feet; and he lay there as in the horrible pit, and fouled with the mire and clay. And the elder cared not, nor regarded.

Then came the angels of the lower heaven to the younger as he thus lay, and said to him, "Why liest thou there? Unless thou arise and overmaster thine elder, thou shalt never see the Father's face; but thy portion shall be with the tormentors."

And the younger answered, "It is so, even now! How can I arise? Behold I have striven, but this other is stronger than I. If my Father and ye help not there is no arising."

And they said to him, "How can we interfere who have had our own fight, and made our own calling sure? It is the Father's will that each soul prove to Him its own nature and worthiness by its conduct in this case. It is not that thou *canst not* but that thou *wilt not!*" And with that they departed from him.

The younger therefore lay as he was, and cried, "Is there no help? Surely the Father knows my desire and knows also my weakness."

I, therefore, in whom these two were contending was greatly perturbed by their conflict. Yea, and it seemed at times as if I was myself the elder that oppressed; and at other times I felt as the younger who was oppressed.

Now, as I was thus disturbed, Our Father opened in my mind this thought: Better the elder wax first, and then wane, and be cast out, and so eternal peace follow, than that the younger should wax first, and be ever in fear of his opposite growing to strength, and forcing a combat for supremacy upon him.

I thought, moreover: Whatever evil be, or be not, let me look it full in the face; recognise its presence, and so avoid false security. If it be, let it come to the surface and be known and battled with. If it be not, there is nothing to fear.

And at those thoughts I was much comforted, and felt more clearly than ever that the evil was not I, but something in me; which would grow and wane and disappear, and leave nought behind but a sense of power and security, and of thankfulness and joy.

Then came some Angels from a higher heaven than the former, and they talked with me, and bade me take courage. "For," said they, "when the time comes the Father Himself will in His own way uplift thee." And they bade me read and ponder on Ezek. xxxvi. 24-28.

Then said I, "Is not the Father wrath with me for thus letting the younger be trampled in the mire?" Whereat they smiled and said, "Thou knowest not yet Our Father; and understandest not how He is dealing with thee, or His high purpose for thee; but thou wilt know soon." Saying these things the angels still continued with me, and comforted me.

Now while I continued yet striving and fighting, and ever (as it seemed) hopelessly, against that elder one,—in some way, I know not how, I lighted upon a wonderful experience.

One seemed to be at my side; and it seemed also as if she had been there for long, but I had not been fully conscious of her presence.

And as I looked at her she seemed to be ever more and more familiar to me, ever less and less strange; and O, ever more and more dear.

And the love of her grew so in my heart that all thought or care but for this passed from me; and I longed to speak to her, but feared lest a rash word might frighten her away.

And ever it seemed to me that her eyes were upon that part of me I have called the younger one, that lay in the mire and clay; and I saw she desired that he should be raised.

And lo, all at once I was conscious of new power; so that I was sure I could now cast out the elder. But when I went to cast him out, lo, I saw him lying motionless—dead!

Then said I to the Angels who were with me, "How is this?" And they replied, "Dear brother, this is Our Father's love which hath come to thee. For thy heart has been so bent upon the love of this one who is dear to thee that the old delights, which used to please and attract thee have lost all their power; and this, thine elder, that was fed and grew strong on such food, has dwindled and died. And thou art free."

Thus was my life changed. And a great glory and joy and love filled me; so that I went towards her who had thus helped me to clasp her to my bosom, and bless her. But though she smiled at me, she seemed scarcely to understand.

Then said I to the Angels "What may I do?" And they said, "Yet have patience. Be happy in thy love for her; and be sure that she loveth thee, though as yet not realisingly. And for the help she has given thee thou shalt now help her by withholding thyself, and not asking her for aught but what she actually giveth thee. For if ye be joined by any way save by the inner and spiritual your joy shall not abide; but if ye attain to the inner then your joy no man taketh from you."

So I replied, "It is well. The joy that I have in this is almost more than I can bear, and what should I want with more?" And her love filled me, and it was good, and I knew that it should endure; and uplift me above all that was of the lower. I knew also that one day the love of me should fill her, and that then we should be at the end of the wished for, and at the beginning of the undreamt of.

And now it is the Father's will that thou say to all who yet struggle and fall that there is a means, which He holdeth in His own power, whereby their strife shall be ended even as mine has been, and their hearts lifted up and filled with a joy passing all understanding. It is in vain that they labour as for definite results; but their labour is, in another sense, not in vain; for it teacheth them their own weakness, and implanteth humbleness of mind, and sympathy whereby man groweth like to God; and it is the exact measure of their sense of joy when the strife is ended, and peace and love alone reign.

[And as this was said to me I thought of our Father's promises, and the words of Ps. xl. 1-3. And I understood and was glad.]

EVEN peaceable sleep is looked on by the Malays as the wandering of the sleeper's spirit out of himself. A Malay never awakens another sleeper suddenly; he touches him gently, and speaks in an endearing manner to the spirit, asking it to return, and will go on coaxing for half an hour rather than speak roughly or suddenly.—ABERCROMBY'S "Seas and Skies in Many Latitudes."

**RECORDS OF PRIVATE SEANCES FROM NOTES TAKEN
AT THE TIME OF EACH SITTING.**

No. XXI.

FROM THE RECORDS OF MRS. S.

June 9th. This evening the circle sat alone under the usual conditions. The musical sounds were very distinct and sweet. Lovely scented air was wafted over the circle, and brought, by request, to each member.

Mentor tried to control Mr. S. M., but found it difficult to speak through him. He wrote instead answers to our questions through the hand of the medium, signing the name of Mentor, adding a circle and double triangle—his own signs. Imperator controlled, answered numerous questions, and promised to meet us on Friday to answer certain theological questions Dr. S. wished to ask.

June 13th. We sat this evening with the addition of Mr. S. The musical spirits manifested very quickly. Mentor walked round the circle, bringing to each member cool air scented with roses. A small compass was brought from the drawing-room, and thrown down on the table between me and Mr. S. M. After much rapping around him he became controlled, and turning to Dr. S. said, "Friend, you would speak with us." Dr. S. answered, "You proposed to discuss certain questions." "We will as far as we can. Let them be definite, that we may economise the power, as we cannot count upon a long control." Dr. S. then said: "Previous to my hearing of Spiritualism I held certain views, somewhat inconsistent with orthodoxy. What are your views regarding the doctrine of original sin? Is not sin less heinous than we have been taught, and does not God make allowance for it?" "Friend, you have opened one of the very deepest mysteries that surround the spirit, and the conditions which surround the All-Wise. The doctrines taught by the Church are faulty. The views that men have entertained of God partake of the medium through which they have filtered. Men have framed theories for themselves, which have been crystallised into dogmas, and taught as of binding obligation. Orthodox and current theology mercifully is false. Religion is to a certain extent a matter of the heart, infused into it by spirit guardians, and which is more or less true. But man's theology is a reflex of opinion and untrustworthy. One of the dogmas that man has framed for himself is that of original sin, which exists only in human opinion, and has no foundation in reality. We are always reluctant to attempt from our standpoint to supplement the theology of man. We are like one groping in the dark on many questions, and our opinions are in no sense to be taken as the whole truth. When we have passed to the life of contemplation, and to the presence of the Eternal, we might then be able to throw much light upon what is now obscure, but if we cannot give a revelation of truth, we can point out error. Man's views of his relation to the Creator are almost all erroneous." "Are our views of the necessity of Atonement correct?" "We had not completed our answer. Man's views of sin are erroneous. Sin in its essence is the conscious violation of those eternal laws which make for the advantage of the spirit. God cannot view sin as a personal injury. He regards it as we regard the offences of a child, which will bring sorrow and retribution in their train. Sin is not in itself any offence against the Creator; the punishment is not wreaked on a defenceless creature. Sin is itself its own punishment, as the transgression of immutable law. You invite our opinion, and we will give it." "Sin being the violation of eternal laws, may we not say that few are so conscious of those laws as to be wholly chargeable?" "No sin can be conscious, save when it is a conscious violation of that standard implanted in the soul by the guardians. As to the great dogma, our hesitation was caused by the consideration which presents itself as to the advisability of substituting an opinion of our own for the received opinion. The life of the Man Christ Jesus on earth was a pattern life intended for the example of man, intended to show under conditions almost perfect how an almost perfect life could be arrived at; His life was a grand human life, and in so far it was to you and to all the type and indication of the way in which the failings of humanity may be transmuted into virtues pleasing to God and improving to the spirit—in so far it was an atonement, but in so far as it was deemed to be an atonement by way of a sacrifice for sin it was a foul falsehood, degrading to God, degrading to that pure and

