Our London Correspondent.

[We deem it right to state that we do not at all times identify ourselves with our correspondents opinions.]

Another monster Reform demonstration is to be added to the list of meetings in favour of Reform, and still more are to follow. I should think it must now be pretty clear to men of all shades of opinion that all these meetings are not likely to go for nothing, but that they will have their due weight when Parliament meets. In fact it is now pretty well agreed that the Conservatives will succeed quietly but in a Reform Bill as a prominent part of the Ministerial programme. What sort of a measure it will be, and what effect its chances of success or non-success may be matter of speculation, but, seeing that no Ministerial utterances have transpired on the subject, it would be idle speculation. It is to be hoped that neither one side nor the other, but I must say that, in my opinion, the large demands of the Reform League have not been made in the best possible shape. A remark made by Viscount Nevill at the Lewes Conservative Association is worth quoting, as probably shewing the feeling of many of the moderate Liberal party. He said, "As long as Radical stump orators go about the country inciting the people to riot, to the holding of meetings in defiance of acts of legislation, it will not be the subject of Reform will never be carried; for sensible Englishmen are determined to see their Queen and their country properly protected. Now this speech, if it represents the case too strongly, the language with regard to the meetings may have been too harsh, but it cannot be denied that it expresses the opinion of a large party, not only among Conservatives, but amongst the middle classes, whatever be their politics. There is a growing conviction that manhood suffrage and the ballot would be too long a step to take. I say not a word against these ideas in the abstract, but simply note what I conceive to be an opinion which is gaining ground.

The Excursion Season may now be regarded as over. But for the unsettled weather that we have had, excursions would have been more frequent and numerous than they have ever been, but, if we have not exactly been able to say "the rain it raineth every day," we have had so much cloudy weather, so much rain, and so little sun, that the railway companies have suffered severely. Some of the excursions have been marvellously cheap. Last Sunday, for instance, was the day that enabled people could go to Calais and back in one day for 7s. 6d. But what labour for a day of rest! Two long railway journeys, and a sail of 60 miles of the sea! An hour or two of wandering about a dreary French town, and the return home at midnight. Verily this is taking one's pleasure sadly enough, or making a toil of a pleasure. But may we not draw a practical conclusion from the extraordinary cheapness of railway excursions? I think it must be admitted that if these are not too cheap, the ordinary fares are too dear. Of course a railway company cannot take a few as cheaply per head as they can carry a great number, but then it must be borne in mind that in connection with each excursion there are large expenses in advertising which do not occur in relation to ordinary trains, and allowance being made for this, I think the difference between ordinary rates and excursion fares is too great. The excursion fever probably reach its climax next spring and summer in Paris, and then, if the Exhibition, as probably will go from everywhere, and the gay French capital will be the centre of attraction from all parts of the world.

But I digress from the subject which the Cholera, now happily dying out, has given rise to, there has been no fact which has been more clearly proved than that bad water, and an insufficient supply of good water, had much to do with causing and fostering the disease. Several schemes have been talked about for bringing water to the metropolis, but they are all necessary gigantic projects, and I have not heard that anything has been done in respect to any one of them beyond talking and writing. It is absolutely necessary that it be done, and, for the supply of water, it is getting daily less and less in proportion to a population which is always on the increase. Many people are talking of what is to be done, but I notice an announcement which appears to me to be feasible. It is stated that a certain Company in Essex is prepared to supply several millions of gallons of water daily to water companies, boards of health, &c. Now I have not the slightest desire to puff any particular Company, but here, it appears to me, is a feasible and a practical effect. Doctors proverbially differ, but all doctors agree that a good supply of pure water is of the utmost moment in regard to health. Popular prejudice of any opinions immediately arising out of the Cholera, our deficient water supply is daily becoming a more and more serious question. Could not something be done to remedy the evil? The mode of supply by the company alluded to is especially adapted for those parts of the metropolis which require water the most—the Eastern districts.

