

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

There are some important points arising out of recent correspondence on which I propose to offer some remarks, more by way of stating the case on the other side than of dogmatically asserting anything as definitely proven to my mind. Dr. R. M. Theobald addresses to "LIGHT" an important letter, which will be found in another column, on "The Dangers of Hypnotism." I am among those who have drawn attention to these possible dangers in a tentative and speculative way, as befits a man who deals with an obscure subject. I therefore feel it right to meet Dr. Theobald's interrogatories—his objections take that form, and he modestly confesses that he is seeking for light, as I am—with some counter-statements that may define the limits of discussion. We are agreed as to facts. It is possible for one person to obtain such control over another as to govern his acts and suggest to him motives for his actions. In certain cases, when this control has been long continued, it is possible for the operator to throw the sensitive into a state in which he is at the mercy of the dominant will and has no volition of his own. If the operator puts chalk in his mouth and says that it is sugar, sugar it is to the sensitive; if salt, then it is salt; if asafœtida, then it is asafœtida. Moreover, this state can be prolonged at the will of the operator; the patient will perform his ordinary work in life, but he will act at a given time on a suggestion made to him while in the hypnotic state. For all practical purposes he is in the custody and at the mercy of his hypnotiser.

The first question that arises for solution lies on the threshold. Is it right that any man should so surrender his individuality? If hypnotism is admitted as a curative power, is it well that it should go further? Have I any right to give up my responsible self to the custody of anyone, however wise and good I may believe him to be? I put out of consideration altogether the promiscuous trifling with this subject, which I hold to be mischievous and in a high degree dangerous. But I ask broadly whether this power is not such that it should be fenced round with all possible restrictions and exercised with all conceivable caution. Even where it is used only for beneficent purposes it seems to me that it should be employed as a skilful physician uses a dangerous drug. Dr. Theobald asks what ground there is for believing that suggestion can be used for evil as well as for good. What ground, I rejoin, is there for doubting the fact? If I can hypnotise a sensitive and suggest abstinence from vice, is there any reason for believing that I cannot also suggest indulgence in it? I

have not here at hand books for reference, but I remember a recorded case (I think from Nancy) which bears on my contention. A hypnotised patient was given some powdered sugar (called arsenic) and it was suggested to her that a relative was a very objectionable person and might conveniently be got out of the way. The arsenic would do it if administered in a cup of coffee. A date was suggested and the patient was aroused. I forget how long the interval was that elapsed, but at the suggested date in the suggested manner this sensitive set to work to poison this unoffending person. If the sugar had been arsenic, as the sensitive believed, death would have ensued. A single case of this kind seems to me to dispose of Dr. Theobald's speculative queries.

For example, he inquires whether it is possible for a "thoroughly bad man, capable of deliberate and enormous crime, to be a successful mesmeric operator." Why not? Do we not find in our daily lives that a powerfully magnetic person may so dominate a sensitive temperament as to mould it to his will? Do we not find that a powerful and self-assertive will may be quite independent of all moral consciousness? I adopt Dr. Theobald's method of interrogation and I inquire whether there are not abundant cases within the knowledge of observant persons where the control of a strong will over a weaker one, or (what is worse) of a powerful magnetic system over a weaker one, is within demonstration? I believe that what finds its climax in the most interior state of the mesmeric condition is to be reckoned with in our waking states. It is a question of degree. I see no reason to believe that the moral question enters into it at all. I see no reason to surmise that "mind and heart should be in a fairly healthy state" to enable one individuality to dominate another. I see no evidence that there should be predicated "a certain psychical harmony in his nervous, his intellectual, and his moral nature" in order to qualify a man for obtaining this control over others. There is nothing, as far as I know, moral or immoral about it. There is nothing necessarily intellectual about it, save and except the exercise of will. There is probably much more of the psychical, the magnetic, or what Dr. Theobald calls the "nervous."

Again, what sort of proof or even evidence making for proof is there that we all of us have, deep down in our inner consciousness, an arbiter who will resist a suggestion tending to crime? Let us assume that a man is none the worse for habitually giving himself up to the absolute control of another will. Let us suppose—a monstrous supposition—that a man is none the worse for the abandonment of those opportunities for education which come (so far as I know) chiefly from the use of opportunities and the daily garnering of knowledge. What reason is there for believing that the inner consciousness of a man will reject the evil and choose the good in every case? Is there any evidence of "storage of moral and spiritual self-assertion which would be aroused by an assault made on its interior Shekinah"? I think not. The more I see of

human nature the more I am convinced that assaults on the interior Shekinah do not, as a rule, provoke much resistance. It all depends on the state of the Shekinah, and that state is often rotten. I should be very glad to believe that hypnotism can reach the higher self and rouse it into action, while it lulls the lower self to passivity, but I see no reason for such comforting belief. It is quite as likely, as I see the matter, that harm may ensue as that good may come. It is much the same from the meeting of two people in the world. What ground is there for saying that what is operative all round us, when intensified as it is in mesmerism, is purified and secured from all conceivable risk?

I cannot acquiesce in Dr. Theobald's idea that an imaginary crime, suggested by the mesmeriser, is different from a real crime. Try the experiment. Suggest, as Charcot says, to a hypnotised patient to poison A.B. six days after date. Suppose that the patient carries out the suggestion. Go on to the inquest and the subsequent trial. Would it be, in the eye of the law, "a real crime" or not? Charcot considers that "a strong case is made out for making it illegal for any but properly qualified medical men to dabble in hypnotism." I am inclined to agree with Dr. Theobald that the medical man is as likely to rush into "rash and lawless experiments" as any other man. But I do think that there should be some careful restriction as to playing with fire, and some ascertained knowledge before a man practises on his fellow creatures; also, perhaps, some appreciation of what he is going to do.

I should have appended a note to Mr. F. W. H. Myers's letter which appears in another column, but I wished to speak more personally. What I have to say can be shortly said. No one is more conscious than I am that the attitude of Mr. Myers to Spiritualism is friendly. He is not a Spiritualist, only because he has not yet succeeded in convincing himself of what I (for instance) believe and know. He also points out, quite rightly and in due connection, that he is not the Society for Psychical Research. I had in mind, when I was speaking at St. Nicholas, the fact that Mr. Myers has shown tendencies which are not shared by the prominent members of the Society to which he belongs. I remembered the incident, not without its humorous side, of Mr. Podmore and himself hopelessly at variance on the platform at a recent meeting of their Society. It was interesting and instructive, but I smiled over it. I am fully aware that the Society "does not commit itself to any collective opinion" about anything. I wish it would. But I am also fully aware that any, the most tepid, form of Spiritualism would find no countenance among its members. I should regret to misinterpret any persons who are, as I always cheerfully admit that the Society in question is, doing valuable work, but that work is not on the lines of Spiritualism. The tree is judged by its fruit, and my estimate quoted by Mr. Myers does not seem to me, on mature consideration, to be very wide of the mark. Mr. Crookes's experiments in psychical physics were profoundly interesting, but they, if I may be excused for saying so, are not what I should call Spiritualism. Mr. Myers's own paper, which I endeavoured inadequately to summarise for the readers of "LIGHT," was much more Spiritualist at core. A disclaimer of any attitude respecting Spiritualism on the part of the Society for Psychical Research, however elaborately and frequently made, cannot disguise plain facts.

#### LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

The next Assembly will be held on Tuesday evening next, when Mr. E. Maitland will deliver an address on "Some Needed Definitions in Spiritual Science." No more important subject can engage attention. If late, it is better late than never to pay heed to accurate definition.

#### TRANSFERENCE OF PARALYSIS.

In the current number of *Le Spiritisme*, an article signed "Victor Meunier" gives an account of some remarkable experiences at the Hospital of La Charité in Paris. Nothing less than the *transfer* of disease from one person to another seems to have been accomplished, both of the patients being cured, the latter by hypnotism, the former by the transfer.

A certain Marie Th., sixteen years old, afflicted with paralysis of the right arm and left leg, was sent in November, by Dr. Moret, of the Reims School of Medicine, to Dr. Luys, of the Charité, for treatment. This treatment, which is due originally to Dr. Babinski, of the Salpêtrière, consisted in the transference of the paralysis from Marie to another patient named Léontine, called the *transferrent*. According to *Le Spiritisme*, on November 12th, the first day of the treatment, this is what happened:—

Marie, quite awake, was seated on a chair by the side of Léontine. The right hand of the latter was on the paralysed right hand of the former. Dr. Luys threw Léontine into the lethargic state, then, taking a large magnet with five branches (*à cinq branches*, possibly five bar magnets together), he held it at first above the hands placed one on the other, and then moved it along the arm as far as the shoulder. This was continued for about two minutes. It was sufficient to produce fibrillary movements in the fingers and twitchings in the left leg, which, however, had not been influenced by the magnet.

Marie then retired, and Léontine passed from lethargy into catalepsy (*somnambulisme lucide*). In this state Léontine complained that her right arm and left leg were paralysed. In fact, her arm was flaccid, and in walking she dragged her leg. Dr. Luys then suggested to Léontine to wake, and not to feel anything of her paralysis on waking. She did wake, the sleep and the paralysis disappearing at the same time.

The next day the same treatment was repeated. The effect was more marked than on the first day. The nerve currents were evidently beginning to be re-established in Marie, while the state of Léontine was exactly the same as in the first day's experiment. Two more sésances nearly completed the cure of Marie—Léontine on each occasion passing through the same experience as at the first sésance, having no recollection and no feeling of the paralysis on awaking.

During the fourth experiment the hitherto paralysed hand of Marie displayed by pressure a force equal to the weight of twelve kilogrammes. Four days after this force rose to the weight of nineteen kilogrammes. At the same time the left hand had gone up from twelve kilogrammes to fifteen. The leg also continued to progress admirably. The return of the sensitive and motor functions of the two limbs being confirmed, the patient, anxious to return to her family, soon left the hospital.

Marie appears to have had the influenza somewhat severely since then, but this interfered in no way with her complete cure:—

Thus (says Dr. Luys, who is quoted by *Le Spiritisme*) we have a young hysterical girl, who, suddenly attacked by alternate paralysis, the disease resisted all the usual and most varied treatment of nervous pathology for fourteen months. It was sufficient to use methodically the *transfer* treatment to obtain results as sudden and unexpected as those which were developed under our eyes.