stainless Spirit to whom such things were falsely attributed, and misleading to souls who rest on blind faith, and falsely imagine that their credulity would be accounted a virtue. It is a fiction and false; but it does not hide the grand work which the Saviour wrought, for He was a Saviour indeed. We do not wish to substitute our dogmas for yours. You asked from us our opinion as to the Atonement, and we have answered. One day you will wonder how such a baseless fable could ever have obtained credence. We wish to explain precisely what we have said briefly: *A life of perfect humanity brought down to your level; and to you and all else a subject of imitation.*" "As to the Unitarian doctrines?" "We have known many of the sect of whom you speak, and of them, and all others, we can only say the Truth is only grasped in fragments. We do not hold out for imitation any human system of theology. The Truth we are commissioned to declare will render all human inventions unnecessary. Man has made God in his own image: his God is human, very human in many ways: He has had qualities attached to His name which a more divine philosophy would cause man to repudiate. You are gradually coming to know an omnipresent and omniscient loving Father, and when the communication is established with those who know Him better, you will have a new revelation, which will blot out the old falsehoods, and will give you new ideas of God. The revelation of which we are bearers from the Almighty will supersede all the old creeds and philosophies, will render it unnecessary for you to discuss them, and will give you truth instead of fiction, the complement of what has been revealed before. The millennium fabled by poets will be realised in the revelation of so much truth as you are able to grasp for the regulation of your life here and your future hereafter." "Does spirit-teaching make for good?" "It must eventually make for good, seeing it comes from God, but as it must blot out much that men have believed and trusted, it must be subversive of what men have called faith. We desire for the satisfaction of those who are perplexed by this difficulty to dwell on the great cardinal truth that God reveals to man that which he is able to bear, so that the revelation that comes from God is a progressive revelation. The organised attempt of the spirits of evil to mar our work will not cease until the truth prevails, there will be much that is trying to the weak, and also to those whose faith is firm, before it is established. It is the law that has prevailed in all the dealings of God with man. It is the necessary consequence of the existence of evil spirits. Beware how you submit to the guidance of unseen intelligences, without ascertaining if they are what they pretend to be. Those who, with an honest and pure intent, place themselves in communication with the spirit-world must see that those with whom they place themselves in communication are true. When this is clear to you, and you feel and know that you are indeed in communication with the spirits of the blest, and not with those who are coming with feigned messages, you will receive our information with that careful appreciation which we shall gladly welcome. We have nothing to fear from investigation made by honest and pure minds. We disclaim altogether infallibility. It is falsely and wrongly said that human reason is no judge; use it according to your light, your ability, and your reason. Doubt not; use it." "Can you account for our having arrived at these views independently of Spiritualism?" "You do not know how far spirit influence has been brought to bear on you. There is to you, we presume (for we can scarcely understand it ourselves), a mystery in the operation of the guardian angels. We see how they seek out receptive souls, and lead them on from lower to higher knowledge. Hereafter the receptive souls will know that they have been brought from darkness to light. We told you long ago that all were the centre of a band of spirits; ye are all, in your kind, receptacles of angelic influence, moulded by us to work out the plans of God. It was not by chance you were thrown with this medium. . . . The Atonement was true in the sense of its being a redemption of man's nature from the state of depravity in which it was before the time of the Saviour's advent." "Did not the Neo-Platonists teach very much what He taught?" "There never was such a conspicuous character to illustrate His teaching, and it is not true that their doctrines ever rose to the dignity of the teaching of Christ. It never stood out so boldly, so grandly, as an example of perfect humanity." "Not Buddha's?" "It was great and good, but it did not reach

the sublime height of Christ's." "But surely it was not now?" "There was no one teaching of Christ's which had not been taught before, but in Christ you have the union of theory and practice in a grander way than any that preceded it, as an example for future ages." "Is it right to think of Christ as the greatest medium that ever lived?" "None received the high teaching and inspiration of God so thoroughly as Christ. The miracles you have seen here are the same in kind which Christ was enabled to work. The utterances you hear are precisely the same as those given to the Hebrew prophets; they only differ in time and character." "As to Christ's resurrection?" "It was no resurrection from the dead. The doctrine of the resurrection was a doctrine true for all time, typical of the resurrection of the spirit-body, of the spirit, hidden before, veiled on earth, to its true home in the spheres. The body of the Saviour never did rise; it was removed from the tomb, we know not where or how. As to Thomas, he merely saw a materialised form, such as you see nowadays, but more perfect, in consequence of the more perfect conditions." "And that power would have remained on earth?" "It came again in later times, and has never died out in the Roman Catholic Church. It is only unknown in the colder communions of Christianity, which refuse to believe in any real association with the spheres; when man refuses to believe he is also unable to see. Faith is the receptivity of the spirit. God gives to man what he is able to bear, and that alone. Belief in Spiritualism will spread, but not as the creed of any Church. We have to lay before erring souls what they need, and our revelation requires neither bishops, priests, or deacons, but the association between the spirit-guardians and the soul alone. Christ taught that the time would come when no special place, or person, would be held more sacred than another. If you would read the words of Christ you would find how they are condemnatory of all Christian creeds. All are one worse than another. Essentially because they are of human manufacture. What we are commissioned to give you is, so far as you can receive it, Divine. The power will not bear prolonging. Have you any point on which you need further information?" "As to the removal of the spirit? Is it at once conscious of having entered into a new phase of existence?" "Not always. It depends very much on the cultivation of the life of the spirit. If that life has been allowed to become dormant, when it throws off the body as nature intended it often happens that the spirit is unconscious of the change and does not realise it until its spirit-guardians inform it. Others who have led a gross life wake up from a dream to find themselves cold, friendless, and shivering among the beatified. It depends upon the tone and temper of the life the spirit has led upon earth, how far it is consecutive, but in all cases it is the renewing of consciousness. Continuity of identity—Death ought not to be a painful process to one who passes away in full possession of his faculties. In some cases the spirit never loses consciousness at all, and is aware of the bursting forth of latent faculties into a new and brighter life, conscious of the greeting of old friends who have preceded it, conscious of the dawning of a new existence which is a continuation of the old. Brighter, newer, fuller knowledge and richer opportunities for progress. Death in this case is translation. I have been greatly pleased to meet you. We feared we should have been unable to communicate at anything like this length. We are thankful to have been permitted to reply to questions in your minds, and we hope our answers will be useful. We shall welcome any opportunity of resuming. If you will place yourselves in communication with us, we can reply as we have been enabled to do tonight, and so we may be of mutual help. There is a mysterious law (affecting our intercourse) frequently, we are unable to originate topics through the organisation of the medium, but are able to take up the clues which you furnish and converse in them. It is a law which requires to be borne in mind. At first we were unable to use words which we did not find in the medium's mind, and were obliged to impress him with ideas. May the Almighty Father bless you."

IMPERATOR.

THE most virtuous have most foes. To say of a man that he has no enemies is considered high praise; but suppose the remark to be true, what does it prove? Merely that he is negatively exemplary; that he is an amiable person without any force of character. All men who are positively and actively virtuous have many foes.

AN INTERESTING RECORD.

The following interesting letter, of which we reproduce the material portions, appears in the "Religio-Philosophical Journal." There seems to us to be something in the suggestions thrown out that is worth considering. But how is the slate-writing done? The slates are in view on the surface of the table, and we can see no explanation. But, if Colonel Bundy can write inside slates screwed together, we suppose other people can. We missed his explanation of his method.—[ED. "LIGHT."]

When I first called on Watkins I was told that we could not have a sitting for two days. I did not like this idea, it looked to me that by some means a knowledge of us might be obtained on which to base his writing, notwithstanding I had avoided giving a clue, insomuch as to make our stopping place in an adjoining town. However, an hour was set, and we were on time, and were ushered into a small front room. The furniture consisted of a bookcase, a few chairs, and a table 2ft by 3ft, with a felt inlaid top. No cover was used on the table. All the writing was done on top of the table. The medium gave each of us five pieces of paper torn from a block 2in. by 4in. in size. On these we were requested to write questions to our spirit friends, while we were left alone for some ten minutes. We had formulated our questions at our stopping-place. Our questions not to be known to each other. I took the precaution to roll all of them up myself, so that there would be no difference in their appearance. This Mr. Watkins requested. When this was done I re-washed two slates which had just been used by a man and wife. I then put private marks on the slates by which I should know that an exchange had been made; I also examined the table, no appearance of trickery being seen. On Mr. Watkins coming in he stirred up the pellets and showed us how to place them on the table, which was three inches apart in a line. He then gave each one of us a pencil, and we were requested to point first to one and then to another. I wish to say right here that being the proprietor of the opera house in my town where exhibitions had been given, I knew during this stirring up of the pellets is the time that the sleight-of-hand performers take to get hold of one or more of the pellets, covering the procedure by substituting their own. At this point I took extra care to observe his motions, but detected nothing wrong. While we were busy with our pencils Watkins said to my wife, "There, take that up and hold it in your hand." At the same time he placed a small bit of pencil on the slate I had marked and covered it with another slate. These were held by us in the following manner. My wife was at the left and took hold with her left hand; being on the right I clasped them with my right hand. Watkins being on the opposite side of the table held the other edges, all hands resting on the table. When we had sat in this manner a few minutes Watkins told my wife that she was a Hervey, but that her mother was a Sanborn. This remark at once gave us an idea of what pellet my wife held, the contents known to her alone. In a few minutes more the writing was said to be finished. I was requested to open the slates. There had been no sound made by the rubbing of the pencil against the slate heard by us, so that this kind of evidence was lacking. This sound can be simulated, it is well known, by the medium, as his fingers are under the slate. (This, however, amounts to nothing, and must be ruled out as evidence that writing is being done because you hear the writing.) On taking the slates apart a complete answer was found, signed Elizabeth Sanborn Hervey. This was the name addressed, being the name of my wife's mother. While we were reading the message Watkins said there was an old gentleman present who says, "Elizabeth, you have not spelled your name right." I at once looked at the name to find the mistake. My wife seeing my quandary helped me out by saying that she understood it and would tell me later. Now, this is the explanation: About one hundred years ago Mr. Thomas Harvey's children, who were about starting in business at Newburyport, Mass., changed the spelling of their name by substituting the letter "e" for "a," making the name Hervey. Their father was always provoked at this, telling them that they were proud and were ashamed of their name. I don't recollect that I ever heard of that change of name until that time. The question now is, was there an old man

there, or did Watkins read my wife's stored knowledge which was not called in play at this time?

