

# Light:

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

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

"LIGHT, MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

No. 612.—VOL. XII. [Registered as a Newspaper.] SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1892. [Registered as a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

## CONTENTS.

|   |     |   |        |
|---|-----|---|--------|
| The Dialectical Society .....                   | 469 | Haunted House at Birtley .....              | 473    |
| Farewell to Mr. George Spriggs .....            | 470 | The Divining Rod .....                      | 474    |
| Col. Elliott and the Theosophical Society ..... | 476 | In Memoriam—W. Stainton Moses .....         | 475    |
| Tragedies and Comedies of Superstition .....    | 471 | Miraculous Spectacle in a Church Dome ..... | 476    |
| Death—And After .....                           | 471 | Independent Slate-Writing .....             | 477    |
| The Favourite Hypothesis .....                  | 472 | Witchcraft and the Occult .....             | 478    |
| The Astral Body .....                           | 472 | Letters to the Editor .....                 | 479-80 |
|   |     | Society Work .....                          | 480    |

## THE DIALECTICAL SOCIETY.

### I.

We are so accustomed now to hear of phenomena, about which little or no doubt is expressed, that it is interesting to recall what happened twenty-one years ago, when phenomena were either discredited or laughed at; and in this connection some account of the Dialectical Society's proceedings should be interesting. The Report on Spiritualism of the Committee of the London Dialectical Society was published by Longmans in 1871.

On the first page we find this announcement:—

The report and evidence, now made public, were presented to the Council of the London Dialectical Society on the 20th day of July last, and were accepted in accordance with the following resolutions passed by the Council on that occasion:—

- (1) That the report be received and entered upon the minutes.
- (2) That the thanks of the Council be given to the Committee for the indefatigable way in which they have discharged their duties.
- (3) That the request of the Committee that the report be printed under the authority of the society, be not acceded to.

In consequence of the above decision, the Committee unanimously determined to publish the report on their own responsibility, and it is now accordingly submitted to the public.

Among the names of the Committee are the following:—

Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, Rev. C. Maurice Davies, D.D.; Dr. James Edmunds, Mr. Alfred Kisch, M.R.C.S.; Dr. C. Russell Roberts, Serjeant Cox, and Mr. Alfred R. Wallace.

Some extracts from the report are given:—

Your Committee invited the attendance and requested the co-operation and advice of scientific men who had publicly expressed opinions, favourable or adverse, to the genuineness of the phenomena.

Your Committee also specially invited the attendance of persons who had publicly ascribed the phenomena to imposture or delusion.

Your Committee, however, while successful in procuring the evidence of believers in the phenomena and in their supernatural origin, almost wholly failed to obtain evidence from those who attributed them to fraud or delusion.

The Committee appointed six sub-committees to investigate the phenomena "by personal experiment and test," and this is what they reported, substantially corroborating each other:—

1. That sounds of a very varied character, apparently proceeding from articles of furniture, the floor and walls of the room—the vibrations of which sounds are often distinctly perceptible to the touch—occur, without being produced by muscular action or mechanical contrivance.
2. That movements of heavy bodies take place without mechanical contrivance of any kind or adequate exertion of muscular force by the persons present, and frequently without contact or connection with any person.

3. That these sounds and movements often occur at the times and in the manner asked for by persons present, and by means of a simple code of signals, answer questions and spell out coherent communications.

4. That the answers and communications thus obtained are, for the most part, of a commonplace character; but facts are sometimes correctly given which are only known to one of the persons present.

5. That the circumstances under which the phenomena occur are variable, the most prominent fact being, that the presence of certain persons seems necessary to their occurrence, and that of others generally adverse; but this difference does not appear to depend upon any belief or disbelief concerning the phenomena.

6. That, nevertheless, the occurrence of the phenomena is not insured by the presence or absence of such persons respectively.

The Committee then go on to affirm that thirteen witnesses state that they have seen heavy bodies—in some instances men—rise slowly in the air and remain there for some time without visible or tangible support. That fourteen witnesses testify to having seen hands or figures, not appertaining to any human being, but life-like in appearance and mobility, which they have sometimes touched or even grasped, and which they are therefore convinced were not the result of imposture or delusion. And very much more of a kind with which we are familiar.

The report of the General Committee, as distinct from the Sub-committees, concludes in this way:—

In presenting their report, your Committee, taking into consideration the high character and great intelligence of many of the witnesses to the more extraordinary facts, the extent to which their testimony is supported by the reports of the Sub-committees, and the absence of any proof of imposture or delusion as regards a large portion of the phenomena, the large number of persons in every grade of society and over the whole civilised world who are more or less influenced by a belief in their supernatural origin, and to the fact that no philosophical explanation of them has yet been arrived at, deem it incumbent upon them to state their conviction that the subject is worthy of more serious attention and careful investigation than it has hitherto received.

Your Committee recommend that this report and the reports of the Sub-committees, together with the evidence and correspondence appended, be printed and published.

Then follow the reports of the various Sub-committees. In this article we have only room for the report of Sub-committee No. 1:—

This Sub-committee was appointed on February 16th, 1890, and held forty meetings for experiment and test. All of these meetings were held at the private residences of members of the Committee, purposely to preclude the possibility of pre-arranged mechanism or contrivance. The furniture of the room in which the experiments were conducted was on every occasion its accustomed furniture. The tables were in all cases heavy dining-tables, requiring a strong effort to move them. The smallest of them was 5ft. 9in. long by 4ft. wide, and the largest 9ft. 3in. long and 4½ft. wide and of proportionate weight. The rooms, tables, and furniture generally were repeatedly subjected to careful examination before, during, and after the experiments, to ascertain that no concealed machinery, instrument, or other contrivance existed by means of which the sounds or movements hereinafter mentioned could be caused. The experiments were conducted in the light of gas, except on the few occasions specially noted on the minutes.