M. Victor Meunier, in concluding his account, reminds his readers that already the transfer of disease from one side of the body to the other had been previously established by Dr. Burg, and that all that is new in Dr. Babinski's discovery is that instead of the transfer being from one part of one body to another part of the same, we have the transfer from the body of one person to that of another. This may be *all* that is new, but it is a very large *all*, and one feels with M. Victor Meunier that the result is eminently suggestive.

## HOW I BECAME A SPIRITUALIST.

BY ARCANUS.

I have noticed that the world is inclined to believe that Spiritualists are endowed with an enormous amount of credulity, which faculty enables them to believe in the most impossible theories that can be placed before them. My experience teaches me that this opinion is quite erroneous, if my progress toward Spiritualism is at all in accordance with that of other Spiritualists. It is in the hope of being able, in some measure, to disabuse the public mind upon this subject that I offer the following reminiscences.

I may mention that my forefathers were strictly orthodox according to the doctrines of the "Church as by Law Established" and my father required me, every morning, to stand by his side—I should have preferred being at play—and hear him read a Psalm. This did not increase in any way my reverence for either David or his Psalms. My father passed on while I was yet but a boy, and I became a somewhat omnivorous reader. The first book which seemed to make any serious and lasting impression on my mind, as a youth, was Coombe's *Constitution of Man*. This work gave me a taste for the study of phrenology. I read much both for and against phrenology and physiognomy. One side, the opposing, asserted that the cranial bumps were not accompanied by corresponding hollows, therefore they only indicated an extra thickness of bone. How was I to know the truth? My experimental propensities availed me here. I procured several skulls, and, with the assistance of a friendly surgeon, sawed them into sections, and so convinced myself by practical demonstration. Mesmerism next attracted my attention. I read the *Zoist* (a magazine edited by Dr. Elliotson, for whose memory I still retain great respect) and other works on that subject. It appeared to me that their reasonings and statements of cases were very sound and conclusive, but my innate desire for proof still clung to me. I soon had an opportunity of attending two or three lectures on mesmerism by an itinerant lecturer and witnessing his experiments. He quite failed to confirm my good opinion of mesmerism—I still use the old name, as not affirming any particular theory—and I became rather sceptical upon the subject. What was to be done in this case? I induced several other members of a literary and scientific society to join me in forming a class for the special purpose of studying phrenology and mesmerism without the aid of any professional mesmerist. This is the mode which Spiritualists now advise inquirers to adopt with regard to Spiritualism. We found that mesmerism—though at that period as much decried as Spiritualism is now—was an incontrovertible fact, and we went so far as to obtain indubitable proofs of clairvoyance in some members of the class. Thus I came to the conclusion that mesmerism and phrenology were mutually confirmatory of each other. Thus far, I think, I had not exhibited any of that blind credulity which Spiritualists are frequently charged with.

I may now be allowed to advert to my religious opinions at this period. They were entirely deistic. I endeavoured to follow the advice of the Apostle Paul, to "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good." For this purpose I attended the religious services of all the various sects and denominations that I could possibly meet with, without finding that truth which I sought for in any of them. They all seemed to have but very partial and darkened glimpses of it. Their various dogmas appeared, when impartially examined, to be contradictory to each other, and also to those of other sects, and, taken as a whole, "made confusion worse confounded." I was willing, nay, anxious, to believe, but *could not*. I found it utterly impossible to bring my mind to receive the dogmas of opposing sects, they being contrary to all my ideas of love and justice.

In this frame of mind—yet anxious to believe as orthodoxly as possible—I was induced to read the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. I found his theology more satisfactory than that of any other writer with which I had been hitherto acquainted, but his visions and conversations with spirits of various kinds I could by no means then digest.

I afterwards became acquainted with a gentleman who occasionally posted to me an odd number of the *Spiritual Magazine*, or of the *Medium and Daybreak*; and for so doing I shall ever feel grateful to him. He was scattering the seed of which I trust he may reap an abundant harvest. I had previously heard of table-

tilting and rapping, but—not having seen anything of it, and having no desire to do so—regarded it simply as a passing amusement, something like tricks with cards. However, the periodicals before named induced me to look more carefully into the question, and I began to reason with myself as to whether or not I was right in condemning anything without giving it due examination. These periodicals opened to my view a vast region for research which had hitherto been to me a *terra incognita*. I read, pondered, and became desirous of exploring this mysterious world of spirits.

Scientists, backed up by religious teachers, had taught me that I must not on any account believe in the "gifts of the Spirit" as taught by St. Paul. The theologians, certainly, had told me that these gifts were given, received, and acted upon in the day of the Apostles, but that those days had long since passed away, and nothing of the kind must be expected to occur in this nineteenth century. I, however, could not but believe that if such gifts ever had been conferred upon mankind and had been withdrawn—of which I saw no proof—it was quite possible that like gifts might be revived or reconferred in some succeeding age, and, if so, why not in the present? Speaking of the various spiritual phenomena that are said to occur now-a-days—resembling in all respects those recorded in the Scriptures—scientists say, "Don't believe that they occur, even if you see them. They are due to hallucination or trickery." Theologians either say the same or aver that they are all owing to the wiles and devices of Satan, and it is dangerous to our immortal souls to have anything to do with them. Why the self-same gifts should be attributed in one case to Satanic agency and in the other to that of the Holy Ghost I failed to perceive. At any rate, this denunciation did not deter me from pursuing my inquiries.

Between the differing assertions of the theologians and the scientists what could I do? I had recourse to my old maxim, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." About this time a notice in the *Medium* attracted my attention, and I induced a sceptical friend to accompany me to a séance, at Mr. Burns', 15, Southampton-row, London, where the main feature of the evening was a "trance address" by the now well-known medium, Mr. Morse. "The Player," one of Mr. Morse's controls, was very witty and amusing, but we both left the meeting at its close with the conviction that what we had heard and seen was nothing beyond what might have been accomplished by any ordinary mortal who was possessed of a good memory and ready wit. My friend never would be induced to take another step towards the investigation of Spiritualism, and has since gone to solve the problem in another sphere of existence. Here we have samples of two distinct classes of minds; one of them might, and apparently did, think that he was not to be humbugged by the trance speaker, who was a fraud; *ergo*, all trance speakers are frauds. The other mind was not quite so credulous as to believe that the whole arcana of Spiritualism could be quite so easily discovered, and accordingly suspended judgment until further evidence should be procurable, and therefore did not adopt the policy of abstention from further inquiry.

My wife and grown-up sons—like many others—were greatly averse to Spiritualism, and thought me somewhat demented upon that subject. However, by a little perseverance I induced a few friends to sit together—without any known medium—for table-tilting experiments, and we had a great variety of that and table-knocking phenomena. Being perfectly satisfied that these phenomena were not produced by trickery, or any ordinary force with which we were acquainted, the first question which arose was, what was the force which moved the table, and, secondly, enabled it by raps and tilts to give intelligent answers to reasonable questions whether asked *visd voce* or mentally? Surely this was a proper subject for scientific inquiry? The intelligent answers proved that the force, whatever it might be, was controlled by intelligence of some kind; and that this intelligence was not always derived from persons present was proved by its being frequently quite beyond their knowledge or capacity. Unknown facts have sometimes been stated, which upon inquiry proved to be quite true. Now, this intelligent force, when interrogated upon the matter, *always* claimed to be the spirit of some departed human being, and very frequently to be a friend, or relative, of one or more of the persons present. Why should we doubt or deny their assertion that they once lived on this earth as we do now? Surely they ought to know whether or not that is a fact better than we can possibly do. And we have all the more reason to believe that it is so, when the communicating force, spirit, or intelligence proves itself perfectly cognisant of family matters which occurred years

ago, some of which were known and others unknown to the person most interested, but which were afterwards verified.

I fancy some will say that "Telepathy" will account for all this, and think that they have thus accounted for the mystery, but it is only by substituting another and more improbable one. I must leave impartial judges to form their own opinion, as I did. This opinion was that the subject is one of vast importance to all who care to have truth rather than falsehood, and is worthy of the most careful and searching inquiry. This I endeavoured to give it, and, in pursuance thereof, read during a period of about twenty years all the periodicals published in England on the subject—and paid for them—also some American ones, together with very many books upon the subject. The titles of a few of them, which I would specially recommend, may be interesting to those who are commencing an inquiry into the subject. I therefore give them as a note.\*

I also availed myself of all opportunities of attending spirit circles, and witnessed all—or nearly all—the various manifestations of spirit-power with which your readers are so well acquainted, both at the rooms of the mediums, in my own house, and in the houses of private friends, where no machinery or collusion could possibly be available to the medium. I have also witnessed the imitations of conjurers, and have been forced to the conclusion that the Spiritualistic theory is the only one yet advanced which in any way can account for the very remarkable phenomena which I have witnessed. "In every philosophical inquiry it is admitted that that hypothesis ought to be adopted which accounts for all the phenomena with the greatest clearness, and which is attended with the fewest difficulties. Whatever theory best explains acknowledged facts is universally considered most entitled to regard; and if it solve the several phenomena easily and simply, while every other hypothesis is attended with contradictions and absurdities, no doubt is entertained of its truth."†

In conclusion, I would adopt the words of Judge Edmonds, and say, "The knowledge (of Spiritualism) is not confined to a few, but is open to all, rich and poor, high and low, wise or ignorant, who will wisely and patiently search for it; and when it is attained it cannot but work in the heart 'a closer walk with God,' and an intercourse with our fellow-men of a more elevated character, void of selfishness, and devoted to their absolute advancement in all knowledge and goodness, both in this world and in the world to come.

"This is a part of the something I have found in my researches. But there is more yet. There is that which comforts the mourner and binds up the broken-hearted; that which smooths the passage to the grave and robs death of its terrors; that which enlightens the atheist and cannot but reform the vicious; that which cheers and encourages the virtuous amid all the trials and vicissitudes of life, and that which demonstrates to man his duty and his destiny, leaving it no longer vague and uncertain.

"I went into the investigation, originally thinking it a deception, and intending to make public my exposure of it. Having from my researches come to a different conclusion, I feel the obligation to make known the result is just as strong. Therefore it is mainly that I give the result to the world. I say mainly, because there is another consideration which influences me, and that is the desire to extend to others a knowledge which I am conscious cannot but make them happier and better."

Cambridge.

April 7th, 1890.