On this same slate and just below the other message was the following: "Tell mother that I send her my love and to all.—(Signed) Alice." Now, here is a message that is hard to account for. It will be understood that only one of the pellets has been taken up, nine still remaining on the table. Had Watkins substituted one of his for one of those we had written, read and replaced it on the table, or was my daughter present and did she dictate the message? It reads, "Tell mother," &c. Now, why should she use the word tell? By leaving this word out all would seem natural, as her mother was there at the table. To give my impressions obtained from my investigations, I think the most natural conclusion is that a scribe or clerk does the writing, but is influenced by the spirit of the dictator, as we observe that the handwriting is not exactly the same in all messages and certainly are not in the handwriting of the one said to have sent them. We went on with the pointing. Soon I was requested to take up a pellet and put it into my pocket. Again my wife was asked to hold one in her hand. The slates were adjusted as before and the following came on the slate. "He appeared as I did at first, and then we grew young together." My wife's father died at the age of thirty-one and her mother at eighty-five years. This was a natural question for a child to ask, and purported to be answered by the mother who would naturally tell the truth in so extraordinary a case. Is this the condition of the spirit world? Do the old grow young, or was this answer the dream of the medium, or was it a reflex of my own mind as I have often suggested it might be, in the other world?

I will notice another case. I have said that I had taken up a number of pellets and put them in my pocket. Seven had been answered correctly under the same conditions. There remained three. I was requested to take one out and hold in my hand. Soon Watkins, appearing somewhat puzzled, said: "You have written to two persons." "No," I replied. "Then Martha Hopkins was the wife of Captain Robert Emery." I assented to that. The question was then answered correctly. Was my mother there or was the answer taken from my mind? Another case. I took a pellet from my pocket and held it as before. Watkins at once appeared very much excited and remarked that this man came to his death in an instant. Watkins struggled for a minute or two with great effort to control himself; he soon became calm and said, "This spirit has tried hard to entrance me, but I will not be to-day as I have been overworked." The facts in this case are somewhat singular. In the first place, it was impossible for me to have known which pellet I held in my hand of either of the three put in my pocket. This was my question: "Under what conditions did you die?" This case was as follows: My father sailed for Boston from Belfast, Me., and went into Portland for a harbour. While his vessel lay at anchor in a heavy snowstorm a larger vessel coming in from sea ran into her. My father thinking his was about to sink attempted to get on board of the brig. In doing so he slipped from the icy rail between the vessels, being crushed at the time, it was thought. Watkins said, "This man died instantly." No word came from father direct. A part of the communications came on the slates without any pencil being used while we held them as usual. I will say that at a subsequent sitting I held them out in one hand, holding the medium by the other. I have now in my possession ten slates covered with glass puttied just inside of the wooden frame, also a written letter by Watkins pasted on one of them. With these facilities I can compare the writing and draw my conclusions. It was by this method I found Dr. Slade's handwriting was the same as in his slate writing. Mr. Watkins will sell any slate for twelve cents, and a sitter ought to carry home such for future reference in his cooler moments. It would seem that in case a deception was to be practised a smaller size slate would be used—7½ in. by 10½ in. is quite a large size. At these sittings there was a pile, say about fifty, on the floor near the table, and as fast as I bought one another was taken from this lot—all fresh and new.

Four years before the advent of Modern Spiritualism I was employed by Mr. P. P. Quinby, of Belfast, Me., to take charge of his jewellery business while he lectured on Mesmerism, as it was called then. He and his subject Lucius had for a few years previous been experimenting and got to be very proficient. During the year I was engaged 1

became one of the family, and witnessed hundreds of exhibitions of the different phases of the power. I was, however, more interested in clairvoyance, as Lucius was a fine subject. It is hard for me to assent to the spiritual explanation of much of the phenomena on that ground. I do see much evidence that clairvoyance coupled with mind reading will account for all except the physical part. In the matter of question reading with Watkins, to me it was a clear case of clairvoyance, as he often answered the questions himself after first naming to whom they were addressed. It would appear that as soon as he named the one addressed he became the possessor of the writer's mind, either active or dormant, and was able to formulate an answer either as one would in a dream or according to facts known to the sitter.

I give this as an idea, suggested by my investigations, as to the mode or way the writing is done. I will now admit that my cable is not long enough to reach bottom.—

Bucksport, Me.

JAMES EMERY.

GOD'S WORLD AND MAN'S.

It is not God's world, with its love and friendship and little children, its fields and flowers, sea and sky, sunlight and starshine, and sweet consolations of Art and Song, against which we are bidden to beware. No, it is man's world—the world which devotes itself to gain, or to the wish to be somebody in society; to the frittering away of our days in fashionable frivolity, or in struggling to outdo our neighbour, not in the purity of our lives, or the dignity of our actions, but in our clothes, our carriages, and the company we keep—*this* world it is which cannot be rightly loved by one in whom dwelleth the love of the Father.

But God's world we can never love half enough, can never sufficiently appreciate and enjoy. I believe that if God were to make a man, a full-grown man in a moment, and were to set him down in the midst of the world, to look upon it with new eyes, and for the first time, instead of letting him grow up from a child, *to become accustomed to it*—for it is true, as Mr. Lowell says, that "we glance carelessly at the sunrise, and get used to Orion and the Pleiades"—I believe that that man would be in danger of delirium from his overwhelming joy and wonder at the beauty and the boundlessness of that which he saw around.—"A Dead Man's Diary."

BOOKS AND MAGAZINES RECEIVED.

- "The Idler." Chatto & Windus. (6d. July.)
"The Columbus of Literature: or, Bacon's New World of Sciences." By W. F. C. WINGSTON. (Chicago: F. J. Schulte & Co., 298, Dearborn-street.) [An instalment of the Bacon-Shakspere controversy.]

THE ANGEL DEATH.

Strange, how we think of Death,
The angel beloved of God,
With his face like an asphodel flower,
And his feet with nepenthe shod.
Strange, how we turn and flee
When he comes by the sunset way,
Out of the valley of rest,
Down through the purpling day!

Why should we fear him so?
What doth the white one bear?
Heart's-ease of Paradise,
Lilies of purer air!
Comes he so soft, so kind,
Down from the singing sky—
Soft as a mother comes,
Stirred by an infant's cry.

—“Congregationalist.”

THE TRUE CHURCH.—The Church of Christ is essentially and necessarily a *broad* church—Broad? That is a poor word. It is wide-reaching as the Infinite. It is a unity, for all its members are bound together by their common love of righteousness. But it admits of infinite diversity. My chief business in life is to explain and enforce this lesson. When men have learnt it there will be no more sects; no more religious, or rather irreligious, persecutions; diversity will remain, but discord will have vanished; all who love righteousness will love one another; religious communities will perceive that they are not separate and antagonistic bodies, but parts of the self-same organism; and the Churches of the world will become—in a sense quite different from that in which the words can now be applied to them—the Churches of our Lord and of His Christ.—DR. MOMERIE.

[July 16, 1892]

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
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Light:

EDITED BY W. STAINTON-MOSES.

["M. A. (OXON.)"]

SATURDAY, JULY 16th, 1892.

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.

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DISCOURSES OF MINOT J. SAVAGE.

Among the exponents of a rational and reverent religion the Rev. Minot Savage holds a foremost place. To whom shall we compare him of those who on this side of the Atlantic have stood forth as defenders of the faith as it is best commended to the thinking mind that would fain conserve the truth and disembarass it of the rubbish that has been super-imposed upon it? Martineau? Yes, but he is less abstruse and more adapted to daily wear; not that a word of disparagement should be said of one of the bravest and keenest intellects of the age. But Savage is more human than Martineau. He appeals more to the man and less to the scholar. Stanley? Yes; but he is more practical, not so poetic, not so—shall we venture to say?—"ladylike," though none who has thought on the lines of what we call Broad Churchism can undervalue his debt to Stanley, with his indescribable grace of language and his fearless outspoken utterances. Stopford Brooke? Yes; but he sacrificed a coign of vantage when he left the Established Church for a position necessarily less commanding. In America this would not have been the same thing. It is in no spirit of derogation that we say that a singularly acute and sincere intellect has suffered from the very sincerity of the action that it imposed upon itself. Still Stopford Brooke comes nearest to Minot Savage among those who may be compared with him. Haweis? Yes, of course. The qualities of ability, outspokenness, and a sort of commanding magnetic influence, together with a freshness of thought and a power of re-stating old truths in terms of modern acceptance, belong to both these leaders of men. Haweis has stuck to his post in the Church of his original choice, and it is, in our opinion, impossible to over-estimate the value of the work that he has done in broadening thought and stiffening the attitude which the pioneer of a new age must adopt in reference to opinions that have had their day and cease to be. A vivacity of thought and a capacity for vivid presentation of new ideas have made him a leader in surroundings which do not hamper Minot Savage. Both have "caught on" to that which differentiates the present age from the preceding one—a recognition of the "ministry of angels," never lost but all too much ignored in the past; a realisation of the fact that "God has not left Himself without witness": a readiness to lend

the listening ear to what may count for so much and which has been so neglected as only now to be vindicated for what it really means.

Others there are whom we have not mentioned, for the inspiration is becoming wide-spread and one cannot take count of all. But decidedly Minot Savage is eminently worthy of our attention. Some account, therefore, of his thought and its expression is deserving. We propose to give some extracts and summaries of his teachings, the material for which has been kindly furnished to us by himself:—

DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

BY THE REV. MINOT J. SAVAGE, BOSTON, U.S.A.