Moreover, professional or paid mediums were not employed, the mediumship being that of members of the Sub-

committee, persons of good social position and of unimpeachable integrity. And under the most severe test conditions that they could devise, the Sub-committee established conclusively—

1. That under certain bodily or mental conditions of one or more of the persons present, a force is exhibited sufficient to set in motion heavy substances, without the employment of any muscular force, without contact or material connection of any kind between such substances, and the body of any person present.
2. That this force can cause sounds to proceed, distinctly audible to all present, from solid substances not in contact with, nor having any visible or material connection with, the body of any person present, and which sounds are proved to proceed from such substances by the vibrations which are distinctly felt when they are touched.
3. That this force is frequently directed by intelligence.

Speaking of the phenomena that led up to these conclusions, the Sub-committee said:—

They occurred so often, under so many and such various conditions, with such safeguards against error or deception, and with such invariable results, as to satisfy the members of your sub-committee by whom the experiments were tried, wholly sceptical as most of them were when they entered upon the investigation, that there is a force capable of moving heavy bodies, without material contact, and which force is in some unknown manner dependent upon the presence of human beings.

#### FAREWELL TO MR. GEORGE SPRIGGS.

There was a large gathering on Sunday evening last at St. Andrew's Hall, Newman-street, the occasion being a Harvest Festival, and "Farewell" to Mr. George Spriggs, of Melbourne. The hall was tastefully decorated with appropriate mottoes, &c., and a large and beautiful display of choice fruit, flowers and cereals, emblematic of harvest time. The proceedings were opened with singing by the members of the Camberwell Lyceum, conducted by Mr. Coleman, after which the festival service commenced. Mr. J. Burns gave an invocation which was listened to with deep interest, and Miss Ward then sang with great expression, "Cleansing Fires." Mr. J. Burns then introduced Mr. Spriggs, who gave a deeply interesting account of his first experiences as a medium, his connection with Mr. Rees Lewis, of Cardiff, and the remarkable seances held at Mr. Lewis's house. Mr. Spriggs's earnest and unvarnished description was heartily received and applauded. A harvest hymn having been sung there was a short interval, after which Mr. T. Everitt was unanimously requested to take the chair, when a beautifully illuminated address was presented to Mr. Spriggs. Speeches were made by the Chairman; Mr. John Lamont, who came up from Liverpool for the occasion; Mr. Samuel, late of Melbourne; Mrs. Miles, Mrs. G. Sadler, Mr. E. Adams, and Mr. G. Sadler, representing the Cardiff Psychological Society; and Mr. Spriggs made a suitable reply. The remainder of the evening was spent in pleasant and social converse, and the fruit, flowers, and vegetables were distributed among the visitors. Great praise and thanks are due to Mrs. Russell Davies, Misses Bewley and Attwood, Mrs. and Miss Everitt, and Mr. Alfred J. Sutton for the arrangements and decorations which were much admired by the visitors.

#### SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY.

The "Daily Chronicle" says:—

We have heard some silly talk lately in England about "ghost-photography." Some ten years ago, there was more serious discussion of it—by Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace, who believed he had photographs of "spirits." But Professor Elliot Coues, in the "Californian," disposes in one style of the argument that phantasms have an objective existence because they can be photographed. He has traced the work of a dozen or more of the takers of bogus spirit photographs, and gives a number of illustrations which may have served to deceive the very credulous, but which any clever amateur photographer could parallel in half an hour. The truth is, that "spirit-photography," if it existed, could be absolutely proved without the slightest difficulty. A new box of plates bought at the first shop accidentally visited, an exposure of a portrait of the chosen sitter in an ordinary room, development by a third party ignorant of the test—if there is a "spirit" on the negative the case is proved. But there never is.

Is the "Daily Chronicle" quite sure of this?

#### COLONEL OLCOTT AND THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Colonel H. S. Olcott has addressed the following letter to the "Theosophist" under date August 21st, 1892—

##### THE PRESIDENT'S RETIREMENT.

In January last, confined to my room by sickness, lame in both feet, unable to move about save on crutches, and yearning for rest after many years of incessant work, I carried out a purpose long entertained and sent the Vice-President my resignation of the Presidentship. I should have exercised my constitutional right and named him as my successor if I had not been told that the American and European sections would not consent to having the office filled during my lifetime, this being, they thought, the truest compliment that could be paid me. Immediately, I began building the cottage at Ootacamund on land bought, in 1888, as a retreat for H. P. B. and myself in our old age.

On February 11th, however, the familiar voice of my Guru chided me for attempting to retire before my time, asserted the unbroken relation between Himself, H. P. B. and myself, and bade me prepare to receive further and more specific orders by messenger, but without naming the time or place.

The Indian section had, as early as February last, unanimously agreed to recommend that, if I were really compelled to retire, the Presidential office should not be filled during my lifetime, but my duties performed by the Vice-President, acting as P.T.S. Nearly all the Indian branches and most influential members, as well as the branches and chief members in Australasia and Ceylon, and many in Europe and America wrote to express their hope that I might yet see my way to retaining an office in which I had given satisfaction.

Under date of April 20th, Mr. Judge cabled from New York that he was not then able to relinquish the secretaryship of the American section and wrote me, enclosing a transcript of a message he had also received for me from a Master that "it is not time, nor right, nor just, nor wise, nor the real wish of the \* \* \* that you should go out, either corporally or officially."

The Chicago Convention of the American section, held in the same month, unanimously adopted resolutions declaring their choice of Mr. Judge as my constitutional successor, but asking me not to retire.

The London Convention of the European Section, held in July, also unanimously declared its choice of Mr. Judge as my successor and adopted complimentary resolutions about myself, but abstained from passing upon the question of my remaining in office, under the misapprehension—how caused I know not—that I had definitively and finally refused to revoke my January letter of resignation. The fact being that the terms of my May note upon the subject (printed with the June "Theosophist") left the question open and dependent upon the contingencies of my health and the proof that my return to office would be for the best interest of the society.