#### MR. J. J. MORSE'S NEW CATALOGUE.

Mr. Morse sends us his latest list of books which he has on sale at 16, Stanley-street, Liverpool. He is the recognised agent in England for American Spiritualist publishers, as well as for Mr. Terry, of the Melbourne *Harbinger of Light*. If any of our readers require books or periodicals published in the States or Australia, Mr. Morse will furnish them on the usual terms, and supply the trade.

A man who can control his tongue will have no trouble in bending almost anything to his will.—*Milwaukee Journal*.

\* *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World; Miracles and Modern Spiritualism; The Debateable Land between this World and the Next; On Spiritualism*, by Judge Edmonds and Dr. Dexter; *Letters on Spiritualism*, by Judge Edmonds; *From Matter to Spirit; Planchette; Startling Facts in Modern Spiritualism; Spirit Teachings; Spirit Identity; Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism; Where are the Dead? Holy Truth; Night Side of Nature; History of the Supernatural; Higher Aspects of Spiritualism*.

† *The Divine Government*. By Dr. Southwood Smith.

## VERIFICATION OF A SPIRIT MESSAGE.

FROM *Neue Spiritualistische Blätter*.

TRANSLATED BY "V."

SIR,—A proof of the continued existence of man's spirit after the death of the mortal body, which was of great interest to us, occurred at one of our regular Friday sittings. I give you an account of it, which you are perfectly at liberty to publish, if you think proper, in the *Spiritualistische Blätter*. I append my name which will vouch for the truth of the facts I relate.

Since last Christmas a change has taken place in the person of our spirit control. The spirit who presented himself to us as our new guide begged to be allowed to conceal his name from us, and said that after we had formed our judgment of him from the communications he gave us from the other world, if it was a favourable one, he would then reveal his personality to us; since which time his noble and moral teachings have given us many enjoyable hours. At our last sitting but one, he informed us that he was the spirit of "Friedrich Stein," a chemist's assistant, that he was born on January 19th, 1827, and died October 15th, 1853, at the age of twenty-six; he further said that his mortal body was buried in the old graveyard of St. George's Church (Greifswaldersstrasse). He could not give us any precise description of his grave or the number of it, but said I should follow the principal path and count twenty-three rows of graves on the right-hand; his was the second grave and was marked by a cross.

The next day I betook myself to the place in order to confirm the spirit's statement by the witness of my own eyes, but could not find the grave at the spot indicated; on examining, however, the register of deaths for [the year 1853, which the official allowed me to do, I found under the date, October 18th, 1853, the name "Carl Gotthilf Ferdinand Stein."

I was unable to spare the time to search further for the grave then, so I departed, resolving to question the spirit at our next sitting respecting the apparently falsely given name. He anticipated me, however, for at the sitting he said to me:

"Dear Friend,—I know what you wish to ask; do me the favour to-morrow to go again to the churchyard, accompanied by your medium, and take some paper and a pencil with you, when I shall be able, through the hand of your medium, to describe and point out the way to my grave and all will be made clear to you."

To-day we complied with the spirit's request.

On entering the churchyard we went a little aside from the main path, and I gave the medium the paper and pencil, when immediately was written, "Go back to the principal alley and walk straight on till I give you a signal to stop."

We followed this direction, and walked along the alley nearly to the end, when I felt impressed to look to the right, and there, shining in the winter sun, I saw, in letters of gold, the name "Friedrich Stein" upon a cross; and before the name of Friedrich were the three other names, "Carl Gotthilf Ferdinand." Now all was clear to me. In the register of deaths only the three first names were given, while the very name he went by was forgotten.

Under the name, as the spirit had said, stood: "Born 19th of January, 1827; died October the 15th, 1853." The twenty-third row of graves was likewise correct. The spirit should have said: Follow the principal alley till you come to a cross-path, and then count twenty-three rows of graves on the right hand.

Then it was further written through the medium's hand:—

"Dear Friends,—I thank you heartily for the trouble you have taken in coming this long way on my account; accept my thanks for that as well as for the lovely wreath you have brought me. Does my grave please you? It is too cold here to continue to write to you, so go home and sit again on Friday, but will you not first offer up a prayer?"

This we did from our hearts, thanking God for the proof we had received of the continued spiritual existence of the, to us, entirely unknown person of Friedrich Stein.

MAX RAHN, Bureau-Assistant.

Berlin, Schwedersstrasse, 224.

February 1st, 1890.

WHICH way soever else we let loose our hearts, they will return unto us again empty and weary. Time will convince the vainest and blindest minds that happiness is no more to be found in the things of this world than it is to be dug out of the earth.  
—WILLIAM LAW.

### HYPNOTISM AS AN ANÆSTHETIC.

#### REMARKABLE MEDICAL EXPERIMENTS AT LEEDS.

The following abridged account, for which we are indebted to the *Pall Mall Gazette* (April 5th), will be read with profound interest. This is the beneficent use of hypnotism. Some of the most remarkable results attained by Esdaile and other old-time mesmerists are being reproduced in our midst.

The *British Medical Journal* prints a long account of proceedings the other day at the rooms of Messrs. Carter Brothers and Turner, dental surgeons, Leeds, where upwards of sixty of the leading medical men and dentists of the district witnessed a series of surgical and dental operations performed under hypnotic influence induced by Dr. Milne Bramwell, of Goole, Yorkshire, who is described as quite a master of the art of hypnotism as applied to medicine and surgery, and is shortly to publish a work of considerable importance on the subject. The object of the meeting, says a local correspondent of our contemporary, was to show the power of hypnotism to produce absolute anæsthesia in very painful and severe operations. A woman, aged twenty-five, was hypnotised at a word by Dr. Bramwell. She was told she was to submit to three teeth being extracted, without pain, at the hands of Mr. Thomas Carter; and further, that she was to do anything that Mr. Carter asked her to do. This was perfectly successful. There was no expression of pain in the face, no cry, and when told to awake she said she had not the least pain in the gums, nor had she felt the operation. Dr. Bramwell then hypnotised her, and ordered her to leave the room and go upstairs to the waiting-room. This she did as a complete somnambulist. The next case was that of a servant girl, M. A. W., aged nineteen, on whom, under the hypnotic influence induced by Dr. Bramwell, Mr. Hewatson had a fortnight previously opened and scraped freely, without knowledge or pain, a large lachrymal abscess, extending into the cheek. Furthermore, the dressing had been daily performed and the cavity freely syringed under hypnotic anæsthesia, the "healing suggestions" being daily given to the patient, to which Dr. Bramwell in a great measure attributes the very rapid healing, which took place in ten days—a remarkably short space of time in a girl by no means in a good state of health. She was put to sleep by the following letter from Dr. Bramwell addressed to Mr. Turner:—"Burlington-crescent, Goole, Yorks. Dear Mr. Turner,—I send you a patient with enclosed order. When you give it her she will fall asleep at once and obey your commands.—J. MILNE BRAMWELL." "Order.—Go to sleep at once, by order of Dr. Bramwell, and obey Mr. Turner's commands.—J. MILNE BRAMWELL." This experiment answered perfectly. Sleep was induced at once by reading the note, and was so profound that, at the end of a lengthy operation in which sixteen stumps were removed, she awoke smiling, and insisted that she had felt no pain, and, what was remarkable, there was no pain in her mouth. She was found after some time, when unobserved, reading the *Graphic* in the waiting-room, as if nothing had happened. During the whole time she did everything which Mr. Turner suggested, but it was observed that there was a diminished flow of saliva, and that the corneal reflexes were absent, the breathing more noisy than ordinarily, and the pulse slower. Dr. Bramwell took occasion to explain that the next case, a boy aged eight, was a severe test, and would probably not succeed, partly because the patient was so young, and chiefly because he had not attempted to produce hypnotic anæsthesia earlier than two days before. He also explained that patients require training in this form of anæsthesia, the time of training or preparation varying with each individual. However, he was so far hypnotised that he allowed Mr. Mayo Robson to operate on the great toe, removing a bony growth and part of the first phalanx with no more than a few cries towards the close of the operation, and with the result that, when questioned afterwards, he appeared to know very little of what had been done. It was necessary in his case for Dr. Bramwell to repeat the hypnotic suggestions. Dr. Bramwell remarked that he wished to show a case that was less likely to be perfectly successful than the others, so as to enable those present to see the difficult as well as the apparently easy, straightforward cases, "in fact," as he said, "to show his work in the rough." The next case was a girl of fifteen, highly sensitive, requiring the removal of enlarged tonsils. At the request of Dr. Bramwell, Mr. Hewatson was enabled in the hypnotic state to extract each tonsil with ease, the girl, by suggestion

of the hypnotiser, obeying every request of the operator, though in a state of perfect anæsthesia. In the same way Mr. Hewatson removed a cyst, of the size of a horse bean, from the side of the nose of a young woman who was perfectly anæsthetised and breathing deeply, and who, on coming round by order, protested "that the operation had not been commenced." Mr. Turner then extracted two teeth from a man with equal success; after which Dr. Bramwell explained how his patient had been completely cured of drunkenness by hypnotic suggestion. To prove this to those present, and to show the interesting psychological results, the man was hypnotised, and in that state he was shown a glass of water; he was told by Dr. Bramwell it was "bad beer." He was then told to awake, and the glass of water offered him by Dr. Bramwell; he put it to his lips, and at once spat out the "offensive liquid." Other interesting phenomena were illustrated and explained by means of this patient, who was a hale, strong working man. Mr. T. S. Carter next extracted a very difficult impacted stump from a railway navvy, as successfully as the previous case. Dr. Bramwell described how this man had been completely cured by hypnotism of very obstinate facial neuralgia, which had been produced by working in a wet cutting. On the third day of hypnotism the neuralgia had entirely disappeared (now some weeks ago) and had not returned. The man had obtained refreshing hypnotic sleep at nights, being put to sleep by his daughter through a note from Dr. Bramwell, or by a telegram, both methods succeeding perfectly. At the conclusion of this most interesting and successful series of hypnotic experiments a vote of thanks to Dr. Bramwell for his kindness in giving the demonstration was proposed by Mr. Scattergood, Dean of the Yorkshire College, and seconded by Mr. Pridgin Teale, who remarked that the experiments were deeply interesting, and had been marvellously successful, and said: "I feel sure that the time has now come when we shall have to recognise hypnotism as a necessary part of our study." The vote was carried by acclamation.

#### IN THE NIGHT.

Angel of Judgment, did I see thee bending,  
Across the night, star-crowned and lightning spanned,  
Thy flaming sword with sudden radiance rending  
The midnight silence of the sleeping land,  
As thou wouldst mark the uttermost offending,  
Of waking eye, or wandering furtive hand?