[*Slightly Abridged.*]

As we review the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus, I hope you will bear in mind that I am not arguing either for or against the question of the resurrection or the future life of the human soul, but am only treating certain alleged historical facts.

In the legendary story of Jesus, we are told that it grew dark at noon on the day of his crucifixion. Whether we may accept this as literal fact or not, we may at least take it as a beautiful and appropriate poetic setting-forth of that which was real in his life. His life grew dark before it was noon: before the sun was at its zenith, it was suddenly eclipsed.

"This star
Rose . . . through a little arc
Of heaven, nor having wandered far;
Shot on a sudden into dark."

We have noticed the gathering of the clouds of suspicion, hatred, and jealousy around him; and now we are to see him passing under the fringes of this tempest that is so soon to burst with fatal stroke upon his head.

The Jews were accustomed to keep the Passover on Thursday evening, on the fourteenth day of their month Nisan. This festival seems to have been made up of mingled elements, some of the customs and practices being drawn from an original nature-worship, and a part from the later worship of Jehovah. In any case, at the time we are considering, a family or a group of friends was accustomed to gather on this evening, and to eat a lamb roasted whole, with fried fruits and bitter herbs, in celebration of their deliverance from the bondage of Egypt. Whether they were originally attached to them or not, they had come to look upon each one of the particular parts of the ceremony as having some special and peculiar significance. Jesus, then, and his disciples being a Jew as he was—were gathered in an upper chamber in Jerusalem, in the house of some secret or open friend; and he sat down with them to keep this Jewish feast of the Passover. He seems to have been shadowed already with a premonition of the coming disaster; for we find him talking in mysterious sentences concerning the death which he was to suffer. It is hardly possible for us to tell now, with the records we have at hand, as to whether Jesus really felt certain that he was to die, or whether he did not expect some supernatural deliverance, even at the last moment; for one of our authorities tells us that he spoke of his being able, if he would, to command more than twelve legions of angels to come to his defence and rescue. And then that last pathetic cry of his upon the cross—"My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me!"—will at least bear an interpretation of disappointment, as though he expected a deliverance that, at the last moment, did not come. We will not dogmatically decide that this is the meaning, for it may have another. And yet there are some serious difficulties in believing that Jesus told his disciples, in plain terms, that he was coming again; for we find, after his death, that they are utterly crushed, broken, and scattered. They either did not understand that he was to die, or else they did not believe his word—that he would reappear once more.

So much, at any rate, seems plain. Jesus, then, sits with his disciples, and eats the Jewish Feast of the Passover. And, when the supper is ended—that is, the formal part of the supper—he takes a loaf of bread and breaks it, and distributes it to the disciples, and says, "Take, eat: this is my body." And he takes a cup of red wine, such as they were always accustomed to drink, and passes it to them, saying: "This is my blood which is shed for many. Do this in remembrance of me; for I will not drink with you again

until I do it anew in the coming kingdom of God." This naturally symbolic way of asking them to remember him is beautiful and pathetic. And yet to what a cruel engine of oppression and outrage has it grown in the history of the church. All through mediæval Christianity, it was made the engine of excommunication and torture, so that men feared it more than they did death itself.

Either while he is at this supper or very soon after, Judas, one of the twelve, mysteriously disappears from their number, and leaves only the eleven disciples. After singing together a hymn—as the translation has it, or the Psalms from the one hundred and fifteenth to the one hundred and eighteenth, as was customary at the close of this supper—Jesus and his disciples leave the upper chamber toward midnight, go out of the city in the darkness across the little Brook Kedron, which ran through the valley that separated the mountain on which Jerusalem stood from the Mount of Olives, and here seek seclusion, a place for meditation and prayer, in an olive grove near the foot of the mountain, in a place called, from an "oil-press" which was near by, Gethsemane. Here his soul was weighted and troubled and he passes through an agony of conflict. Divining without any doubt the purpose of the absence of Judas, his soul for the last time goes through that tremendous struggle as to whether he shall face his fate manfully or save his life by flight. It must be decided at once, for now the crisis hastens on apace. Are we to think for a moment that there was any less bravery in the soul of Jesus because he shrank—young, and filled and flushed with life and power as he was—from a speedy and ignominious death? Rather, to my mind, does his courage seem to tower above many of those who have met death without one sign of flinching or reluctance. Insensibility is not bravery. The highest courage is that which feels what death means, which shrinks from it in every quivering fibre of the thrilling life, and which yet, for principle, dares to walk on and meet it. "Are you not afraid?" said a young and boastful officer to an older companion whose face was blanched and pale as they stood in the midst of the thick falling shot of the battle-field. "Yes," was the reply, "I am afraid; and, if you were one-half as fearful as I, you would flee." Courage does not mean any lack of shrinking: it means standing the ground bravely in spite of the shrinking.

While Jesus, then, was passing through this conflict, Judas is leading a part of the Temple guard, which was under the control of the priests; and they come with their lanterns and torches and weapons, enter the garden, and at a signal from Judas arrest the Nazarene. There is a momentary struggle, the drawing of a sword on the part of one of the disciples; but Jesus, whose weapons were "not of this world," bids him put it up again, and quietly submits to his fate. Now, then, he is led away alone. One of the disciples has betrayed him, one of them is soon stoutly to deny him with an oath, and all have deserted him in his hour of trial. He is led away at midnight to the palace of Caiaphas, the high priest; and the fragments of the Sanhedrin such as they could gather at this unseasonable hour are summoned for the purpose of condemning him. For his condemnation was a foregone conclusion; and whether they had witnesses and evidence or not was of slight account. For, when an ecclesiastical court has decided to put a disturber out of the way, it does not look very far for witnesses or evidence. But they are not able to put him to death without the consent of the Roman power; for Caesar had taken away from them this prerogative. So they must wait until morning; and then they go to the Pretorium, the great palace of Herod, now occupied by Pilate. For Pilate, although he lived at Cesarea a great part of the time, was accustomed to come to Jerusalem with his Roman soldiers during the feast, to keep the people quiet; lest there should be a popular uprising. They took him then to Pilate; and here, in an open court, on a pavement called in the Hebrew Gabbatha, Jesus the culprit is brought before the man on whose word hangs his life or his death. Pilate seems disposed to let him go. He would naturally look with a sort of contempt upon these religious quarrels among people with whom he had no sympathy, and he evidently regarded Jesus only as a simple, good-natured enthusiast; and he proposes to the people that, as it was the custom on this day of the feast to set free someone who was held in custody, they accept the gift of the life and freedom of the Nazarene. But the crowd, instructed by the Pharisees

and the chief priests, cried out: "Not this Jesus. Give us Jesus Bar-Abbas—the son of Abbas—and let this one be crucified." Pilate did not shrink usually from putting a man to death; and though he would have been glad to set Jesus free, yet he dared not, after the nature of the charge they had brought against him, lest he should be reported to Herod or Caesar as conniving at a popular political uprising: for they had said, "This fellow claims to be King of the Jews." Pilate, therefore, easily condemns him, after washing his hands in water, saying: "I will have nothing to do with the matter. Do as you please." And they took him and led him away to be crucified.

The scene of the crucifixion we are unable now to determine. We only know it was on a little bald-topped hill outside of the city, from its peculiar appearance taking the name of "a skull": for this word, skull, is the English translation of the Latin Calvary, and Calvary is the Latin translation of the Hebrew Golgotha, each of the words meaning simply a skull, which was given to this hill from some peculiarity of its rounded outline. Here, then, Jesus is nailed to the cross while it is lying on the ground—his arms stretched apart on the cross-beam, his feet nailed together with a single spike; and then the cross is lifted into its position. This is about twelve o'clock. He hangs there from twelve to three. It was not unusual for a person in such a position, if he were strong and robust, to live for a day or two; hence the surprise when they come to Pilate and tell him that Jesus is already dead, and when Joseph of Arimathea begs the privilege of taking down the body and putting it in his own new tomb. The ladies of Jerusalem, to mitigate the sufferings of those who were crucified, were accustomed to prepare a stupefying drink; but this, when it was lifted to the lips of Jesus and he had tasted, he refused, preferring to suffer with a clear brain and to meet his fate with open eye.

Jesus, then, at last is dead, and he is buried away very hastily on this Friday night, because it was the Jews, "preparation day"—that is, the day preceding the Sabbath; and, lest they should be polluted by having anything to do with a dead body, they must despatch this business the night before. The death of Jesus, as I have already intimated, threw his followers into utter confusion and dismay. They were scattered abroad, hopeless and aimless. Nobody knew what to think about it or what to do. We find an intimation as to their state of mind, in the story of the two disciples taking an evening walk to Emmaus. They say one to another: "We do not know what this means. We trusted that this had been he who should have redeemed Israel; and yet now he is crucified and buried, and our hopes are gone."

We must pass over a little time. After a few days or weeks—we know not just how long it was—had passed, we find the strange story in circulation that the crucified had risen again—that Jesus is alive, that he has ascended into Heaven. We find the scattered disciples gathered again in Jerusalem into the central congregation which constituted the first Church. Jesus is alive, they say: he was the Messiah; he is risen, he has ascended, and will come again. These were the words that fell on the ear. And a little later still we find Paul preaching in Jerusalem and in Damascus and in Asia Minor, "Jesus was the Messiah; though he was crucified, he has risen again; he has ascended to the Father; he will come in the clouds very speedily—no one knows how soon—to establish his Messianic kingdom." This was the message of the first preachers of the Christian Church.