Amidst the endless discussions about the poor and the poor laws there are frequently some important suggestions made. One of these is worth quoting. Though I would propose a modification, "There is no real scarcity of work," says the special commissioner of the *Standard*, and we believe the small difficulty in finding it is owing rather from impotence, than from any other cause. There is no public registry available either to the master or the man, and in this vast metropolis it is possible for a skilled workman to wander about for days, and even weeks, without encountering a master who may be wanting him all the time. This registry has Poor Law Guardians, but it is not, I think, so; it would be painfully suggestive of there being only one step from want of employment to the tender mercies of the Poor Law Union. But this difficulty, nevertheless, ought to be. Private registry offices are worse than sham, and the "house-of-call" system among workmen is wholly bad. The less there call at the public-house, the better. But a public registry for employers and employed would be a great boon, especially to the latter. To anticipate the establishment of such a registry of labour would be absurd, but there is no reason why a commencement should not be made. Suppose, for instance, in a country town, or a particular district of London, a few well-known commercial men, a clergyman and minister or two, and a few substantial employers were to open an employment registry, it would immediately command respect and attention, and some of the details might be managed by a committee of working men. The idea, I think, is worth trying.

As the recent French circular affirms that the Imperial contract for the evacuation of the Papal States shall be faithfully carried out, the Italian difficulty appears not a general revolution follow the cessation of foreign occupation, and is it not probable that ere long the Pope may have to seek refuge elsewhere than in the Eternal City? "All eyes" will now be directed towards Rome, and perhaps in due time those eyes will be turned towards Malta, whither, it is rumoured, the Exiled Pontiff may be fled in case of need. The Papal question bristles with difficulties, religious and political, but it seems probable that ere long these questions will press for a solution.

I have made enquiries into the truth of the rumour that Mr. Spurgeon has had 20,000*l.* offered to him, to found an orphanage. It is quite correct. The lady who makes this generous offer does not wish her name to be known, but I may state that she is a lady of rank, whose name is familiar to the public. At the time I write Mr. Spurgeon has declined the gift, but has taken time to consider whether he can undertake any supervision of a new institution in addition to the heavy work and responsibilities he has already, but it is scarcely likely that the noble gift will be refused on this account. *Apropos* of Mr. Spurgeon, I may mention that he has just compiled for the use of his congregation a hymn-book, which he calls "Our Own Hymn Book," which smacks rather unpleasantly of sectarianism. Like everything with which Mr. Spurgeon is connected, it will prove immensely successful, and the question has already risen what shall be done with the profits? To his honour be it said, he does not intend to appropriate a farthing himself. Just a word about the singing at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. I should say it is decidedly the worst in London, and I will never be better till the congregation sings or a trained and powerful choir. The congregation is so immense that the efforts of a leader, or precentor, or whatever may be the right term, are well nigh futile. In vain Mr. Spurgeon now and then exclaims, "Now then, sing with all your heart and all your voices, and—don't drag it." Dragging seems a necessity where a vast congregation contains very few who understand singing, and many moreover persist in inserting variations which the composer never contemplated. Occasionally there arises, however, such a magnificent volume of sound that one naturally regrets that it is not better regulated and I for one would be very much pleased if Mr. Spurgeon should oppose himself to what has been so frequently proposed, an organ. Palmody has made great progress in London as elsewhere, and the singing at the Tabernacle contrasts strongly with that at many other large places of worship—notably, for instance, at Surrey Chapel, where old Rowland Hill's well-known aspect about "all the good tunes" still holds sway. While skimming over such topics as these I will just mention, without any comment, a remarkable development of what may be called the Pneuyism of Dissent. We have by this time become familiar with the practice, either advocated or actually adopted, of separating the sexes in places of public worship; but what think you of separating the "converted from the unconverted" now adopted by the Rev. Mr. Lincoln, in Walworth? Mr. Lincoln has already attracted considerable notice by having seceded from the Church of England and having become a Baptist minister in a building which still nominally ranks among the churches of the establishment, but is Baptist; and he has also made himself conspicuous by the advocacy of some very peculiar views. This last movement will attract increased attention towards him and his congregation.

AN EXTRAORDINARY CASE.

One of the most remarkable incidents that has ever occurred, the result of which, taking the last given by the marriage, has for some time occupied the attention of the London Bar, and the Court of Chancery, and has now in a stage that most important revelations will shortly be made to the French authorities.

The facts are briefly stated, a few years ago the merchant of Bordeaux, turned his life to the end of the Crimean Peace. He was a Frenchman of the old school, "Tory" which he returned to his native country, and was ordered by the Emperor of France to be arrested and taken to the Tuileries. He was suddenly disappointed, and pursuing to be a copy of the register of the London Bank, he left Paris, and fled to England, at the insurance office in Paris, and claimed the amount for the death of the Tory. He was some resolution arising in the minds of the officials of the Bordeaux Insurance Company, and they sent over