A long rest in the mountains has restored my health and renewed my mental and physical vigour, and therefore, since further suspense would injure the society, I heroby give notice that I revoke my letter of resignation and resume the active duties and responsibilities of office; and I declare William Q. Judge, Vice-President, my constitutional successor, and eligible for duty as such upon his relinquishment of any other office in the society which he may hold at the time of my death.

H. S. OLCOTT, P.T.S.

WHETHER you can believe in Spiritualists or not, writes a "Gentlewoman" correspondent, is a matter for you alone to decide. Very few of us can admit an unalloyed faith. Yet sometimes these clever people manage to startle one somewhat. Within the last few weeks a very interesting seance was held at the house of a lady well known in London society. Lady de Grey was one of the party. The medium, who had never seen her before, and was unaware of her identity, approached her. "If you can tell me from whom I received this bracelet," declared the smiling countess, "I will almost promise to believe in you." The medium touched with his finger-tips a pretty bangle upon her arm. "I see," he said, "an Eastern bazaar, and people walking to and fro. Someone is buying the bracelet. Again I see you in a beautiful room, sitting on a couch by the side of the Princess of Wales. The Princess hesitates, then unclasping the bracelet from her own arm, fastens it on yours, saying, 'That is to be a souvenir.'" As it happened, the bracelet had been bought at a bazaar in Cairo, and was given to Lady de Grey by the Princess in the manner described.

## TRAGEDIES AND COMEDIES OF SUPERSTITION.

By C. HECKER.

FROM THE "LITERARY DIGEST."

That the Evil One seeks to tempt people through their fondness for fresh fruit, has been universally believed ever since the Fall of Man; but how careful one must be to guard against the so-called *Hutzeln*, or dried-fruit-devils, when indulging in dried fruit, may be gathered from the example of a boy who in this way gave entrance to no less than ten devils into his body, and this, too, through the instrumentality of a previously blameless woman, who, in pure good nature, gave the child a handful of dried fruit, but who was afterwards denounced by the Evil One himself as a witch. One need only picture to himself the horror with which people regarded and spoke of a person "ten times possessed," to form an idea of the condition of the poor child. All the laws of nature and of Christian morality appear to have been in a moment subverted; the boy beat his parents unmercifully, and assailed in wanton violence everything which good children hold sacred.

Fortunately, not far from the scene of this horrible occurrence, there was a Capuchin monastery in which was a valiant monk named Father Aurelian, who, with the approval of his spiritual superiors, courageously undertook to combat the demoniacal host, and in a four-times renewed charge with stole and censer, and the fragments of the Holy Cross, pressed the devils so hard that unwillingly, but without confession of their personal guilt, they retreated, sighing and groaning, into hell. The prudent exorcist, however, declined to release the boy's bands and led the assemblage in, chanting the *Te Deum* in celebration of his victory, until, in reply to his oft-repeated question, "Have you arrived there safely?" a wailing, melancholy voice, tinged with the subterranean character of its origin, responded, mockingly, "Thanks, yes." There was now no further question of being imposed upon by their devilish cunning; the boy's bands were loosed, and the *Te Deum* celebrated, but unfortunately without the characteristic accompaniment of the crackling of the brands with which the dispenser of the *Hutzeln*, or dried fruit, should have been burned. That this ceremony of roasting the witch was omitted was certainly not the fault of the pious Father Aurelian, whose original account in the Cologne "Gazette," not, as might be supposed, in the dark Middle Ages, but in the year of grace, 1891, threw a side light on the condition of culture at Wemding, Bavaria, the scene of the occurrence which afforded the world a startling commentary on our boasted nineteenth century civilisation.

Not long before, the criminal court of Saargemund was concerned in the investigation of an entirely opposite sample of superstition, in which, not the devil, but the Saviour of mankind was claimed to be in possession, but which, nevertheless, led to a charge of fraud. The accused was the daughter of simple peasant farmers, Katharine Filljung, born in the village of Bidingen. From childhood up she was sickly, and, according to her own account, was healed by a wonderful vision of the Holy Mother of God which she experienced in the Catholic Church of Saargemund. On the strength of this vision, and others which she claimed were subsequently accorded to her, she pretended to a mission, and in the course of six years succeeded in extracting from her believers, mostly women, a trifle of 150,000 marks (£7,500). The money was, however, applied to the establishment of a magnificent orphan asylum, and the courts acquitted her of fraudulent intent.

The two cases above cited are equally samples of hysteria, that still but imperfectly understood derangement of the nervous system. Hysteria was responsible for the violent outbreaks of the Wemding boy; and to the evidence of the Court physician as to the nature of her disease, the holy girl of Bidingen owed her acquittal, although the evidence certainly pointed to a measure of conscious deception on her part. But, as was argued on the trial, it is a peculiarity of this disease that along with extreme nervous tension there exists an irresistible desire to attract notice, which, whether due to external suggestion or to auto-suggestion, may very easily reach that stage at which the patient is no longer capable of distinguishing the true from the false, the memory of actual occurrences from the memory of fleeting fancies; and in which even the action of the nerves of sensation is sometimes sus-

pending, so that, strange as it may appear, the patient may be subjected to bodily injury without experiencing pain.

In this case of the holy maid of Bidingen, she claimed as before said, to be possessed of the Holy Saviour, for whose sake she every Friday went, or apparently passed, through the agonies He suffered at the Crucifixion, beginning at 9 o'clock, and gradually sinking into unconsciousness, to arouse herself at three o'clock with the words, "Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachthani," and "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

It would be impossible to find a case affording a more perfect example of so-called "stigmatisation," or one in which the blasphemous possibilities of the disease are exhibited in a more glaring light.

## DEATH—AND AFTER.

FROM "LUCIFER."