Now, one of the most important questions connected with this whole life of Jesus, perhaps the most important of all, is the one that I now ask you sincerely and simply, without prejudice one way or the other, to face: How does it happen that these discouraged, broken, scattered disciples come together again, that they are full of hope, that they believe and assert that Jesus is alive, and that he has ascended to Heaven, that he will come back again to establish his kingdom? How did it happen, I say, that such a belief as this arose? You are aware, of course, that the popular answer to this for hundreds of years has been that the veritable body of Jesus did leave the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, and that he appeared to his disciples and talked with them, gave directions concerning what they were to do, then in their sight rose into Heaven in the very body that he had worn during the thirty years of his life on earth, and that he is to appear again in the clouds. This, I

say, is the ordinary answer that is given to this question. Let us look now for a moment, and see what we must think and believe about it.

I purpose first, without expressing any opinion of my own, simply to give you the argument, so far as we can get at it, of the Early Church. The triple tradition—that is, the story of Jesus in which Mark, Matthew, and Luke all agree—says nothing about any miraculous return to life or any ascension into Heaven. This is certainly a very striking fact for us to bear in mind. Our first witness, then, in regard to the matter, is Paul. For you must remember distinctly—to untangle this snarl and confusion as to chronological order that we have in the New Testament—that the stories under the names of Matthew, Luke, and John did not take their present shape for many, many years after Paul preached and wrote his letters to the churches. Our first witness, then, is Paul. He wrote on the subject about the year 58. Let us glance at his argument a moment, and see how much we should consider it to be worth at the present time. It seems that there were people in the Church at Corinth who denied the doctrine of the resurrection. It is to answer this state of mind that Paul writes. Here are his arguments. First he says, "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen." You see he does not give any proof that Christ is risen. "If Christ is not risen," he says next, "your faith is vain." Thirdly, "If Christ is not risen, we are false witnesses, because we say he is." Next, "If Christ is not risen, they who have died in this faith have perished." That is, the popular belief at the time was that those who died before Jesus appeared in the clouds would be raised again, so that they might participate in his triumph and kingdom. Paul says, If he is not risen at all, why, then, those people that have died in this expectation have perished. Then it seems to have been the custom at this time, if a person had not been baptised before he died, to have someone else baptised in his stead as a sort of proxy. Paul refers to this, and says, "If Jesus is not risen, then those persons that have been baptised for the dead have been doing a useless thing." And then he says, furthermore, "If he is not risen, why stand we in jeopardy every hour?" Briefly, there is the substance of all that Paul says in the way of argument upon the subject—everything. And yet I need not say any more about it than that no one at the present time would consider it in the light of an argument at all.

Pass over that, then, and let us see the strength of Paul's testimony as to the resurrection. Of course, I am speaking now from the standpoint of the theory that Jesus' body came back again from the grave—the popular modern idea. I shall have something further to say on that before I am through. Here is Paul's testimony, which I give you in detail: first, he says, "Jesus died, was buried, and rose again the third day"; secondly, "He was seen by Peter"; thirdly, "Then the whole twelve saw him"; fourth, "Then he was seen by above five hundred brethren at once"; fifth, "Then James saw him." And here let me show you a little fragment of tradition concerning this seeing of Jesus on the part of James, that you may note the kind of atmosphere we are in. This tradition, the fragment of a lost gospel, goes on to tell us that James, the brother of Jesus, was present at the last supper. Of course, we know that he was not. He was not one of the twelve, and we know from all sources that only twelve were present. It says that James there took an oath that he would never taste any more bread until he had seen Jesus again; and that the first thing that Jesus did after the resurrection was to appear to James with a loaf in his hand, and assure him that he might now eat, for he had actually risen. Then, again, Paul says that he was seen by all the apostles; and last of all by himself. Now, it would seem as though we had personal, unimpeachable, authentic testimony here; for Paul distinctly says that Jesus was seen by all these different persons, and last of all he says he saw him himself.

Now, we should feel compelled to give such evidence as this a great deal of weight, were it not for the last clause of the testimony. Perhaps you have never noticed it or seen its significance. Let me call your attention to it, then. How was it that Paul saw Jesus? What does he mean by his seeing him? So far as we know, he had never seen Jesus at all in the flesh. He does not claim to have seen him between the resurrection and the ascension. It is only a long time after the ascension, when he is on his way to Damascus, that he says he saw Jesus. And how did he see

him then? He saw a vision; that is, Paul's seeing Jesus was merely a mental or subjective vision. He has a waking dream of seeing him. And this story of the vision is mixed up with hopeless contradiction. One of the accounts says that the attendants of Paul saw a light, but heard nothing of the voice that is said to have spoken. The other account says they heard the voice, but saw nothing.

And what kind of a man in regard to the matter of visions was this Paul who says he saw Jesus? We know from his own account that he was one who was given, in most wonderful and extraordinary degree, to seeing visions. He tells us that he had such an abundance, such a multitude, of these supernatural revelations, that it was necessary for God to send him some sort of an affliction—"a messenger of Satan," "a thorn in the flesh"—to keep down his spiritual pride. He tells us that on a certain day he was caught up into the third heaven, and saw there wonderful sights and heard things that it was not lawful for him to tell about. And he relates all this as though it were the same kind of matter-of-fact, everyday reality as his visit to Antioch or preaching in Rome. Paul, then, was a man given to the seeing of extraordinary visions. And it never occurred to him to doubt the objective reality of these, any more than of any ordinary occurrence in his everyday life. If, then, his seeing of Jesus was only a vision, we are driven almost of necessity to question whether the similar seeing on the part of the others of whom he tells us was not also a vision.

Did they have any reason for coming into this exalted and ecstatic state of mind? The disciples must have believed that Jesus would appear again. It was a necessity of their condition and of their faith. One of the fundamental principles of Jewish belief was that an ignominious death was a sign of the reprobation and wrath of God. And when Paul speaks of Jesus hanging on the "accursed" tree, it was an accursed thing to be put to death among the Jews; and they could not believe that Jesus—this simple, humble, loving, divine soul—was worthy of the reprobation of God. They thought there must be some other way of explaining it. They believed firmly that he was the Messiah. If he were the Messiah, then he must come again, he could not be really dead. And then they began to look over the old prophecies, as we find by more than one intimation, and to read them in a new light, to see here and there hints that the Messiah might possibly suffer. For we know that these beliefs were all in the air; and they said: "He was the Messiah. For some inscrutable reason, God suffered him to be put to death; but he is not dead, and he will come again to demonstrate that he was the Messiah." And then they picked up fragments of his sayings about his suffering and his rising again, and out of these grew an excited, expectant state of mind. And it needed then how much to start a belief of his appearance? Only a fancy, a rumour that somebody somewhere had seen him, and it would spread like wild-fire all over the country, and their hope would flame up anew and their enthusiasm burn with an unquenchable fire.

This matter of visions I must dwell upon just a moment longer, to make it clear. The Jews at this time believed that a dream was a reality. You must remember that they had no sort of knowledge of this wondrous brain structure of ours, these marvellous nervous systems that can so exalt and sometimes so cheat us. Anything that they saw, or thought they saw, they at once gave objective reality to. It was a necessity of their state of mind, and of that stage of the education of the human race. They knew no other way of explaining it. We know to-day perfectly well that there may be as many visions that have no external reality corresponding to them as there are that have: there are cases, hundred and thousands of them, in all the nations of the world and throughout history. If De Quincey had lived in the first century instead of the eighteenth, his visions that he saw under the influence of opium would have been taken as a revelation. Goethe, the great German poet, had the power not only of seeing visions, but of actually calling them up at will: so that he could create objective forms in his own room, and sit there quietly and study them, and then dismiss them when he was through. Cases like these are common. Only let me give you one more illustration. In the sixteenth century lived one of the most famous of Italian artists of the Renaissance, Benvenuto Cellini, who wrote his own life—an entertaining and wonderful biography—giving an account of his paintings, of his sculpture, of his travels, of his quarrels, of his jealousies, of his loves. And

in the midst of this biography he tells us of the most wonderful visions and revelations. And he tells them with the same matter-of-fact sense of reality with which he speaks of going to Rome or painting a portrait. For example, on a certain occasion, he goes with a magician to the Colosseum in Rome; a magical powder is cast upon some burning coals, and suddenly the whole amphitheatre is filled with devils. He tells us again—though he was not much of a saint—that during a part of his life his head at morning and evening was surrounded by a halo. He tells us also, with a veritable sense of reality, of seeing a marvellous vision of the sun; and out of this sun comes Jesus, the glorified, followed by the Virgin Mary; and then the whole court of Heaven is open to his view. And he tells all this as simple matter of fact, showing what the best educated men were capable of believing and telling even so late as the sixteenth century. All through history, anywhere and everywhere, you will find illustrations of this. It has been very easy for a man to see a vision; and, when he has seen it, it is not an uncommon thing for a whole multitude, caught by the infection, to persuade themselves that they also see it. Now it is a vision of some mighty hero on horseback in the midst of the battle; then of a cross in the heavens, such as was seen by the whole army of Constantine, with the words *In hoc signo vince*—"By this sign conquer"—written in the sky. History is full of these things. I cannot stop to detail any more of them.