Angel of Judgment, at thy sword-shaft's gleaming  
The roof-trees crumble, and the walls divide,  
I saw the poor, on straw or tatters dreaming,  
Pale, woeful, wasted, huddled side by side;  
I saw fine linen, and soft purple streaming,  
Over the rich safe lapt in pomp and pride.

Although no voice was heard, no word was spoken,  
Though silent sleepers slept, as sleep the dead,  
The air felt breathless, till a rustling token  
Of restless wings about the silence spread,  
Anon the spaces of the night were broken,  
Dim phantoms hovered round each quiet head.

About one gilded couch grey spectres leaping,  
Whirled in a ghastly revel of the night,  
One, woman-shape, came, lithe as serpent creeping,  
Her pale lips writhing in a feigned delight,  
Whereat a sleeper's soul slid from him, sleeping,  
And drank from hers all bitterness and blight.

I saw dark phantom-forms that wreck and plunder,  
Dim dreadful shapes that rend, and hurt, and slay,  
Vain shadow-fools that gape, and stare, and wonder,  
Sly shadow-knaves that baffle and betray,  
Each sleeper (soul from body drawn asunder)  
Held to his soul-love till the dawning day.

Crouching on straw there lay a mother, pressing  
Her dying baby to her milkless breast,  
Outcast, forlorn, yet one pure love possessing,  
The angels knew their sister and their guest,  
Whom now they held constrained in mute caressing,  
As who should say: "Stay with us, it is best!"

I saw white souls these shining ones were leading  
Out of the burden of their daily strife,  
Though dumb as death their bodies lay unheeding,  
Their souls strove upward to eternal life,  
Or soft they rest, in fair green places feeding,  
By crystal streams with balm and blessing rife.

Like unto like, degenerate or aspiring,  
Each bodiless spirit joins its fitting mate,  
The deadly hell the sinner's soul requiring  
Is the affinity his sins create;  
Sleep ultimates the deepest soul-desiring,  
The ruling of its dominant love is—Fate!

Angel of Judgment, not of the man's ruin  
He sows his sorrows, he prepares his pain,  
The conscious faults half slunned, and half pursuing,  
Assert their empire in sleep's dark domain;  
Death wakes the sense of uttermost undoing,  
Hell needs no bonds save custom's iron chain.

M. L. H.

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

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MANY letters and articles are crowded out owing to pressure on our space.

## Light :

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

SATURDAY, APRIL 19th, 1890.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to the Editor.

## "MISS LUDINGTON'S SISTER." \*

Mr. Bellamy must clearly be considered from two points of view ; as a novelist or a story-teller, and as an exponent of advanced, though vague, ideas. As a story-teller in both *Looking Backward* and *Miss Ludington's Sister* he can hardly be said to have succeeded, for in both books the last chapters entirely upset the apparent meaning and interest of the story. It is not, of course, given to everyone to be able to introduce the abnormal into ordinary life with the skill of Mr. Stevenson or Mr. Anstey, but it should be done well, or not at all, and Mr. Bellamy has not done it well in *Miss Ludington's Sister*.

As an exponent of new ideas Mr. Bellamy takes a higher place, but the word "vague" has been used advisedly in this connection. Mr. Bellamy's knowledge of Spiritualism, for instance, is crude in the extreme. He sees a little of the sea of truth, and though he does not evidently suppose as some writers do that the whole of that ocean can be taken in at a glance, yet he talks a Spiritualistic philosophy of a singular kind without apparently concerning himself with the hypotheses on which that philosophy has been founded ; and then, as if frightened at having talked about the thing at all, weakly finishes the book with an explanation in a story of the vilest fraud that ever disgraced an intelligent community.

*Miss Ludington's Sister* is an apparent development of a curious theory of identity, an "apparent" development only, for however the author may philosophise, he strikes a deadly blow at his own philosophy when the "facts" on which his story depends are shown to be the outcome of a complicated set of villainies, on the part of a "medium" and her allies, which if possible in New York City, as they are represented to be, does not say much either for its police or its people.

The "sister" is, up to the bottom of p. 118 (the book consists of 133 pp.), the materialised form of a certain spirit who had been unable to return to spirit-life because the medium died during the materialisation. In the last fifteen pages she is shown to be a fraud. The idea as to personal

\* *Miss Ludington's Sister*. By EDWARD BELLAMY. (London: William Reeves, 185, Fleet-street, E.C.)

identity which pervades the story is that this spirit was the youthful soul of Miss Ludington, which went over when Miss Ludington, now a grey-haired old lady of sixty, had the small-pox and lost her early and marvellous beauty. A second self then took possession of the young lady's altered corporeal form, this second self mourning for the former one as for the dead. Now we are pretty well acquainted with the notion of twofold, threefold, and even manifold personality, but successive personality is not such well-trodden ground, and were it not for the bathos which concludes the book, and almost, if not quite, destroys its value, a great deal might be said in praise of Mr. Bellamy's treatment of the subject.

A young man named Paul de Riemer is the hero. This youth falls violently but spiritually in love with the portrait of the earlier self of his somewhat worn-out old aunt, Miss Ludington. When he sees the materialised form of the same spirit, the spirituality of his affection changes somewhat, and when after the second séance the form remains materialised, and submits to be dressed in the latest fashion—"she was a ravishing symphony in white, pale green, and gold"—Paul "wandered for an hour about the dark and silent village street," in quite the proper way, "waiting for the tumult of his emotions to subside." And no wonder, when one thinks of the "spirit's" "long, beautifully moulded arms."

It goes without saying that this lady was nothing but a common cheat, and if Mr. Bellamy's object were to show that in New York as well as in London the "confidence trick" can be played pretty easily when you have two fools to deal with, an old and disappointed woman, the very incarnation of selfishness, and a lad full of sentimental gush, the book would be amusing and indeed clever. But that is not the case, as the following will show. Ida, the damsel who, if the criminal law had been put in force, would together with her mother and father have had to suffer no inconsiderable term of imprisonment, has really fallen in love with Paul, and runs away after writing a penitential letter. She is forgiven, and :—

In the days that followed, Ida was at first much puzzled to account not only for the evident genuineness of the esteem which her friends cherished for her, but for the fact that it seemed to have been enhanced rather than diminished by the recent events. Instead of regarding her repentance as at most affecting her offence, they apparently looked upon it as a positive virtue ; redounding wholly to her credit. It was quite as if she had made amends for another person's sin, in contrast with whose conduct her own nobility stood out in fine relief. And that, in fact, is the way they did look at it. Their habit of distinguishing between the successive phases of an individual life as distinct persons made it impossible for them to take any other view of the matter. In their eyes the past was good or bad for itself, and the present good or bad for itself, and an evil past could no more shadow a virtuous present than a virtuous present could retract to brighten or redeem an ugly past. It is the soul that repents which is ennobled by repentance. The soul that did the deed repented of is past forgiving. There was no affectation on the part of Paul or Miss Ludington of ignoring the fraud which Ida had practised, or pretending to forget it. This was not necessary out of any consideration of her feelings, for they did not hold that it was she who was guilty of that fraud, but another person.

When it is remembered that the "soul that did the deed" had helped her father, under an assumed name, in a dark séance to cheat two enthusiastic idiots, had been privy to a knowledge of a nicely-balanced false top to the cabinet, for she had come in that way dressed, or somewhat undressed, as an orthodox angel, back hair down, and so forth ; that she had worn chemically-prepared clothes, which might easily drop to pieces, as materialised clothes are said to do ; that she had carried on this cheat for months, been supplied with money, and accepted Miss Ludington's diamonds, it is only fair to suppose that Mr.

Bellamy had in writing the book some purpose in view other than that of producing one more story of human credulity, fraud, and sensual love. If he had in mind an idea of showing the potentialities of human individuality, it is curious to find him hanging the whole story on a fraud which must in real life have brought discredit on all connected with it. If he had not any such idea the book must be relegated to that catalogue of vague eccentricities at a shilling each, which railway travelling and impatience have sown broadcast over the land.

Mr. Bellamy has made some reputation as a writer, hence this notice, otherwise too long, and because of that reputation it would be satisfactory to get something from him a little less hazy and a little more consistent when he chooses to talk about the unseen. T.

#### "THE NEW REDEEMER."

Under the above title the Paris *Figaro*, of April 9th, has a curious and suggestive article; curious from its subject matter being treated at all in the *Figaro*, and suggestive in that the treatment is mainly serious. The article, which is signed "Gustave Guiches," commences in this way:—

My surprise was considerable when a few days ago, on paying my fare to one of the conductors of the Panthéon Courcelles line of omnibuses, he thanked me in terms of remarkable courtesy, and added, without further remark, "The time is nearer at hand than one thinks. The reign of the Holy Spirit is at last about to begin." I am neither inventing nor exaggerating, for I could, if necessary, give the name of this excellent servant of the company, in whose service he has been for twenty-three years, as well as the number of the omnibus.

The writer gives, as one might expect, a description of the man, as being in no way different apparently from an ordinary member of society, other than perhaps being more alert, more polite, and more considerate for others. "There was nothing in his appearance which revealed the *exalté*, the monomaniac, or the mystic."

The conductor went on with his monologue, and told the writer how one evening, while he was lighting his lamp, the truth was revealed to his hearing. He also asserted that he was destined for the future to conduct other vehicles than those of the omnibus company. "I am an instrument in the hands of God."

Now this may be semi-serious banter on the part of the *Figaro's* contributor, for such things are known on the other side of the Channel as well as here, or it may be a real history somewhat garnished by its reporter. But that there is a foundation for it in fact is evident from the rest of the article, which is singularly different from the *persiflage* connected very strongly with the usual methods of the *Figaro*. Says M. Guiches:—

The conductor was right. The partisans of the Holy Spirit are really more numerous than they have ever been. At the very time when the Catholics were celebrating the anniversary of their Redemption, the believers in the new faith were calling for the supreme manifestation of the Paraclete.

Then follows about half a column of ancient history after the manner of certain English journals, in which it is shown that the doctrine is not new. It was revived, however, in France by Pierre Michel Vintras, of Tilly-sur-Seulle, in the diocese of Bayeux, about half a century ago. He said:—

It is only after wars both internal and external, followed by numberless calamities, that the Spirit will consent to reveal the new mysteries and attach men to Himself by an indissoluble law of love. For the execution of His will, he will make use of the Duke of Normandy and the Duke of Bordeaux. These two princes, with whom will be joined a very holy pope, will ardently help towards this coming.