Who does not remember the story of the Christian missionary in Britain, sitting one evening in the vast hall of a Saxon king, surrounded by his thanes, having come thither to preach the Gospel of his Master; and as he spoke of life and death and immortality, a bird flew in through an unglazed window, circled the hall in its flight, and flew out once more into the darkness of the night? The Christian priest bade the king see in the flight of the bird within the hall the transitory life of man, and claimed for his faith that it showed the soul, in passing from the hall of life, winging its way, not into the darkness of night, but into the sunlit radiance of a more glorious world. Out of the darkness, through the open window of birth, the life of a man comes to the earth; it dwells for a while before our eyes; into the darkness, through the open window of death, it vanishes out of our sight. And man has questioned ever of religion, Whence comes it? Whither goes it? And the answers have varied with the faiths. To-day, many a hundred year since Paulinus talked with Edwin, there are more people in Christendom who question whether man has a spirit to come anywhence or to go anywhere, than, perhaps, in the world's history could ever before have been found at one time. And the very Christians who claim that death's terrors have been abolished have surrounded the bier and the tomb with more gloom and more dismal funeral pomp than have the votaries of any other creed. What can be more depressing than the darkness in which a house is kept shrouded while the dead body is awaiting sepulture? What more repellent than the sweeping robes of lustreless crape, and the purposed hideousness of the heavy cap in which the widow laments the "deliverance" of her husband "from the burden of the flesh"? What more revolting than the artificially long faces of the undertaker's men, the drooping "weepers," the carefully arranged white handkerchiefs, and until lately the pall-like funeral cloaks? During the last few years, a great and marked improvement has been made. The plumes, cloaks, and weepers, have well-nigh disappeared. The grotesquely ghastly hearse is almost a thing of the past, and the coffin goes forth heaped over with flowers instead of shrouded in the heavy black velvet pall. Men and women, though still wearing black, do not roll themselves up in shapeless garments like sable winding-sheets, as if trying to see how miserable they could make themselves by the imposition of artificial discomforts. Welcome common-sense has driven custom from its throne, and has refused any longer to add these gratuitous annoyances to natural human grief.

It remains a problem why Christianity should have, growing in its midst, the unique terror of death that has played so large a part in its social life, its literature, and its art. It is not simply the belief in hell that has surrounded the grave with horror, for other religions have had their hells and yet their followers have not been harassed by this shadowy fear. The Chinese, for instance, who take death as such a light and trivial thing, have a collection of hells quite unique in their varied unpleasantness. Maybe the difference is a question of race rather than of creed; that the vigorous life of the West shrinks from its antithesis, and that it unimaginative common-sense finds a bodiless condition too lacking in solidity of comfort; whereas the more dreamy mystical East, prone to meditation, and ever seeking to escape from the thralldom of the senses during earthly life, looks on the disembodied state as eminently desirable and as most conducive to unfettered thought.

### THE FAVOURITE HYPOTHESIS.

BY MRS. A. J. PENNY.

(Continued from p. 454.)

But even with people most solicitous about life after death, any kind of spiritual phenomenon was formerly laid to the charge of the devil. *Gichtel* mentions an instance of this very simply. "A man for ten years after his death followed his wife everywhere asking for her prayers; and all whose counsel she asked told her it was the devil; but the woman knew her husband."

The Spanish saint, Theresa, gives notable examples of this superstition in her charming autobiography: as typical of the natural attitude of religious minds even to this day, I quote her account of it. Such experiences as she had, raptures in prayer, levitation, and the opening of her interior senses to sights and sounds only accessible to them, were not in her day understood. "It once happened that many people met together in whom I placed great confidence. They consulted with one another about finding a remedy for my soul, for they loved me much and feared I might be deceived. I think there were five or six, all of them great servants of God. But my confessor told me they were all firmly convinced that my prayer came from the devil, and they advised me not to communicate so often." [P. 215.] "People were so certain that I was under the influence of the devil that they wished me to be exorcised." [P. 253.] "As my visions began to increase, one of those who used to hear my confessions when my ordinary confessor was not in the way told me that I was evidently deluded by the devil. He commanded me, since there was no better means, always to be crossing and blessing myself when I saw any vision, and to use some sign of scorn, because it was certainly the devil.

"This command was very painful to me, as I could not help believing that my prayer came from God. It was a terrible thing to me to use any act of scorn, neither could I desire that these things should be taken from me; still I did all that was commanded me." [P. 253.] "When he spoke in this manner to me great was my affliction, and many the tears I shed, through the fear that I had, for I certainly desired to serve and please God, and I could not persuade myself that this came from the devil." [P. 197.]

At last her own convictions overpowered those of her devout advisers, and she wrote, "As for believing that these favours come from the devil, it is not in my power to force myself into such an opinion." Though with her usual sagacity she observes, "However, the devil knows how to play many tricks, and therefore in this matter nothing is so certain but that something may still be feared from him."

To this side of Spiritualism we must now look. To ask, Is it right or wrong? is to state the problem in childish and misleading terms; it is to assume that *all* so-called Spiritualism is of a questionable nature; and this leads people otherwise large-minded hastily to decide that it is wrong, because such terrible mischief can come of what they understand by the word. If the vast field of contiguous spirit-life had been more carefully considered, such a question could as little be asked as "Is going to America or on the Continent wrong?" All turns upon what do you go for, and with what equipment for prosperity when there. If only to take your chance among unscrupulous strangers, to whom your ignorance of their ways and language will make you an easy prey, you might as well inquire, "Is folly wrong?" It is simply destructive: and that folly is trifling compared to the madness of attending promiscuous séances; no one denies that these offer immense opportunities to hostile powers; and to call them "undeveloped spirits" or "mischievous elementals" will not lessen the danger incurred. The malice which can energise those crude forces is that of a powerful enemy: you know, when you have been fleeced externally; you do not know when surrendered to the machinations of a masked tormentor, what has been done. When passions are inflamed and mental perspicacity dulled, when every restraining belief has been abandoned, and you feel adrift in a wild sea with no harbour to make for, you will have a foretaste of resulting spiritual bondage. Are you sure of strength to resist it then?