I have not said anything, and shall not at any length, in regard to the stories contained in Matthew, Luke, and John; for, as I have already told you, they grew up at a later day. They are myth, they are legend; and, not only that, they contain improbabilities such that we cannot believe them. Improbabilities did I say? They contain impossibilities. They contradict each other. They contradict Paul. And then the one thing which would discredit them, if nothing else, and put them outside any veritable history that can possibly be believed, is the story of the sudden reappearance and disappearance of Jesus after the resurrection. They tell us that he appeared a body of flesh, blood, and bone, bearing the scars on his hands, his side, his feet; able to eat and drink and digest like ordinary mortals; telling the disciples that he was not a spirit, but a veritable flesh and bone; and that, being such, he suddenly appears in the midst of the disciples, as suddenly disappears, comes through solid walls and closed doors, and disappears again as mysteriously. This is not merely improbable: it is absolutely impossible, unless we dispute and deny the maxim which lies at the basis of all sanity and knowledge—that two bodies cannot possibly occupy the same space at the same time. It does not come within the scope of Omnipotence itself to be absurd. We must dismiss these, then, without any further question.

Men to-day do not continue to believe in the resurrection of the body of Jesus, because it is based upon anything that could be called evidence in this nineteenth century; for there really is not a fragment of what would pass as proof in a court of justice. They continue to believe it, then, for either one or two of the following reasons: first, because they suppose it to be intimately, necessarily, causally, connected with their belief in their own immortality; secondly, because they suppose it to be intimately and causally connected with the origin and existence of the Christian Church. The editor of "Scribner's Magazine" for April has put these two positions into such forcible words that I shall avail myself of his own language in stating them to you, and then pass on to consider them. He says, in regard to the first of the above points, that the resurrection of Jesus "is the only open demonstration of the problem of immortality ever vouchsafed to the human race." And then, secondly, in regard to the other point, "The fact that Christianity, as a living and aggressive religion, exists at this moment, is proof positive that Christ rose from the dead. It never would have started, it never could have started, except in the fact of Christ's resurrection." And, further, "There is no man living who can form a rational theory of the genesis and development of Christianity, who does not embrace the resurrection as an initial and essential factor." Those two points it remains for me to notice.

In what relation does the belief in the resurrection of the body of Jesus stand to our faith in immortality? I must not spend many words upon it; but let me tell you in brief, at the outset, that I utterly fail to see that it stands in any vital relation to it at all. Let me tell you what I mean.

According to the popular faith, Jesus was an extraordinary, unnatural, supernatural being, whose body rose from a tomb—not air-tight, but an above-ground tomb—after it had lain there about forty-eight hours; that he was raised by miracle—by the power of God. Now, what bearing can that possibly have on the question as to whether the bodies of millions and millions of common people, after they have slept for hundreds and thousands of years, have been dissipated and scattered all over the earth, are to be collected together again, and raised up in the flesh? That one extraordinary, supernatural man, eighteen hundred years ago, was raised from the dead after sleeping forty-eight hours, can hardly be regarded, by sober, earnest thinkers, as conclusive proof that everybody else—not extraordinary and not supernatural—is going to be raised again in bodily form after having been dust for hundreds and thousands of years. The belief in a bodily resurrection is hardly held to-day by intelligent people. It cannot be; for the obstacles are utterly insuperable to anyone who tries to understand what it means. If you want to believe it, you had better not think about it. This body of mine, for example, in a few years will have gone back to earth; it will in the next few hundreds or thousands of years have become a part of one, ten, fifty, one hundred, possible one thousand other human bodies. Whose body, then, shall claim the fragments on the day of the resurrection? The difficulties surrounding it are insuperable, and we will not stop even to discuss them.

But the doctrine is not held in this shape to-day, you will say. We believe not that the body is to be raised again from the grave; but the belief has changed its form, and now we trust that the soul does not die at all, but simply continues to live in spite of the death of the body. But this you must remember was not at all the belief which was held in the first century. They believed that this kingdom of God was to be here on earth with its centre at Jerusalem; and of course anyone who was to partake of it and be a citizen of that kingdom must be raised from the dead and clothed again with his body within a very few years. What bearing, then, does the supernatural raising up of the body in one instance, eighteen hundred years ago, have upon our faith, not in the raising up of our bodies, but in the continued existence of the soul? A very little superficial thought even will show you that there is no sort of logical or rational relation between the two supposed facts at all.

But we must now come to face that other question, what Paul and his immediate fellow-disciples really believed and taught. If you will go back and read the records with a little care, you will find that Paul does not say anything about any belief in the raising of Jesus from the grave, his resurrection from death, or the resurrection of his body. He does not allude to either of these things. What does he allude to? The doctrine that Paul held and preached was the resurrection of Jesus "*from the dead*." And that means, as we shall see in a moment, something very different from what we have all this time been talking about. That which has come to be called the Apostles' Creed, but which, so far from having been the workmanship of the Apostles, did not come into its present shape for two or three hundred years after Christ, contains the absurd dogma, which is repeated in the churches of Christendom to-day, of "the resurrection of the body." This, as I am telling you, was not the original doctrine at all. In order to understand this, we must have clearly before us all what the Jews believed about the universe and the destiny of human souls. For the sake of putting it before you in the words of another, so that you may see that it is not simply my own idea, I want to read to you a brief description of the Jewish universe. It is from a work recently published, by a leading professor of the Semitic languages and literature in John Hopkins University, Baltimore. He says:—

The writers of Scripture believed and tell us in their writings that the earth was a plane surface, square in form, supported at each corner by pillars resting on the rocky bed of the sea which surrounded it; that its geographical centre was Judea and Jerusalem; that underneath it was an enormous cavern called Sheol, through which flitted the shades of the departed; that the vault above was a cube of metal placed like a tent-cover over the earth, and fastened down at its corners; that to this cover all the heavenly bodies were attached, and on it they moved around for the gratification or benefit of the earth, which was the centre and reason of the whole creation; that in this overhanging arch there were windows, through which, when opened, there descended the rain or snow from their storehouses just above.

You must remember, then, that in a universe like this they all believed. They supposed that the souls of the

departed went down into this Sheol. In the earliest ages, they did not believe in any vital, conscious existence at all : it was only an underground, shadowy, semi-conscious state they were in. This was not peculiar to the Jews : it is the belief of antiquity. Let me read to you just a fragment from the translation of the "Iliad" by Mr. Bryant. Achilles is represented as speaking to Ulysses there in the world of the departed—in Hades ; and he says :—

"Noble Ulysses, speak not thus of death,
As if thou couldst console me. I would be
A labourer on earth, and serve for hire
Some man of mean estate who makes scant cheer,
Rather than reign o'er all who have gone down
To death."

The Greeks believed that the dead lived in Hades—this underground twilight world. The Romans believed it. The whole ancient world believed that only heroes, demigods, special favourites of the deities ever went on high to Olympus, to Heaven. The Jews did not believe that anybody except Enoch and Elijah had gone to Heaven, in the modern sense of the term. Heaven was the court of God, where he sat on his throne, surrounded by angels. All the dead from Adam down to Jesus had gone down into this underground cavern, Sheol. And this has been the traditional doctrine of the Church from that day almost to this. Only a few years ago, Mr. Edward H. Bickersteth published a poem called "Yesterday, To-day, and Forever," in which he places all the dead in this under-abode. He does not undertake to locate it as they did in ancient times, because the astronomer has taken away the old conception of the universe. But, in his poem, none of the dead are ascended : none of them are to ascend until after the general resurrection and judgment. The good and the bad, then, are down here somewhere in this under-abode. Dante teaches this in his immortal poem. His Hades is in the centre of the earth, and here are the dead. And the doctrine of Jesus having descended into hell had taken such hold in all Christendom, in Dante's time, that in his journey through hell he comes to the very place where the stone wall of an embankment had been jarred asunder and broken by the earthquake that took place at the time of Jesus' resurrection. He went down into hell, and set free a host of the spirits in prison. This, then, was the belief of the ancient world. Nobody had gone to Heaven. Our idea of simply a continued existence of the soul and of a future life in Heaven is a purely modern idea : it does not get one single word of countenance from Christianity. If you think that you are basing your hope of a continued existence immediately after death, and an ascension into Heaven, on Christianity, you are utterly mistaken. Christianity does not teach any such doctrine anywhere.

What, then, did Paul believe ? He taught "the resurrection of the dead," but what did he mean by it ? He did not go to the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea to see if there was any body there. It would never occur to the disciples at that time to see whether the body of Jesus had risen. They had no interest in his body. The resurrection of the dead, in their mind, did not depend at all on the question whether his body had risen or not. The resurrection of the dead meant simply this, then : that Jesus was not shut up in Sheol among the multitudes of the common dead that were there imprisoned. It meant that he had escaped from Hades ; that he had ascended, had gone into Heaven, was sitting at God's right hand, and would come again to establish his Messianic throne on earth. This was what the resurrection of the dead meant to the disciples. Do you not see how utterly different it is from the modern perversion and corruption of the original idea ? It meant only as much as we would mean to-day, when, standing over the dead body of a friend, we should say : "He is not dead ; he cannot be dead ; he is alive. We do not bury him ; he has gone up on high." This was the only doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus held or preached by the Early Church. Of course, it was necessary that this should be believed before there could be any Christianity. The Church could not spring out of a grave, or from a belief in a dead Jesus. The Church had its birth in the belief that he was alive, that he was coming again to establish his kingdom ; and that is the gospel that they went preaching all over the world. And you will notice in these early sermons it was not the propitiation for our sins, it was not his grave, it was not his death that was the most important. The one thing which Paul puts in the forefront as of more significance than anything

else was the resurrection. Jesus is the Messiah ; he is alive, this is the great informing, inspiring faith of the Early Church.