Vintras founded a society which was speedily condemned in 1843 by Pope Gregory XVI.

This religion still exists (says the *Figaro*), modified, perhaps, in some points of belief, but intact as to the general character of its rules. Its centre is at Lyons, where resides its Pope, the successor of Vintras, a priest separated from Catholicism, and who has been one of the purest luminaries of the theological world. Lately congresses have taken place. Societies are in active existence, the most important being at Nîmes and at Montpellier, and, daily, corresponding circles are being formed in different countries, especially in America. Around this "Paracletism" there is grouped a considerable portion of religious socialism, for the hope of a new earthly redeemer is mingled with the hope of a divine restorer. In the labour movement with which the mysterious Emperor of Germany is occupied with such passionate solicitude, at which all the States of Europe are alarmed, and to which the Holy See is not indifferent, the "Paracletists" think they feel the first movements of that reign of love, of those centuries of grace, the unspeakable precursors of the end of all things.

This belief (concludes the journal) can only progress. It has penetrated the masses. It is received with delight by the simple intelligence of the people, and it is widely spread abroad, since it is possible to meet with it in the commonplace movement of daily life, and to hear the crusade of the Paraclete preached even on the platform of an omnibus.

Whether the *Figaro* is right as to all its asserted facts or not, there remains the remarkable "sign of the times" that the coming of the Holy Ghost, the reign of the Spirit, can be spoken of in one of the lightest of the Paris journals with not only not a single sneer, and scarcely a word of banter, but with evident sympathy and appreciation.

#### "THE GLOBE" ON PARIS SPIRITUALISM.

To see ourselves as others see us, to read about ourselves what goes to the making of history and thereby to make acquaintance with pleasing fables—this is always a treat. On April 3rd (two days delayed, we imagine) the Paris correspondent of the *Globe* gave its readers a column on Spiritualism. The anniversary of the death of Allan Kardec was the occasion. "Moved by the spirits," various Spiritists orated on the subject of Spiritism and in praise of Kardec. Whether from these orations or by way of interview, the Paris correspondent of the *Globe* has arrived at some remarkable conclusions. Occultism, he has learned, has grown to formidable proportions. "In fact, it is said that the Occultists have become so powerful that the Spiritualists have been forced to come to terms with them." This is news indeed, even though it be vouched for "by one of the high priests of the faith." His further details and statistics are even more curious. There are 12,000,000 Occultists in the world, 10,000,000 in America, 50,000 in England, and the same number in France. But it is vain to attempt to condense this effusive gentleman. He must be allowed to be heard:—

All these believers in the mysterious science are connected together by a secret psychic force, which on the 27th day of the month in every country unites them at the same minute, calculated in conformity with the various latitudes. In Paris the moment of this universal communion of soul is comprised between 8.20 and 8.35 p.m. Perhaps nothing proves the prevalence of this strange movement so much as the numerous publications specially devoted to the study and propagation of occult theories. At the present time they include about 100 reviews and periodicals. Thirty of them appear in France, sixteen in North America—one of which has 14,000 subscribers—thirty-one in South America, where in Buenos Ayres alone there are 22,000 Spiritualists and almost as many Occultists; twenty in Spain, ten in England, four in Belgium, three in Germany, one in Russia, and others in India, Australia, and Japan, all printed in the local tongue. Of all the believers in the dark and mysterious, however, Spiritualism is the dogma which numbers the most adepts. This is not surprising when we bear in mind that it is less speculative and more experimental than the other forms of superstition. The congress held in Paris last September contained delegates from all climes, representing a total of more than 40,000 adherents. Such a figure, says my informant, may sound rather extraordinary, but if we look at

what is taking place in America it will not be found exaggerated. In New York, for example, we are told that the Spiritualists have bought a large piece of ground where every year in the month of August they have a monster camp-meeting. Last year it was attended by 25,000 believers, who voted a resolution approving of the Paris congress, and rejoicing over the progress of the faith.

"Other forms of superstition" is distinctly good, and "a monster camp-meeting in New York" shows what flights of imagination our *Globe* correspondent is capable of.

He proceeds to even more dazzling efforts. We are split up, he says, and chief among us is "the independent group of esoteric students, placed under the direction of a special organ entitled the *Initiation*, the inspirer of which is *one Papus, a modern mage*." (The italics are ours. We could not resist the temptation.) There is more information equally veracious. There are, it seems, Cabalists who find in the Zohar the esoteric meaning of Genesis. We should like to hear from them as to the interpretation of the first chapter. Then there are "Theosophists or Buddhists." We had not realised that these terms were of equivalent value. They are to be met with "chiefly in India." Hence, we presume, it is that they figure in "Spiritualism in Paris." However, they are dimly connected with France by having two lodges, one under the Duchesse de Pomar, and the other "represented by the aforesaid Papus." (One hardly knows whether to wonder most at the accuracy of the facts or at the felicity of the diction of the *Globe* correspondent.)

We are next taken to the group of astrologers, under "Ely Star." Whether that designation indicates a heavenly or a human body is not clear. "They believe in the influence of stars, which they study jealously." We are not told why they should import jealousy into their studies. Then they have talismans and an "old manuscript attributed to Solomon," the king of that name, we imagine. He did know, or was reputed to know, a thing or two, and any manuscript of his would be distinctly inquired after at Christie and Manson's.

Then we have Alchemists who are under one M. Tiffereau. We learn with regret that he has not enriched himself by his search after the philosopher's stone, and has indeed thrown himself on the charity of the faithful to enable him to pursue his researches. Curious how history repeats itself.

Next come what we may call an "odd lot." They are Graphiologists, Chiromancers, Cartomancers, Augurs (who must be very old by this time and whom we had thought extinct as a soothsaying tribe), Diviners of dreams, "whose most authentic master is Joseph (of Egypt, we presume), Geomancers, Pythagoreans," who foretell events by the manipulation of certain figures (for information apply to "C. C. M." and " $\pi$ " in this country), Somnambulists "more or less lucid," Magnetisers, Hypnotisers, "whose chief to-day is Dr. Charcot, the magician of the Saltpêtrière." The scribe concludes, as well he may, that "there exists at present a tendency towards the study of the secret and mysterious in human nature." He might also have added a rider to the effect that there exists a tendency in newspaper men to write about it without adequate knowledge.

#### BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

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

*The Review of Reviews.*

*Psychic Studies*, No. II.

*The Phrenological Magazine.*

*The Spiritualists' Lyceum Magazine.*

ANYONE anywhere who cultivates a hobby at the expense of other people's comfort is making a failure of life.

#### PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.

ORIGINALLY CONTRIBUTED TO "PSYCHIC NOTES" (CALCUTTA).

By MRS. GORDON.

As the continual repetition of the occurrences at the séances which have been taking place in Calcutta would be wearisome by their similarity, it will, I think, be more interesting to give a general account of varied phenomena I have witnessed both here and in England. As the commonest fallacy about these phenomena is that mediums are clever conjurers, I will begin with an account of two séances held at the house of a friend, when no professional medium was present. The lady was the widow of a clergyman, and having attended a séance at my house she was so much struck with the manifestations that she asked me to invite the medium to come to her house, as she was most desirous that her brother should see phenomena such as she had just seen. I arranged this séance, and some striking things occurred. We were only four in all sitting, the brother and sister were holding the medium, yet the piano was opened, the keys struck, and a large Japanese screen removed to a distance and turned upside down.\*

The gentleman was very obdurate, he questioned the servants, to be sure no one else had been admitted with the medium, and though astounded was not convinced. Two days after on seeing my friends I found that reflection had effected something, and the gentleman confessed the medium *could* not have opened the piano or moved the screen. He then suggested that we three should sit: we accordingly darkened the room, and sat round a small tea table, on which we put candle, matches, a bell, and fan. Judge of our astonishment when after sitting a few minutes there were sounds as though the paper fan was touched. The gentleman asked if we had done it, which we denied. Again there was the same unmistakable sound. I asked if there was a spirit present, and three clear raps responded. After several questions and answers, to try and elicit a name, we were informed that we did not know the spirit, but that he had died in that house. We then requested politely that he would show his power by fauning us, and this was done. Phosphorescent lights floated up from the table as though the matches were being manipulated, the bell was then rung up in the air and dropped with some force on the gentleman's head. Then he requested that something should be brought from the writing table, and immediately a folded newspaper was put into the lady's hand. Remember, we were only three of us sitting and holding hands, in this lady's drawing-room. I asked the spirit to show himself but could get no promise. We distinctly heard the things on the writing table being touched, and at request the chair was moved several times. Then I had an impression as though something were passing me, and afterwards I found that at the same moment the gentleman had been touched, but before we had time to mention our experiences the handle of the door was heard to turn. I looked round thinking somebody was coming into the room, when to my surprise I distinctly saw a form, apparently that of a young dark-haired man, go out of the door. I was in the best position for seeing this, but the others saw the door open (the passage was brilliantly lighted), and something dark run out. I saw the form in a stooping attitude as though running. So astounded was I that I believed somebody had been in the room doing the things we had witnessed. We ran to the door which closed with a spring, and opening it quickly, saw the housemaid walking along the landing towards us. We asked who had just come out of the room. She said no one. We inquired if she had not seen the door open and shut, and she said, "Yes"; and addressing the gentleman of the house she said, "You came and opened the door and looked out, didn't you?" Not wishing to disclose to her our motives for asking these questions we said no more, but returned to the room to sit again; on this occasion I stipulated for a little light, as the excitement of my friends made me nervous for the first time. We had a small jet of gas, and after sitting a few minutes the gentleman exclaimed that the same form was again in the room, and coming towards me, and was putting its hand on my head. At the same moment, *simultaneously*, the lady exclaimed that there were lights about my head and face, and they both saw and commented on these lights as they moved about like diamonds on my head and face. The gentleman said, "I know something tremendous is going to happen, I hope you

\* At this séance a photo was brought to me from my own house, three miles distant.