The wise heathen did not lightly encounter such risks; they trained initiates most laboriously before they allowed them to encounter the onset of alien spirits while passing on to higher and purer spheres; but the Englishman, who finds

it difficult to believe in danger, feels competent to hold his own against every intangible power when minded to gratify his curiosity; for we are as a race so "dominantly natural" that, whatever may be reported of that (spiritual) "nature," scarce anyone believes it, on account of a pre-conceived and confirmed opinion, that it is nothing because it is unseen." —A.C., 945.

### THE ASTRAL BODY.

The "English Mechanic" perseveres in its course of publishing articles connected with Occult matters, and admitting correspondence on Spiritualism and the like. Mrs. Besant is supplying a series of papers on Mesmerism and Hypnotism, and from one of these we get the following account of the "astral body." We have had many descriptions, but perhaps never has advantage been so completely taken of the word "polarity" as in this case. A "molecular change of polarity" may do anything:—

Taking these three stages of Akasha as present in the universe as a whole, we look for their equivalents in man. We find that man's body is distinctly related to the physical world, and that he has evolved five senses which respond to vibrations from without, and which put his consciousness, so to speak, into communication with outside things. But we notice that that consciousness may be busy among objects of consciousness not then present to the physical senses, or—under abnormal conditions—among ordinary objects able to impress the physical senses, but not then impressing them to any purpose. For instance, a somnambulist will walk about a room crowded with objects in complete darkness, or in light with his eyes shut, or in light with his eyes open, but fixed, glassy, and "unseeing," and he will find his way in and out with complete facility. A servant in this state has been known to lay a table in black darkness, fetching all the necessary articles and arranging them in perfect order. Such facts show us that in "sight" something more is concerned than the sense-apparatus, for that is present and is not acting; also, that its place may be effectively supplied by a sense which works with equal facility in "darkness" and "light," with the eyes shut or open. Now, we assert that each physical sense has its counterpart in the subtle astral matter, and that these serve as the bridge between mind-stuff and physical matter in our ordinary waking state, and serve as independent organs of sensation to the consciousness when the physical organs are in repose. In the waking state the molecules of physical and astral matter are arranged like the molecules of a conductor, but in the "sleeping" state the polarity is changed, and so "current" can pass. The bridge for the time is broken, and the physical apparatus becomes useless, receiving, indeed, the stimuli from outside, but unable to pass them inwards towards the consciousness.

I put the words darkness and light in inverted commas above, because what is darkness to the outer eye is light to the astral eye, that vibrates to the shorter, or ultra-violet, ethereal waves. The somnambulist sees perfectly well by this astral light, and we can learn a good deal about it from natural clairvoyants, from persons who become clairvoyant in artificially induced trance, and, occasionally, from blind persons. And it is important to notice that the testimony is similar wherever it comes from—a fact that suggests the idea that an objective reality is being reported on. The "astral body," then, of man is a vehicle of consciousness, composed of astral matter, or ether, and responding directly to ethereal vibrations. It permeates every part of the physical body, envelops every molecule, is the bridge between "matter" and "mind," and is capable, by a molecular change of polarity, of being so dissociated from the physical body as no longer to serve as a bridge.

O Beauty, old yet ever new!

Eternal Voice, and Inward Word,

The Logos of the Greek and Jew.

The old sphere-music which the Samian heard!

Truth which the sage and prophet saw,

Long sought without, but found within,

The Law of Love beyond all law.

The Life o'erflooding mortal death and sin!

Shine on us with the light which glowed

Upon the trance-bound shepherd's way,

Who saw the darkness overflowed

And drowned by tides of everlasting day.

—WHITTIER.

## THE HAUNTED HOUSE AT BIRTLEY.

FROM THE "NEWCASTLE DAILY LEADER."

Say not 'tis false, I tell thee some  
Are warn'd by a meteor light;  
Or a cold wind rushing calls them home,  
Or a voice on the winds by night.

Mrs. Hemans must surely have been under "the influence" when she wrote in the above strain, or, perhaps, had some such experience as was vouchsafed at the "haunted house" in Birtley recently through a clairvoyant. The villagers are still excited over the mysterious sounds heard in the miner's cottage, and their congregating outside must be as disturbing to the family in occupation as the ghost. The wailing sound was heard once about eleven o'clock, and again early in the afternoon; but the time of most disturbance was said to be between nine o'clock and midnight. "Twixt the gloamin' and the mirk" the miner and his wife kindly received a special party of investigation and discovery, including Mr. Robinson, the well-known Spiritualist; Mrs. Brown, a local clairvoyant and personating medium; her husband, and a representative of the "Leader." The head of the house has given us his notions about a natural explanation of the unearthly sound and was not averse, with his wife's concurrence, to a trial of the supernatural, of which he, however, had no conception, having seen nothing of the kind. Mrs. Brown is not a professional medium; she only made the visit at the request of Mr. Robinson; and she is the mother of a large family. Sitting in the kitchen with the light only from the glowing fire, for it was quickly failing by the window, the clairvoyant looked herself like a visitant from the other side, so thin and pale are her features, and this effect was not relieved as she became possessed of her familiar spirit—that of a negro girl, named Flossie. She shook and shivered, gave convulsive throbs, and seemed at first like one in an epileptic fit.

The clairvoyant, in low, and at times rather incoherent, tones—quite different from her own voice—began to tell what she knew the group wanted to know.

"Me see a woman sitting by the fire," she murmured.

"Is she happy?" queried the irrepressible Mr. Robinson.

"Me like to talk what I see," said the clairvoyant's familiar, as a rebuff to the questioner.

"She be very agitated—she put her elbows on her knees and rest her head on her hands. She does not know I am here."

The clairvoyant now swung herself backward and forward, and appeared to be in sympathetic anguish. She proceeded to describe this ghost that she saw sitting on a stool beside the fire, and said she seemed to be worrying herself more than she had any cause. She appeared to be from twenty-eight to thirty years of age, and her hair was plaited down the head.

"Yes, that's his first wife," exclaimed the young mistress of the house, and her husband acquiesced.

The clairvoyant was in an agony of perspiration as she made the revelation.