And now we must just glance a moment at how many parallel this belief has in the world. If you think it pertains simply to Jesus, you are mistaken. Thousands of years before Christ, in Egypt, the doctrine had grown up that Horus, the son of a god and a virgin, had lived until he was twenty-eight years of age, was put to death in a struggle with Typhon—the Devil, the Prince of Evil—that he was raised again from the dead, and was made king of all the departed souls. This belief in the disappearance and return again of some hero who has come for the deliverance of man has not been confined to any age or to any nation. You find it in ancient India. To come to comparatively modern times, it was believed concerning Nero ; it was believed concerning Charlemagne, concerning King Arthur, concerning Merlin, concerning the sun-god of the Aztecs of Mexico, concerning Hiawatha, the great hero of the northern tribes of Indians. It has been believed even in the most modern times concerning Napoleon I. There is a religious sect alive to-day who believe that Napoleon is not dead, that he has only disappeared in the Far East, and that by-and-bye he is coming back to conquer and rule the earth again. This belief, then, I say, is wide-spread and common, and is simply an illustration of the saying of the poet, that—

"Hope springs eternal in the human breast."

We cannot believe that our great hopes have died. They spring up again by the law of their very nature, for they are immortal ; and we must look forward to something greater yet to be.

The whole New Testament, if you will read it in the light of what I have said, you will find all alive with the expectation of this coming. Paul teaches that Jesus is to come before those who were then living should die. And he comforts some of the friends of those who have died, by telling them they are not to be troubled, for, when Jesus comes, they will be raised again to life, and be permitted to share in the glory of his Messianic reign. And the last book of the New Testament—as it stands to-day, the Revelation—is all alive and on tiptoe with this expectation. Everywhere, all through, throbs the belief that Jesus is coming quickly. And you find, as you read the history of the canon of the New Testament, that, after their expectation had been disappointed and Jesus did not come, this book was discredited and came very near being thrown out of the Bible. But, after a time, it was reinstated again. As late as the year 1000, all Europe was thrilled and convulsed with the expectation of the immediate coming of Jesus ; and men went so far as to put away their property, and to do all sorts of things in the way of getting ready. And, from that day to this, the old belief occasionally—in sublime or ridiculous fashion—flames out again. You remember only two or three years ago there was a Convention of all the Evangelical Churches of America in New York, to take up and treat the subject ; and leading men in all the Churches expressed their belief that Jesus might be expected to return any day. And yet—so vital is a baseless superstition when once it is in possession of the imaginations of men—Jesus himself, who ought to be regarded as authority on the subject, says that this coming is to be before the generation to which he was then speaking had passed away.

These, then, are the facts, so far as we can find them, concerning the story of the death and the resurrection of Jesus. This discussion does not touch the question of our immortality one way or the other. Our hope and our faith do not rest upon any of these things. All nations, even those who lived hundreds and thousands of years before Jesus was born, have believed in immortality. The belief has never been so vigorous and so real among any people under Heaven as it was in ancient Egypt. It is a belief that springs out of the human heart ; and I, for one, trust that it is the whisper of the eternal truth of God.

DARWIN ON MESMERISM.—I have just heard of a child, three or four years old (whose parents and self I well knew), mesmerised by his father, which is the first fact which has staggered me. I shall not believe fully till I see or hear from good evidence of animals (as has been stated is possible), not drugged, being put to stupor ; of course the impossibility would not prove mesmerism false, but it is the only clear *experimentum crucis*, and I am astonished it has not been systematically tried. . . . Keep some cats yourself, and do get some mesmeriser to attempt it.—DARWIN to Fox, December, 1844 : From "Life and Correspondence of Darwin."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

[The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents, and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views that may elicit discussion.]

Madame Blavatsky and the Butterflies.

SIR,—As I was (on another occasion) witness of the butterfly phenomenon described by Colonel Olcott in his notes on Madame Blavatsky, it occurs to me that a contemporary record of an independent observation may not be without interest in point of evidence. I extract from a diary I began on arrival at New York, September 6th, 1875, so much as relates to the incident in question:—"Called on Colonel Olcott, and was taken by him in the evening to Madame Blavatsky's. Present: Mr. S. [I suppress names, as Colonel Olcott does so], an Englishman (Editor of the "American Bibliophilist") Signor B. (an Italian artist, formerly secretary to Mazzini), Colonel O., Madame Blavatsky, and myself. . . . Signor B. asked me if I thought spirits could materialise themselves into butterflies. There were none visible to me in the room then, but the windows were wide open about a quarter of an hour, and in came a butterfly fluttering about the room. "Let us have another," said Madame B., and looked towards the window as if summoning one. Almost directly another one came in. Then they were required to disappear. One of them did, but not the other for some time, when it got behind the valence of the curtain. I thought little of this, though it impressed Olcott, because they did not fly to the candles, after the nature of moths (and they were nothing but large moths)."

However, I find it added that on the next night I saw one of these large moths there, which did go to the candle, so I think they must be frequent visitors, and that no magic is required to account for them." Then further: "Olcott told me he had seen [Signor] B. bring clouds over the moon on a clear, cloudless night—but twenty minutes intervened between the summons and the appearance—t me enough for a light cloud to arise naturally, and in a city the horizon is not seen." This gentleman favoured me with another slight display of his powers of mystification, but I seem to have subjected the performance to a very sceptical criticism.

C.C.M.

Truth; or, Nature's Unveiling.

SIR,—I thank you sincerely for the marked copy of "LIGHT" of June 16th; and I also return thanks to "G.W.A." for reviewing the little booklet. But I would ask him to again read both booklets when he is in a calm condition of mind, then he may read it understandingly as written. The matter was so new to him and apparently so bold that it startled him and carried him out of his normal condition of mind, and while in that condition he wrote his review. What I have written is not mine. The aphorisms came to me in every condition of life. If I fail to pen them when they come, they are lost. You will almost doubt my statement when I tell you that I never get an idea as others do. I have never offered a theory or an opinion for or about anything. The knowledge I have given is not mine. It dashes through me and I must fix it or it is gone for ever. I have never "attacked" the Church or an individual. The Church has done a grand work; it was the stepping-stone as it were to the Divine Revelation in spirit now upon us, and which is no "respecter of persons." If the Church does not accept this spiritual dawning, it will get the alternative, that is, it will end in a politico-social organisation, with material power only. Let me state my case as a beacon to others. I have learned my own littleness and I have got to that condition when I want nothing, desire nothing, would not accept anything. I would not relieve poverty with money earned by another. Neither could I respect any person that would desire to follow me. As for fame, it is best symbolised in the poisonous viper: only the viper could destroy the body, while fame opens the doorway for vice to enter into him who accepts it and the soul is lost. I would say to the readers of "LIGHT," "seek" without ceasing in meekness and humility, for there is a power in the spirit within our own atmosphere, which all may find, that is greater than that of the mightiest emperor, and this power—"Light"—Truth—God—is no respecter of persons.

Dorchester, Mass.

Jos. M. WADE.

June 27th, 1892.

Spirit Identity.

SIR,—It is to be hoped that the readers of "LIGHT" will respond to your editorial queries in the article on this question. The reiterated observation of phenomena in circles seems to lead many minds to the firm conclusion that all these phenomena come from their friends' disembodied spirits; and what is communicated in trance is nearly always taken as coming from the same source. This would be all very well if any large section of the investigators were quite dispassionate and took a strictly unbiased and scientific view of the evidence, which is rarely the case. To the majority of Spiritualists a table moving without visible control of the movement is proof of a spiritual being's presence, and when intelligent answers to questions are given this is considered a positive demonstration, especially if something is conveyed that is unknown to all.

Now (like you), I have observed that communications from alleged spiritual beings in the next stage of existence are sometimes true and sometimes false, but that the average truthfulness of all communications on all points that do not concern identity is far greater than that which affects this particular point. For instance, I had, during some years, communications from a great many so-called "spirits." Many of these informed me who they were, giving their replies through the table, through a trance medium, and by writing, direct and otherwise. What they stated was in nearly all cases correct, but supposing I asked them, "Please tell me your wife's maiden name," in five cases out of six they could not tell me, and when I repeated a number of female Christian names, including the correct name, they were still at a loss, and sometimes gave the wrong one.

One of the communicating spirits (so-called) said he was my father. He was quite cognisant of my past history, and often replied to questions in my mind, but unuttered. Moreover, he materialised, and bore a very exact resemblance to my deceased father, but on three out of seven times that he came he could not reply to the question, "What was my mother's maiden name?" Now, the actions of this being were very serious and devout. It knelt in the circle and prayed. It put its hand on my head and said, "God bless you, my son." It gave a great many absolutely truthful communications and spoke sensibly; but it gave me the impression of an automaton that was fixed in a kind of mental groove, and when taken out of this groove it was quite helpless. This impression was not confined to the times when a "form" was observed, but also when the alleged "spirit" spoke through a medium, on the table, or by writing.

I have an idea why these seeming discrepancies arise, but it is very difficult to put it into words. I will try. The spiritual condition after death is, I believe, one of mind, or rather thought. Everything seen or felt is first of all in the mind or soul, and by the action of the mind or soul it becomes objective. Consequently a house, a landscape, a person, or assemblage of persons are simply so many mind pictures objectified. Some can evidently make these mind-pictures to be seen by others, in which case the mental picture of themselves and their belongings is seen by some, and not seen by those over whom they have not this power. I have taken two (so-called) "spirits" and asked them simply to describe what they saw from my window. Both their descriptions were altogether unlike the actual scene, and each description differed from the other. I have tried this in all manner of ways, generally with the same result. This experiment should be made in all cases by automatic writing. When done through a trance medium the medium's own consciousness interferes and vitiates the result.