feel prepared for it," but their excitement was too much for me, and I stopped the séance. I daresay we should all have seen the form had we sat longer, but I who had never felt nervous when among experienced Spiritualists could not stand any more such manifestations with new sitters. I had intended leaving London the following day, but was persuaded to remain for another séance, which we fixed for two evenings later. On this occasion a few friends were invited. We were eight in all, and sat in the dining-room, which adjoined the drawing-room. A musical box had been borrowed, which was so large that it was put on a chair instead of on the table, around which we sat. On this was put a bell, fan, candle and matches. At the last moment I suggested pencil and paper, and a gentleman present took some printed circulars from his pocket and put them with pencil on the table. Having wound up the musical-box, seated ourselves, and joined hands, the light was put out. In a few seconds there was an exclamation that someone was touched. The sound of the music became distant. We at once lit the candle and the box had disappeared! We could all hear it somewhere, and a lady proceeded to look for it in the next room, but not seeing it we resolved not to trouble about it, fearing to disturb the circle any longer in our efforts to find it. We took hands again and put out the light, and then we were fanned, the bell was rung, the table thumped in the most vigorous way in answer to questions. A name known to the host was written on a piece of paper, and on the circulars was written, "We are here, good-night." The bell was heard ringing up in the air, and the tongue was heard to fall out of it on to the table. The hostess commented on this with some surprise, it never having happened before. We lit the candle, and after many attempts to replace the tongue, a lady with slight fingers managed it. We put out the light again, and the bell went ringing merrily, and then out fell the tongue once more, but we had scarcely time to comment on this when, to our astonishment, we heard the bell ringing again. It was more suggestive, as if done to show us how quickly our visitors could do in the *dark* what we had fumbled over for a long time in the *light*. We had satisfied ourselves that the doors were all locked, and a great sceptic who was present had put the keys in his pocket. After some time I suggested having the musical box back, and asked if we should break up for the purpose of finding it. Being answered in the affirmative we lit the candle without breaking hands, and there was the musical box in the room again on the floor near the door. We wound it up and sat again, when hands were felt, and the gentleman sceptic who had the keys exclaimed that he was holding two hands, and that a head seemed to be placed on his shoulder. He convinced himself that it was not his neighbour (the host) who was at that time lying back in his chair in a trance. Fearing we were exhausting this gentleman, whose mediumistic gifts were causing the phenomena, I suggested we should break up. The room was very small, and we had sat there for more than three hours, and as the host was still insensible, it was very desirable to have some fresh air. We now proved conclusively that we were securely locked in, for we could not fit the keys and get the doors open during several minutes.

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

##### The Position of the Society for Psychical Research.

SIR,—In "LIGHT" for March 29th, p. 257, in the course of a lecture given by the Editor, I observe the following words:—"The Society for Psychical Research seems to be drifting into the attitude of the Sadducee, believing neither in angel nor spirit, but only in a sub-conscious self. That is a pity, but can do no particular harm, for angels and spirits will still persist in spite of denial."

As I am the member of the Society for Psychical Research who probably has written most on the sub-conscious self, I may perhaps be allowed to point out that the opinion above attributed to the Society is at variance with my published views. In our *Proceedings*, Part XV., p. 13, note, will be found these words: "Various converging lines of evidence have led me individually to think it probable that in some at least of the cases here cited there has been a real agency of deceased persons." The whole of the paper on "Apparitions after Death" which follows—and of my portion of the previous paper on a similar subject in *Proceedings* XIV.—is consistent with the expression of my opinion just cited.

I cannot, of course, speak for the Society, which does not commit itself to any collective opinion on the questions into

which we inquire, but contains persons of widely differing views. But the fact that an article by Mr. Crookes on "Séances with D. D. Home" follows my article in *Proceedings* XV., may at least show that I am not alone among our members in my belief that man's sub-conscious mental action is not the only phenomenon which we have to observe. As I think that I have seen both Mr. Crookes' paper and my own mentioned in "LIGHT," I suppose that they have not entirely escaped the Editor's notice.

If I may be allowed to state what, as I conceive it, is the nearest approach to a collective creed which our Society possesses, it is this:—All the questions into which we inquire are questions of evidence; and we ought to collect our evidence as diligently as possible, to test it as carefully as possible, and to weigh it as candidly as possible. I regret to observe that some Spiritualists deem our canons unduly rigorous; but on the other hand, I regret to observe that some of our scientific critics deem our canons unduly lax. For my part, I can only say that I am, as always, most anxious to receive fresh information (first-hand if possible) on any of the subjects with which we deal; and at this moment especially on apparitions after death, or upon written or other messages affording proofs of identity. If I should fail to do full justice to any evidence sent to me, my failure will not be due—I trust—to any prejudice or prepossession, or to want of sympathy with any form of earnest inquiry, or of honest belief.

FREDERIC W. H. MYERS.

Leckhampton House, Cambridge.

April 4th, 1890.

##### Difficulties of a Pioneer.

SIR,—"Nothing is sacred to a sapper!" Heredity and kindred subjects have been lately freely discussed on psychical grounds; but I doubt if that was the case to any appreciable extent fifty years ago. Still less was there a question, at that period, respecting the moment when the pre-existent soul entered the body; as, at that time, it seems to have been generally supposed that the body formed the soul. All this is now changed, at least among some psychical researchers; and I must say that Victor Hugo's idea of solving the difficulty concerning "the fruit that perishes," by the theory of the Re-incarnation of the same embryo into the next embryo of the same mother, as we are told by "M.D." in your issue for April 5th, appears an inadequate solution to a humble but inquiring mind. But it is, I believe, a Kardecian notion, and, as I have said before, there is the strongest reason to suppose that Kardecian notions had their inception from the books written by the Duke of Normandy, otherwise the unrecognised son of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette, more than fifty years ago.

For the above reason I give a curious extract from the book, *The Heavenly Doctrine*, published in 1839, without in any way signifying my adhesion to it. His controls persuaded him that there had been many interpolations in the New Testament, which were adverse to the words primarily laid down, and not least as regards the words of Jesus Himself; all of which it was his mission, through their agency, to rectify. And this really seems the main object of the book. Here is a part of what he calls

A formal declaration of the angel of the Lord, on the questions which I addressed to him, during June 16th and 18th, when he visited me.

The royal medium asked:—

QUESTION: At that time, then (just before the coming of Jesus) it appears there was no person among this people (the Jews) who preached the truth and justice of God, to unmask to the world the imposture of these priests?

ANSWER: There have been many, and in all times, but through the malice of the High Priests, strengthened by the knavery of the sacrificers, of the scribes, and of the ancients, they caused the preaching of truth to be persecuted. . . . It was at this time that the merciful God wished to save, by His infinite grace, the people of Israel. . . . Consequently He sent to them from Heaven His eldest Son, Who made Himself man, by taking possession of the body of the first-born of Mary and Joseph.

QUESTION: How could the Lord Jesus, Who is the first angel created in Heaven by God Almighty, take possession of a body born here below, conceived of Mary and of Joseph her husband in the natural manner? This body, then, had two souls, or a double spirit?

ANSWER: It is man's ignorance which causes him to make such a supposition. The body is not the soul, and the soul is not the body. The body comes from the union of two beings, male and female, in the natural way; but the body conceived in the womb of woman is not inhabited by a soul, for man, according to the wisdom of the Almighty, and the natural order of things, is, by the will of God, creator of the body of the child—but God alone is creator of the soul; and the soul,

of which God is the father, only takes possession of the body, of which man is the father, at the moment when the earthly body is born.

QUESTION: This is very well, said I, to the angel. What, then, is this body, and how can it be that it already lives in its mother's womb before its birth?

ANSWER: Man's body consists of two principal substances, namely, of flesh and of blood; it is the blood which animates the body, and when the body is strong enough in the womb of the woman it moves, and the mother feels thereby that her child has life. This life, however, is merely a vegetative life—and it only becomes spiritual after the soul has taken possession of the body.

QUESTION: Then the Lord Jesus Christ never was in the womb of Mary?

ANSWER: Never, and this is why He said when on earth, "*Woman, what have I to do with thee?*" But the world did not understand it.

QUESTION: Why did not Jesus Christ Himself give these explanations when He was on earth?

ANSWER: He did give them—and they are even written, but the falsifiers of the Lord's Words have only thought to find their advantage by making the Heavenly doctrine agree with theirs.

T. W.

#### The Dangers of Hypnotism.

SIR,—It must be very satisfactory to Spiritualists to see the remarkable revival of interest in hypnotism which is shown almost daily in the public journals. The uses of it are undeniable, both as an anæsthetic in surgical operations, and on account of the remarkable control over the will and nervous system which it can exercise by suggestion. So far all are agreed, the facts cannot be disputed. But everyone who writes on it seems to think it necessary to warn us of the dangers which are supposed to be the obverse side of the benefits. If suggestion can be used for good, it can, it is assumed, be used for evil. So far as I have observed the good is ascertained, while the evil is speculative. In a case of this kind it is desirable to be guided by facts rather than by theories, or if speculative alarm is to be entertained there is room for *a priori* considerations to combat or qualify it. Perhaps some of your correspondents can produce facts that may justify the alarm. Meanwhile let me offer one or two suggestions in support of the idea that the alarm may be to a great extent groundless. And as I can only offer such considerations as may be contradicted by experience I will put them interrogatively rather than affirmatively.

Let me then ask those who know, is it possible for a thoroughly bad man, capable of deliberate and enormous crime, to be a successful mesmeric operator? Without claiming any exceptional exaltation of character for one so endowed, is it not necessary that his mind and heart should be in a fairly healthy state? Is not his power dependent upon a certain psychical harmony in his nervous, his intellectual, and his moral nature? Is criminal intent consistent with this harmonious co-operation of all these interior forces? When a man surrenders himself to crime, does he not at once set up a strife between his conscience and his will, which must weaken him for any action in which their consent is required, and so damage his mesmeric power?

Also while it is true that the subject of mesmeric operation may be apparently an almost abject tool in the hands of his controller, yet is not this also a condition which has its limitations? If the operator should attempt to suggest some deed of infamy, is there no storage of moral and spiritual self-assertion slumbering in the deepest nature of the subject, which would be roused by the assault thus made upon its interior Shekinah? Beneath the superficial servility, is there not a deeper assent which may be withdrawn if the essential laws of morality are violated? When the helpless dipsomaniac accepts the suggestion that the fatal cup shall be resolutely avoided, is it not because behind the diseased nervous state and corrupted and enfeebled will there is a soul of goodness and rectitude which has been asleep, but is now in some sense awakened? If this is not the case, the reform which is effected by mesmerism is only a phantom, not a reality—like a sun-picture drawn on the surface of the nature by a skilful chemical manipulator, which will in time fade away, when the influences which originated it are withdrawn.