The husband admitted that his first wife had a habit of sitting on the stool pointed to and rocking herself in the way mentioned.

The clairvoyant proceeding declared that the ghost was not unhappy because he had got a second wife—that had nothing to do with it. She did not seem to realise yet that she had "crossed the bourne," and was still fretting and worrying at her own miserable self.

The present wife, with a child on her knee, here interposed with a question. Is it because of any ill-usage to her children? There is a report here that I ill-use them—if I was away I only wish someone would be as good to mine.

The speaker gave one the impression that she would be as good as her word, and the husband has all the appearance of being among the best of his class.

Flossie, the familiar, deprecated any personal grievance or the part of the ghost, but said she wanted her husband to forgive her. He did not know what for, but said he was quite willing, like a man.

It now appeared that the ghost had been drawn towards the medium by the more experienced Flossie, who wanted the deceased wife to control her, and in this transmigration the medium became hysterical and sobbed aloud.

The clairvoyant's familiar had evidently got alarmed for the medium, and stopped the control of the ghost. Proceeding, the medium said that the late wife had died with a

grudge, she was very miserable, and could not leave the place. She told that she had left two girls and a boy, which was assented to as correct by the more interested listeners, and proceeded to declare that the misery of the ghost was not on account of jealousy or with feelings of revenge. She was just beginning to realise that she had passed away.

A disquisition on the ethics of ghostology was here promised by Mr. Robinson, himself a Spiritualist of high rank, and coming to question Flossie as to the particular sounds heard by the believer and unbeliever alike, just as the sun shines on the just and the unjust, the familiar candidly confessed she could not say till she heard and saw it done by her sister's ghost on "a lower plane," no doubt. It was a little curious that the medium could tell the past habits of the deceased woman when in the flesh, admitted by the husband as correct, such as always following him to the door when he went out and bolting it, and yet must see the ghost making audible sounds for mortal ears. "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal," and the explanation may be among the eternal verities.

The medium now came out of her entranced state to rest, for she did appear in a condition of exhaustion. In conversation it appeared that the present wife has been married for about four years, and has two children. She knew the first wife, who had been dead about six months before she was married to the head of the haunted house. At this stage a County Councillor and two local preachers obtained entrance, the blind was drawn, and the gas lighted, but the weird sound came not. There was a good deal of talking outside, and the preachers and the Spiritualists got into disquisition and discussion. The clairvoyant became entranced again and again, rather a painful ordeal to look at, but the seer influence appeared to be disturbed. A circle was formed, and one of the spirits suggested opening with the hymn, "There is a land of pure delight," but Flossie, the African familiar, said that the disturbing effect of the crowd outside would more than counterbalance any good in the way of promoting the psychological influence, and so after more disquisition and stories on the supernatural the visitors left the cottage for the night. The medium in her waking condition has no doubt but the sounds heard are caused by the miserable ghost of the miner's first wife, and felt that had the disturbing influences not occurred Flossie would have brought about her control by the troubled spirit, and in the process of communication and contact with higher intelligences been relieved from her distress. The first wife died from consumption, and the husband, as he quietly and feelingly stated, sat up with her every night for six weeks.

### THE DIVINING ROD.

No little astonishment has been caused amongst the inhabitants of Fishbourne and Wootton, Isle of Wight, by the successful use of the divining-rod. On the shore near Wootton Creek, overlooking the Solent, is a yachting estate known as Woodside, the residence of the Rev. J. B. Morgan, which has hitherto been without a good supply of water. Two wells have been sunk at considerable expense, but without success. It was thereupon decided to call in the assistance of Mr. William Stone, a well-known operator with the divining-rod. On his arrival Mr. Stone, after cutting his rod in the neighbouring coppice, set to work, and, within ten minutes, indicated a spot which everyone seemed to consider the most unlikely on the estate. It was on the brow of the hill, and over a hundred feet above the house, whereas the wells had been previously sunk in low-lying land. Men were, however, quickly set to work, and at a depth of seven feet the water rushed into the well so fast that the men were obliged to get out, and the water came to the top of the well. This spring has been found an ample supply, and the quality is excellent. This is Mr. Stone's third visit to the island. On his first visit he discovered a spring at Arreton, which yields enough water to supply the wants of the village, and he subsequently found water on another estate near Ryde.—"Portsmouth Evening News."

Those who have enough individuality to think for themselves earnestly and deeply find in that very exercise a happiness that is all their own. They may share it with others, and it may be heightened by sympathy, but it cannot be taken away. It opens a refuge from many troubles and helps one to bear many burdens.

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

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post free to any address, is 10s. 10d per annum, forwarded to our office in advance. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and should invariably be crossed "B. D. Godfrey & Co." All orders for papers and for advertisements, and all remittances, should be addressed to "The Manager" and not to the Editor.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 1, Ave Maria Lane, London, and all Booksellers.

## Light :

EDITED BY "M. A., LOND."

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1st, 1892.

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

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

### THE DIVINING ROD.

A modern method in scientific teaching is to take some particular case, and starting from that as a basis to develop a complete theory of the subject in question. Of this kind are Professor Huxley's treatise on the crayfish, and so forth.

The question of the Divining Rod stands very much in the same position as regards the so-called divination in the discovery of metals, water, and so on, when that discovery is made by means not generally accepted by the scientific world. So the Divining Rod is taken as the heading of this article.

A letter in last week's "LIGHT" is only one piece of evidence among many that water is frequently found by means of a hazel rod held in the hands of certain sensitive people. And if this is true there is nothing more occult in the thing really than there is in the moving of a piece of steel or iron towards a magnet, or the directing of the needle towards the magnetic pole. That so far we do not know what is the nexus between the nervous system of the operator, the essential nature of the hazel twig, and the effect in certain ways of running water, in no way relegates the question to the supernatural. No one yet understands *why* the north pole of a magnetised needle points to the pole, and yet no one now considers the fact supernatural. In fact there is no supernatural; there may be a supernormal, but the so-called supernatural is only the not understood natural.