Now, as thought is thus made objective by something that corresponds with magnetic power here, it follows that individuality of thought must be almost impossible; at least, it is impossible for us to realise how the thought made objective is kept from being made present in a great many minds at the same moment.

Probably it is so made present, and thus a communication reaches the mind of a medium in the peculiar spiritual state called trance through the intermediary of a thousand other minds than the original one that gave it birth, and thus becomes hazy, incoherent or untrue.

Besides, if there is a soul in a stone that tells its history from remote antiquity, is there not a similar power in us to reveal all our past relationships to those who can read those mind-pictures that we unconsciously show at all times and under all circumstances? If this is so, then of course we are

daily an open book to spiritual beings, and our revelations to them, in proportion to their power, are not only what we know and have experienced, but also mediately what our fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, friends and even contemporaries have known and experienced; because to them we seem to form a kind of spiritual whole. The stone does not only speak to the psychometrist of itself, it also tells of the people who placed it in position; and, indeed, whoever and whatever has been near it can be described, because they have left their impress on it. How much more this may be the case with human beings we cannot tell, but we may be sure that this law affects us as part of that natural yet Divine state in which we live, move, and have our being. For the reasons I have given I think proof of identity is a hopeless quest, and, indeed, all that we can know through Spiritualism is that there is a future state.

Embankment Chambers, Charing Cross. R. DONALDSON.

SIR.—The assumed message as from Mr. J. G. Wood, the late naturalist, mentioned in "LIGHT" of July 2nd, who, after his departure hence, is alleged to tell "of things what comes off in the spirit-land," puts me in mind of a prophetic message I once received clairaudiently, and which message woke me from my night sleep, though it did not profess to come from "spirit-land," and the event was to "come off" on this side of life. And as to the communicator, I rather suspect he, she, or it was a naturalist in some degree, but did not say whether it was in the flesh or out of it, nor did the communicator give a name, and if it was my double it did not say so. The message was this: "That 'ere pigeon will come back again." The fact was I had lost a pigeon, and did not expect ever to see it again. But in the morning, when I went out, there was the bird among the others.

MIRROR.

A Rejoinder.

SIR.—I am at one with "Devachanee" in great part, but where he makes a general statement having all the facts against him, I must differ from him. He says for the great majority of us these experiences of "light and love" are small and the consciousness of "beauty and harmony" has yet to be awakened. Passing over "light and love," without the experiences of which the world as regards humanity could not exist, for it is the life thereof, I would ask touching "beauty and harmony" for what does such an institution as Royal Academy exist in civilised countries? Why do people go there to view works of art, paintings and sculptures? Why do people crowd to operas, oratorios, &c., to hear the renderings of the great masters by the trained singers and performers of the musical world? Surely our artistes in whatever line will not agree with "Devachanee" that the consciousness of beauty and harmony has yet to be awakened. In other parts of his criticism I notice also he has not kept quite close to my arguments.

Co. Donegal.

WILLIAM SHARPE, M.D.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.—Information and assistance given to inquirers into Spiritualism. Literature on the subject and list of members will be sent on receipt of stamped envelope by any of the following International Committee:—America, Mrs. M. Palmer, 3101, North Broad-street, Philadelphia; Australia, Mr. Webster, 5, Peckville-street, North Melbourne; Canada, Mr. Woodcock, "Waterniche," Brookville; Holland, Van Stratten, Middelaan, 682; India, Mr. Thomas Hatton, Ahmedabad; New Zealand, Mr. Graham, Huntley, Waikato; Sweden, B. Fortenson, Ade, Christiania; England, J. Allen, Hon. Sec., 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or W. C. Robson, French Correspondent, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne. The Manor Park branch will hold the following meetings at 14, Berkley-terrace: the last Sunday in each month at 7.15 p.m., reception for inquirers; Friday, at 8.15 p.m., for Spiritualists only, the study of mediumship; and at 1, Winifred-road, the first Sunday in each month at 7.15 p.m., reception for inquirers. Tuesday, at 8.15 p.m., inquirers' meeting.—J.A.

PERSONAL INFLUENCE.—Perhaps we cannot estimate correctly the extent of our influence over every one with whom we come in contact, because in the majority of cases we are not trying to wield any influence. We meet casually with half a dozen acquaintances in the course of a day; we talk on indifferent subjects and part, and straightway we forget all that passed between us, or we think we do. But the impressions given and received are as ineffaceable as they might be slight, and we can never hold converse for a brief half hour with any fellow creature without leaving some mark and carrying some away.

LIGHT.

SOCIETY WORK.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—An excellent evening spent on Sunday last. Next Sunday Mrs. Stanley, 7 p.m. Thursday, 21st, seance, at 8 p.m.—F.

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMEN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—Service every Sunday, at 7 p.m. Speaker for next Sunday, Mrs. Stanley.—J. K. BOW, Hon. Sec.

NEW HALL AT NOTTING HILL.—The Victoria Hall, Archer-street, will be opened for meetings on the first Sunday in August under the auspices of the London Spiritualist Federation.—PERCY SMYTH, Organiser.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH, 14, ORCHARD-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Cable gave an address, also psychological readings, to the evident satisfaction of all present. Next Tuesday, seance, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Mason. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Whittaker.—J.H.B.

WANDSWORTH SPIRITUAL HALL, 132, ST. JOHN'S HILL, CLAPHAM JUNCTION.—Sunday next, at 7 p.m., devotional meeting, Mrs. Ashton Bingham, assisted by Sister Florence. On Thursday, at 8 p.m., Mrs. A. Bingham will be happy to answer questions either by letter or interview.—E.A.B.

86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE.—On Sunday last Mr. Wallace gave an excellent inspirational discourse on "Thoughts for Freethinkers"—argumentative, philosophical, and spiritual; full of thought for Materialist, Spiritualist, and Christian alike. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., open meeting, Mr. Hawkins present, free healing, &c.; at 7 p.m., Mr. Towne's experiences, &c.; Thursday, 7.40 p.m., Mrs. Spring, seance. Saturday, 7.40 p.m., Mrs. Whittaker, seance.—C. I. H.

SOUTH LONDON SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, 311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—Next Sunday at 11.30, public seance; Lyceum; 7, spirit communion; Wednesday, 8.30, seance (strangers invited). Our public seances are well attended. We have taken a new departure in our Sunday-evening services, which allows of the spirit operating upon those assembled, and we hope that all our future meetings will be as successful as on Sunday last. Mr. W. E. Long has been elected chairman of the committee, and will in future conduct all our public meetings.—W. G. COOTE, Hon. Sec.

PECKHAM RYE.—Mr. R. J. Lees held his usual meeting on Sunday last. He had a large and attentive audience. Continuing on the same lines as the previous Sunday, he dealt with the Rev. Mr. Skewes' book on the "Finding of St. John Franklin"; he continued his reply to the oft-repeated question, "What good, even if true, was Spiritualism?" by drawing his conclusions from Wolfe's "Startling Facts," and more fully from Mrs. Maynard's "Was Abraham Lincoln a Spiritualist?" and conclusively showing what influence spirit intercourse had on the policy of Mr. Lincoln during the War. There is no doubt that this line of thought taken by Mr. Lees is having a telling effect.—J. C.

CARDIFF.—On Sunday last Mr. R. Scott gave an excellent address, in which he showed the fallacy of all objections commonly urged against an investigation of the claims of Spiritualism, which, being based upon, and drawing its very life from, the unchangeable laws of the universe, and the indisputable revelations of the phenomena called spiritual, is able to rise superior to, and to effectively combat, all the misconceptions and prejudices of objectors ignorant of the subject. A successful seance was held after the service, led by Mr. J. W. Buckle and Mrs. Billingsley; the former spoke effectually to some sceptical visitors, and the latter gave some striking clairvoyant descriptions the father of one of the strangers being minutely described and fully recognised.—E. A.

PECKHAM SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, 33, HIGH-STREET.—On Sunday evening last, an audience of over seventy listened with evident pleasure to an address delivered by Rev. G. W. Allen. The subject was "The Secret of Power to Help," which was clearly defined. He remarked: "Those who would be helpers should lay down definite principles. The desire to help is a human instinct. We are the manifestation in multiform of the one Great Spirit. The idea of the Divine is always active." Altogether the good words encouraged one to continue in the race, taking our failures and disappointments as tending to our ultimate good. Sunday next at 7 p.m., Rev. R. Young, "Righteousness"; Monday, study; Thursday, healing; 24th, Mrs. Wallace, of America.—J. T. AUDY.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION: OPEN AIR WORK HYDE PARK (NEAR MARBLE-ARCH).—Last Sunday afternoon a good meeting was held. Mr. Percy Smyth spoke upon "Spiritualism," explaining its principles, &c., and Mr. F. D. Summers gave an address upon "Spiritualism and Religion." Next Sunday all our energies will be transferred to Finsbury Park on account of a "Field Day" being held there. We hope to see numbers assemble next Sunday, at 3.30 p.m. It remains with Spiritualists to make these meetings a success, who are cordially invited, and also speakers. Later, the "Field Days" will take place, it is hoped, in other parks—Regent's Park, Battersea Park, Epping Forest, Victoria Park, Manor Park, &c.—PERCY SMYTH, Organiser for London Federation.