These are the doubts that suggest themselves when any alarm is raised respecting the dangers of mesmerism or hypnotism. I know that these forces may be used in a light and frivolous way, and that very unpleasant practical jokes may be perpetrated on the subject, and through him on others. But these are, as a rule—such is my impression—rather unmoral than immoral; bad fun rather than base conduct, not sufficient to provoke any resistance that might be latent, and ready to show itself if real occasion arose. My notion is that these mes-

meric forces bring us into contact with the deepest and noblest elements of human nature, into each man's heaven, where only what is good and useful can have any permanent and effective existence.

But I am an inquirer, and ask for "light."

While I am writing these questions, the answer to them partly comes in the shape of an article by Dr. Charcot, in the *Forum*, on "Hypnotism and Crime." His first consideration—that only a few nervous creatures are capable of being hypnotised—does not bear very conclusively on the question, which refers to the possibilities of a criminal use of hypnotism whether the cases are few or many. I am glad, however, to be able to quote his authority for the statement, that even in the hypnotic state subjects may have the capability of resisting uncongenial suggestions. Dr. Charcot tells us that trained subjects may be induced to commit imaginary crimes—which, of course, is only a dramatic performance, to which no blame need be attached: the conditions for real crime are entirely different. One can only smile at the residuum of caution which this medical hierarch approves—"A strong case is made out for making it illegal for any but properly-qualified medical men to dabble in hypnotism." My own impression is that rash or lawless experiments are quite as likely to be perpetrated by medical men as by any other class—perhaps more so, since, as a class, they have a strong tendency to take a materialistic view of psychic facts, and are not exceptionally reputed for reverence and wisdom.

5, Grosvenor-street, W.

R. M. THEOBALD.

#### Hypnotism.

SIR,—I should like to say a word in support of Mr. Hayes' views. First of all, it is undoubtedly true that most ailments (not mental) may be relieved or cured without rendering the patient unconscious or abnormally conscious.

I myself, who am in no way susceptible to hypnotism, have been relieved of violent pain by a person whom I could easily mesmerise; and I once saw the same person successfully treat another subject for something which the latter had suffered from for two years, and which had defied the efforts of a "suggestionist," but in this case the operator was in the hypnotic condition.

My acquaintance with the French methods is limited, but it would seem that they are opposed, as Mr. Hayes says, to the methods and conclusions of Gregory and Ashburner's school.

Moreover, the former proceed entirely, I believe, from a medical standpoint, and it does not seem likely that psychical science will benefit much from such investigations.

Professor Huxley has recorded some wonderful psychical phenomena, but sees them only in the light of materialism, and I could well imagine his taking part in these French experiments, and yet remaining the same modern scientist that he was before. If we had but a few more investigators of the type of Dr. Gregory, and with the same opportunities, our store of knowledge would be largely increased.

The fact is that all exalted or abnormal conditions are loosely classed under the term hypnotism, and a man who experiments in one direction will come to totally different conclusions from one who pursues another method; for there are distinct conditions which are superficially similar.

Anyone who has read Reichenbach's *Researches* can no longer doubt the existence of a magnetic fluid or aura, still less if he has taken part in magnetic experiments.

The effect of the magnetic process on plants, which may easily be verified, seems to be entirely ignored by the suggestionists. But although the passage of this fluid from the fingers of the operator produces magnetic sleep, the same phenomenon sometimes occurs spontaneously, without external agency. In not recognising these facts the hypnotists are at fault.

Furthermore, the subject may be thrown into trance by the proximity of a crystal, or other odyllic body, even when unknown to him.

Then, with regard to the dangerous possibilities of suggestion, I think they are not general. As far as my limited experience goes, I have never seen a case where the operator could force the subject to accept any suggestion which did not recommend itself to the latter. The entranced subject is usually a rational and responsible being—more so than when in the normal state—and you cannot get him to agree to the suggestion if unreasonable. In short, you ask him to perform a certain action at some future time, and if he considers it desirable he will promise, but not otherwise.

So far from the will being subjugated, it is generally the subject's own will (or, as some would say, his higher self) that controls his post-hypnotic action.

It must be recollected that even in the waking state some unhealthy minds will act on suggestion to their own hurt; for instance, a remarkable suicide often brings in its train deplorable imitations.

Notwithstanding what I have said, however, I do not forget those lower phases of hypnotism, such as are seen at public performances. It would appear, indeed, that the results correspond more or less to the object of the experimenters, and I do not hesitate to say that any method which causes one man to be dominated by the will of another is, generally speaking, degrading and unworthy of practice. There is, to be sure, an element of danger in hypnotism; so there is in the use of anæsthetics or in a knowledge of poisons. It is a weapon in the hands of the unscrupulous, but the moral is, obviously, to take precaution.

Finally, I believe this moral danger applies only to the lower states. If a person who had been so injuriously affected that his will was practically no longer his own were to be thrown into the higher trance state, and his attention then directed to the danger of his position, I have little doubt that his will in this higher condition could so act as to release him for the future from this hurtful hypnotic control.

G. A. K.

#### Curative Mesmerism.

SIR,—I cordially agree with all that has been advanced by your correspondent, Mr. Frederick W. Hayes, in your issue of April 5th. I wish the London Hypnotic Society success, and, apart from its proposed clinic, I trust it will be practically useful. The council and committee give some hope of this. It will be neither a soulless nor materialistic concern as long as the direction remains in the hands of some of those indicated.

May I venture to express the wish that the philanthropic and therapeutic aspects of the subject be dealt with as the most important; the experimental and psychical as subsidiary? The moment these clash, farewell to practical usefulness. Curiosity, misnamed investigation, defeats itself. Patients are neither cured nor are the experiments satisfactory. Many years' practical acquaintance with mesmerism have led me to this conclusion, the therapeutics should be kept distinct from all else; in other words, in curing disease all energies and arts should be applied to that end. Under no circumstances should they be diverted from that object, *i.e.*, to experiment, to discover possible physical, physico-mental, or psychical actions.

Where during the curative processes interesting phenomena supervene—magnetic sense, thought-reading, clairvoyance, and what not—these may be watched, noted, but not encouraged, until the patients are cured of disease for which they were originally placed under treatment.

Sufficient for me that Mr. Hansen has the confidence of those who have either appointed him or have rallied around him. From all reports he is the most suitable man for the work.

There are legitimate and illegitimate suggestions. Under the first head come the cheerful assurances of the family physician; kind words and decided actions of those interested in our welfare, who take occasion to impress us with what we should do and say and should be. All of which are right and useful with "magnetisations." They are of the character used from the editorial chair, when you, sir, wish particularly to convey light to those who seek for spiritual, occult, and psychical knowledge, suggestions given in language of love, mercy, truth, and sincerity. Under the second are the subtleties of grosser materialism, temptations of curiosity and love of experiment, an almost Satanic advantage of the helplessness of the victim; to implant in his mind a wholly artificial and alien set of ideas, which the said victim acts upon unconsciously (as to the incentive), but, nevertheless, significantly enough in his waking condition. In this age when there are so many plausible excuses—given in scientific jargon—for doing evil that good may come, I am not at all surprised that so many are in favour of the latter class of suggestions, so necessary, they allege, in hysteria, epilepsy, and dipsomania. Are they necessary? Who of us would like to submit to such gross impositions and undermining of our individuality? Shall we stand by and see in the clinic of our hospitals these methods practised on our poor patients—introduced under the specious plea of therapeutic and psychical or hypnotic investigation? I hope not.

Diseases can be cured without *the sleep*. Even where sleep of itself is restorative and curative, "suggestion," on which our hypnotic friends lay so much weight, is not necessary. "Sugges-

tion" leads to experimenting, and experimenting to evil. Already hypnotising is forbidden in the French army, albeit medical men were the "suggestionists." As believers in soul, immortality, God, good, and human responsibility, we must set ourselves against the now fashionable craze of hypnotising and experimenting on and after at least the Parisian school of materialists.

I cannot say I am in love with Mr. Hayes' new word, "Hypnodylism." Already we have had too much confusion in the way of words and phrases; I prefer the old ones—such as "operator," "subject or patient," "magnetising," &c. Still, Mr. Hayes' contentions are of the utmost interest, and deserve attention. I am at one with him in advocating, as a potent agent in psycho-therapeutics, *magnetisations without sleep*, as opposed to hypnotic methods, of late so admired, and yet so unspiritual.

Greta Bank, Crosshill, Glasgow, N.B. JAMES COATES.

#### "What is to Be Said to This?"

SIR,—Accepting as correct the statements of your correspondent, "H.," whose letter appears in your last issue, it might prove interesting to others, besides the writer, if an explanation of the matter could be obtained from some recognised Theosophist, in accordance with the teaching of that body. The points involved are:—

An apparently tangible apparition, that (a) is visible to light; that (b) rings a bell and wears a cape; that (c) talks; that (d) is presumably intelligent and actuated by a strong filial affection, yet whose physical body was "dressed for burial."

Was this a "shell," "maya" (illusion), an "astral" form, or a veritable spiritual phenomenon?

36, Stanley-street, Fairfield, Liverpool. J. J. MORSE.

April 13th, 1890.

#### Spirit Music.

SIR,—In continuation of the subject raised by "Pencil's" letter, namely, that of hearing music from some invisible source, perhaps you will allow me to contribute a recent experience of my own? As a remedy for an attack of influenza a doctor gave me a prescription composed of sal volatile, chlorate of potash, nitre, and salicylic acid; soon after taking this potion a truly frightful headache overpowered me, like a nail run through my temples from side to side. After about twelve hours of this, my head seemed to be separated sensibly into two compartments, so that I could distinguish the experiences of the two hemispheres as differing from each other. The pain diminished continuously, but I heard different sounds on the two sides of my head, and both musical sounds. On the one side the waves of the sea were moaning, on the other I heard perfectly distinctly, both as to single sounds and as to unison, the music of many bagpipes, with the accompanying tread of many men. Both suggestions were certainly drawn from what I had lately seen or read. The music of the sea and of the bagpipes never mingled, but remained as distinct for about twelve hours as if I had had two heads and could hear with either. After that time the noise of the bagpipes changed—to my intense relief—to the music of church bells playing tunes I knew, and this in such a realistic way that I sought the assurances of those about me that the ringers were not practising at the church belfry.