Science is quite right in refusing to accept any and every assertion which may be made as to facts which are not corroborated by unimpeachable evidence, but there does appear to be sufficient evidence that certain sensitive individuals can, under proper conditions, become conscious of the presence, at some distance from them, of water, metals, and the like.

But this is really, after all, what might be expected. It is matter of common observation that some persons are vastly more sensitive to the varying changes of light and shade than others. The sybarite who died "of a rose in aromatic pain," was not merely a fiction of the poet; some people are singularly sensitive to things which are not in the slightest degree perceived by other people. To how many have the words the "cold grey sea" any more meaning than that of a general epithet applied to the sea, but to certain others they have a world of significance. Take for instance the sunless sea of Whitby, and contrast it with the sea of the south coast. The two things are quite different in their effect on many minds, but are absolutely the same to the undeveloped.

This sensitiveness becomes much stronger in some persons. Some can see a difference in the sunlight according to the way the wind is blowing. The sunlight of the east wind is a different thing to these people from the sunlight of the north west. And there is, apparently, no limit to the ever widening field of sensitiveness. What is there more reasonable than to suppose that with certain curiously organised individuals the contact of a hazel twig may start an unaccustomed, but well understood, set of nerve vibrations when in the near presence of water? The thing is quite credible on the face of it.

But the divining rod is only the exponent, so to speak, of a large set of phenomena, the study of which, perhaps may eventually lead to a better understanding of the present obscure subject of psychometry. The words "electricity" and "magnetism" have been so abused that one hesitates to use them, and the word "influence," which was used very frequently in the earlier days of the study of electricity, may fairly be substituted. It does not, then, seem an impossible thing that an influence analogous to that produced by the lines of force round a current of electricity may be present round about the hazel rod in the presence of water; that indeed the lines of force round about the water current may go through the hazel twig when that hazel twig is properly arranged in the hands of the sensitive operator. In like manner it is not impossible that an influence in the nature of a charge may be left about the lock of hair, letter, or glove of a person, which would convey a peculiar and distinctive sensation to another kind of sensitive when that sensitive touches the "magnetised" property of the person with whom he feels himself *en rapport*.

We are only on the threshold of the meaning of things, and there is no reason to suppose that we are at all near the finality of our knowledge even as to the subtler phenomena of the class called physical; much more, then, are we not near the end of our knowledge as to matters called psychical. We are on the common borderland of both, and because that is so we are forced to accept as true, things which, looked at from the purely physical or purely psychical standpoint, seem eminently ridiculous. The "dowser" and his congeners are coming to the front after all.

### LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A Conversazione of the Members and Friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held in the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall, on the evening of Wednesday, October 26th. Further particulars will be given in future issues of "LIGHT."

### CHRISTO-THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

The Ninth Session of this Society will commence on Thursday, October 6th, when a paper will be read by Rev. G. W. Allen, on "The Christ that is to be," commencing at 8 p.m. Meetings will be held every Thursday up to December 15th. On the first Thursday in the month they commence at eight o'clock: on all other Thursdays at four o'clock. All meetings of the Society are held at 33, Bloomsbury Square, W.C., and are freely open to all who are interested in the discussion of truth from the widest Christian point of view. The following is a list of lecturers and subjects:—

- October 13th.—Mr. Rowland Estcourt. (Subject not fixed.)
- .. 20th.—Mr. J. W. Farquhar, "Planetary Life."
- .. 27th.—Mr. Charles E. Benham, "The Sympalmograph and its Teaching." (Illustrated.)
- November 3rd.\*—Mrs. Boole, "The Relation between Intuition and Intellect."
- .. 10th.—Rev. C. R. Shaw Stewart, "Spiritual Emancipation."
- .. 17th.—Rev. R. W. Corbet, "Love, the Spring of real Morality and Religion."
- .. 24th.—Mr. C. C. Massey, "Silence."
- December 1st.\*—Miss Julia Wedgwood, "The Song of Solomon."
- .. 8th.—Rev. F. Mann, "The Ideal and the Practical."
- .. 15th.—Mr. S. Stepiak, "The Free Russia Movement."

\* Commencing at 8 o'clock; on all other dates at 4 o'clock.

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

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post-free to any address, is 10s. 10d per annum, forwarded to our office in advance. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and should invariably be crossed "—— & Co." All orders for papers and for advertisements, and all remittances, should be addressed to "The Manager" and not to the Editor.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and all Booksellers.

Light :

EDITED BY "M. A.," LOND."

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1st, 1892.

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

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

THE DIVINING ROD.

A modern method in scientific teaching is to take some particular case, and starting from that as a basis to develop a complete theory of the subject in question. Of this kind are Professor Huxley's treatise on the crayfish, and so forth.

The question of the Divining Rod stands very much in the same position as regards the so-called divination in the discovery of metals, water, and so on, when that discovery is made by means not generally accepted by the scientific world. So the Divining Rod is taken as the heading of this article.

A letter in last week's "LIGHT" is only one piece of evidence among many that water is frequently found by means of a hazel rod held in the hands of certain sensitive people. And if this is true there is nothing more occult in the thing really than there is in the moving of a piece of steel or iron towards a magnet, or the directing of the needle towards the magnetic pole. That so far we do not know what is the nexus between the nervous system of the operator, the essential nature of the hazel twig, and the effect in certain ways of running water, in no way relegates the question to the supernatural. No one yet understands *why* the north pole of a magnetised needle points to the pole, and yet no one now considers the fact supernatural. In fact there is no supernatural; there may be a supernormal, but the so-called supernatural is only the not understood natural.

Science is quite right in refusing to accept any and every assertion which may be made as to facts which are not corroborated by unimpeachable evidence, but there does appear to be sufficient evidence that certain sensitive individuals can, under proper conditions, become conscious of the presence, at some distance from them, of water, metals, and the like.