The sea continued to moan an accompaniment to the bells, and any tune that I suggested mentally was immediately played by the bells. Presently, however, the church bells changed to the music of a piano accompanied by a violin. The effect now was very odd, for on the left side of my head I heard a harp being played, slowly and very agreeably, in music unknown to me, which I thought very beautiful, and listened to willingly; on the right side the piano and violin hammered out ordinary concert music, neither better nor worse than what may be heard any day. I ought to say that all this time I was not delirious, but in calm possession of my ordinary powers of observation. The doctor attributed the circumstances described, entirely to the action of the one drug, *viz.*, the salicylic acid. If this is so, it would be important to inquire in all such cases as "Pencil's" whether such a cause can be assigned for the concert of invisible music at which he felt himself to have assisted. I am, however, particularly anxious to add that twice before in my own individual experience I have heard invisible music; I was then in good health, I had taken no drugs. The music seemed to originate *not* in my own brain, but to commence in the air around me. My impression of it was of some harmony far more beautiful and triumphant than anything I could have extracted from my own imagination. It had to my consciousness no connection whatever with myself. I should have felt, "everyone must hear this," whereas this drug-store harmony contradicted most of these impressions. The moral of my experience is, I take it, that in this, as in all other departments, care is needed in assigning causes.

M. D.

## SOCIETY WORK.

MARYLEBONE LYCEUM, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, W.—We had the usual programme on Sunday, conducted by C. White, assisted by Messrs. Collings, Willie Towns, and Miss Smythe. Reading from *Spiritualism for the Young*. Recitations by Maud and Harry Towns, and Lizzie and Hetty Maron.—C. WHITE, Conductor.

ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BEAUMONT-STREET, MILE END.—On Sunday Mr. Vango occupied our platform with Psychometry. The descriptions given by this gentleman were remarkably good, being accurate in nearly every case. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Professor Chainey will lecture upon "Revelation Revealed." On the 22nd (Tuesday), at 8 p.m., Miss Marsh will give a séance at 45, Jubilee-street, Mile End-road, E.

GLASGOW.—On Sunday morning Mr. Robertson read from Mr. Cook's pamphlet, published some dozen years ago, on the relation of Spiritualism to Socialism. It was a first-rate subject, and produced a very animated discussion, most of the older members joining in it, and with marked unanimity endorsing Mr. Cook. In the evening Mrs. Harper read a paper on "The Parallels of Biblical with Modern Spiritualism." It was sufficiently exhaustive, and showed a perfect similarity of the phenomena among the ancient Hebrews with those of the present time.—R. H.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, CHEPSTOW HALL, 1, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday last Mr. J. Dale addressed us at the morning meeting, and in the evening Mrs. Stanley's inspirational discourse was a great treat to a good audience, which included many strangers. On Sunday next Mr. Darby, at 11.15 a.m., and at 6.30 p.m., Dr. Maurice Davies will deliver an address on "Theology, Theosophy, and Theurgy." On April 20th our platform will be occupied by a deputation from the London Spiritualist Federation. Our next social gathering will be held on Tuesday, April 29th, at 8 p.m.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

PECKHAM SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday last, at 11 a.m., Mr. J. Veitch spoke upon "Psychometry," explaining how to develop it, and giving experiments. At 7 p.m. Mr. G. Chainey gave an able lecture upon the story of Gideon, showing that, as it could not be historically true, it contained a spiritual revelation applicable to our modern life with its intellectualism. Sunday, April 20th, Mr. Goddard, at 11 a.m.; Mrs. Stanley at 7 p.m. On Thursday, April 24th, at 8 p.m., at the above hall, Mr. G. Chainey will explain his system of interpreting the sacred writings of the past, and we hope to have a large audience, as we did on Sunday last.—J. VEITCH, 19, Crescent, Southampton-street, Camberwell.

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, W.—After an excellent address on Sunday, by Mr. Towns on "Organisation," Mr. Davis was appointed chairman, and it was unanimously agreed to continue the association with Mr. C. White as hon. secretary, Mr. Hawkins as treasurer, Mr. Davis as president, and Messrs. Maynard, Lewis, and Claxton, and Miss Smythe and Miss Peddle as committee. Thirty members were enrolled. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to a donor of fifty new hymn books for the Association. Persons wishing to become members should apply to C. White, hon. secretary. Sunday, April 20th, Mr. Denver Summers; 27th, Mr. George Chainey, subject, "Gospel of Interpretation." Sunday mornings at eleven o'clock; doors closed at 11.30. Mr. Harry and Mr. Willie Towns, mediums.

KENSINGTON AND NOTTING HILL ASSOCIATION.—On Sunday morning last at the Zephyr Hall, 9, Bedford-gardens, Silver-street, Notting Hill Gate, an interesting discussion, opened by a short address from Mr. Towns, occupied the attention of a very fair attendance upon "Are we Creatures of Circumstance?" &c. In the afternoon a very good Lyceum session was held, and a number of visitors were present, giving much encouragement to the scholars. Several good recitations were given. In the evening we had an excellent lecture on "Phrenology" from Mr. McKenzie, who afterwards gave some readings which created a large amount of interest. We regret that on account of an unfortunate difference with the proprietor, on and after Sunday next the above hall will not be in use by us for further meetings; but we hope to be able to find suitable premises. The concert and dance of the 10th inst. were a grand success, there being an attendance of over one hundred persons, all of whom expressed appreciation of the proceedings. The artists evinced great talent, and called forth great applause.—PERCY SMYTH, Hon. Sec., 68, Cornwall-road, Bayswater, W.

KING'S CROSS SOCIETY, 253, PENTONVILLE-ROAD (ENTRANCE, KING'S CROSS-ROAD).—Mr. Rodger's opponent did not appear on Sunday morning, so we only heard one side of the expected debate—"Does the Bible support Spiritualism?" That side was well shown by copious quotations. There was some little discussion, Mr. Vogt propounding the idea that the "angels" of the Bible were not necessarily disembodied men, but probably daemons. In the evening we had an open platform. The secretary opened with a brief *résumé* of Mrs. Besant's recent lecture upon Spiritualism. The chairman, Mr. Battell, related an experience which he submitted could not be ex-

plained by sub-consciousness, the astral body, or any Theosophical theory. An interesting feature was a paper read by an investigator, "My First Séance." Mr. Rodger related some of his early experiences, and a ten minutes' conversation brought the evening to a close. Next Sunday, at 10.45 a.m., Mr. Emms, on "Mediums"; at 6.45 p.m., Mr. Drake. We desire to intimate to those of our members who have been with us over twelve months, that we shall be glad to receive a renewal of their subscriptions.—S. T. RODGER, Hon. Sec.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION.—On Friday evening in last week, under the auspices of the London Spiritualist Federation, Mrs. Annie Besant delivered a lecture upon "Spiritualism from a Theosophical Standpoint." Mr. A. M. Rodger, chairman of the Federation, presided. The Assembly Rooms, Beaumont-street, Mile End, the habitation of the local Spiritualist society, were well filled, and the lecturer received an attentive hearing. Mrs. Besant at once raised the question above legerdemain by admitting the genuineness of the phenomena. The crux was the "cause" of the phenomena. It was not necessary to predicate spirits whenever we do not understand the forces of nature. It was perhaps the simplest way of accounting for the movement of a needle towards the magnet to say that a spirit carried it, but the simplest explanation was not always the truest. When attempting to gauge the nature of the power concerned it was immaterial whether it shook a city or lifted a teaspoon, and so far, the trivial nature of the manifestations did not go for much, but when the work was attributed to spirits the kind of manifestation became of the highest importance. Especial emphasis was laid upon the complexity of the nature of man. The lecturer was afraid the Spiritualists did not understand the tricks which their own minds could play with them, and jumped to erroneous conclusions. All the communications of the séance-room were attributed to the action of the "sub-consciousness" in conveying the forgotten knowledge of the sitters to the astral bodies which were drawn into the current of the séance by the sensitive organism of the medium. All the Theosophical theories are more or less known to the readers of "LIGHT," and it will be sufficient to point out that the real issue lay between Mrs. Besant's declaration that in no case had information been received at a séance which was not within the knowledge (although forgotten) of the sitters, and the Spiritualists' avowals to the contrary. Questions were permitted, and as many were asked as time would permit. A discussion followed to which many of the Spiritualists present contributed. The lecture helped to clear the ground, and will doubtless stimulate inquiry, and so achieve the object of the Federation in convening the meeting. It was announced that Mr. J. Veitch will make a reply in the same hall on Wednesday, the 30th of this month.—S. T. R.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

T.M.—Declined with thanks.

R.S.—We have no space to devote to such questions, nor are they quite suitable to our columns.

T.S.—No, thank you. Neither politics nor theology seem quite fitting. People develop much friction over them.

J.W.B.—Delicate health seems to afford conditions suitable for mediumship. It may also be the result of a too severe drain on psychical power.

W.W.C.—Thank you. We have by no means forgotten you, and thank you for remembering us and sending the poetry, which we use gladly in due course.

P.R.—A letter waits for you at our office. Kindly send address again, as it has been lost. If you address W.H.A., 138, Castle Hill, Reading, you will hear of Spiritualists in that town.

J.V. informs us that Faraday was a Sandemanian and not a Muggletonian, as was stated in "LIGHT." We do not know the difference, but our argument is not affected by the distinction.

N. L.—The late Richard Proctor was a mere *farceur* in regard to Spiritualism. He knew nothing about it, as became evident when he dealt with it. Then his assumption of universal knowledge stood him very little in stead. His opinions are not worth discussion. Thank you, none the less.

J. T. C.—We have received from competent authority the following information:—"The Buddhist Propagation Society is an association of Japanese laity and priesthood, some of whom have studied abroad, and even taken degrees at our Universities, e.g., Bergin Nornfo. M.A., Oxford, late pupil in Sanskrit of Professor Max Müller, the Right Rev. Akamazu, &c. It lives in the East and West, but its headquarters are at Kioto. It issues publications in the vernacular and English, and promotes the revival of pure Bud(d)hist Ethics, philosophy, and temperance. Its authorised representative in London was some years in Japan, chiefly resident in temples, whose lectures and contributions to literature have met the approval of the natives. It is recognised as the foremost and most active and enlightened movement in the Buddhist world, in Japan, China, Ceylon, &c. It does not represent any one sect, although some of the leaders are of the priesthood of the Jan-do Shir Shu, or the 'Protestants' of Buddhism. Further particulars may be obtained (please enclose stamped addressed envelope for reply)."