But this is really, after all, what might be expected. It is matter of common observation that some persons are vastly more sensitive to the varying changes of light and shade than others. The sybarite who died "of a rose in aromatic pain," was not merely a fiction of the poet; some people are singularly sensitive to things which are not in the slightest degree perceived by other people. To how many have the words the "cold grey sea" any more meaning than that of a general epithet applied to the sea, but to certain others they have a world of significance. Take for instance the sunless sea of Whitby, and contrast it with the sea of the south coast. The two things are quite different in their effect on many minds, but are absolutely the same to the undeveloped.

This sensitiveness becomes much stronger in some persons. Some can see a difference in the sunlight according to the way the wind is blowing. The sunlight of the east wind is a different thing to these people from the sunlight of the north-west. And there is, apparently, no limit to the ever widening field of sensitiveness. What is there more reasonable than to suppose that with certain curiously organised individuals the contact of a hazel twig may start an unaccustomed, but well-understood, set of nerve vibrations when in the near presence of water. The thing is quite credible on the face of it.

But the divining-rod is only the exponent, so to speak, of a large set of phenomena, the study of which, perhaps, may eventually lead to a better understanding of the present obscure subject of psychometry. The words "electricity" and "magnetism" have been so abused that one hesitates to use them, and the word "influence," which was used very frequently in the earlier days of the study of electricity, may fairly be substituted. It does not, then, seem an impossible thing that an influence analogous to that produced by the lines of force round a current of electricity may be present round about the hazel rod in the presence of water; that indeed the lines of force round about the water current may go through the hazel twig when that hazel twig is properly arranged in the hands of the sensitive operator. In like manner it is not impossible that an influence in the nature of a charge may be left about the lock of hair, letter, or glove of a person, which would convey a peculiar and distinctive sensation to another kind of sensitive when that sensitive touches the "magnetised" property of the person with whom he feels himself *en rapport*.

We are only on the threshold of the meaning of things, and there is no reason to suppose that we are at all near the finality of our knowledge even as to the subtler phenomena of the class called physical; much more, then, are we not near the end of our knowledge as to matters called psychical. We are on the common borderland of both, and because that is so we are forced to accept as true, things which, looked at from the purely physical or purely psychical standpoint, seem eminently ridiculous. The "dowser" and his congeners are coming to the front after all.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A Conversazione of the Members and Friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held in the Banqueting Hall, St. James's Hall, on the evening of Wednesday, October 26th. Further particulars will be given in future issues of "LIGHT."

CHRISTO-THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

The Ninth Session of this Society will commence on Thursday, October 6th, when a paper will be read by Rev. G. W. Allen, on "The Christ that is to be," commencing at 8 p.m. Meetings will be held every Thursday up to December 15th. On the first Thursday in the month they commence at eight o'clock: on all other Thursdays at four o'clock. All meetings of the Society are held at 33, Bloomsbury Square, W.C., and are freely open to all who are interested in the discussion of truth from the widest Christian point of view. The following is a list of lecturers and subjects:—

- October 13th.—Mr. Rowland Estcourt. (Subject not fixed.)  
 ,, 20th.—Mr. J. W. Farquhar, "Planetary Life."  
 ,, 27th.—Mr. Charles E. Benham, "The Sympthalmograph and its Teaching. (Illustrated.)"  
 November 3rd.\*—Mrs. Boole, "The Relation between Intuition and Intellect."  
 ,, 10th.—Rev. C. R. Shaw Stewart, "Spiritual Enfranchisement."  
 ,, 17th.—Rev. R. W. Corbet, "Love, the Spring of real Morality and Religion."  
 ,, 24th.—Mr. C. C. Massey, "Silence."  
 December 1st.\*—Miss Julia Wedgwood, "The Song of Solomon."  
 ,, 8th.—Rev. F. Mann, "The Ideal and the Practical."  
 ,, 15th.—Mr. S. Stepniak, "The Free Russia Movement."

\* Commencing at 8 o'clock; on all other dates at 4 o'clock.

October 1, 1892.

## In Memoriam.

W. STAINTON MOSES.

Sir.—Agreeably to your wishes I send you a few reminiscences of our common friend, Stainton Moses.

We made the acquaintance of Stainton Moses—as he has recorded in his work "Spirit Identity," p. 61—at a dinner-party at Mrs. Cowper Tomplo's, March 28th, 1871. He impressed us by his frank ingenuous address, his modesty and gentleness, and his large experience and thoughtful appreciation of the questions in which we were interested. We were all of us at that time—as indeed we are still—occupying ourselves with seeking evidence of the identity of the spirits claiming to communicate with us, and a curious series of incidents, which had then recently occurred, united us, in an interesting manner, in our common quest. The details of them are given in the work before referred to; but I will venture to extract them here, for the purpose of confirming the account given, in so far as we were concerned:—

On February 10th, 1874, we (that is the circle at Dr. Spear's) were attracted by a new and peculiar triple tap on the table, and received a long and most circumstantial account of the death, age (even to the month), and full names (in two cases four, and in other three in number) of three little ones, children of one father, who had been torn from him at one fall swoop by the Angel of Death. None of us had ever heard the names, which were peculiar. They had passed away in a far distant country, India; and when the message was given there was no apparent point of connection with us.

The statements, however, were afterwards verified in a singular manner. On March 28th, 1874, I met, for the first time, Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Watts, at the house of Mr. Cowper Tomplo, M.P. Our conversation was concerned chiefly with evidence of the kind that I am now summarising. I recounted various cases, and among others, the case of these three children. Mrs. Watts was much struck with the recital, which corresponded in outline to a very distressing history which she had just heard. On the Monday previous Mr. and Mrs. Watts had dined with an old friend, Mrs. Leaf, and from her had heard a distressing story of bereavement which had befallen the relative of one of Mrs. Leaf's acquaintances. A gentleman residing in India had, within a brief space of time, lost his young wife and three children. Mrs. Leaf entered fully into the melancholy details, but did not mention either names or the place of the sad occurrence. In reciting the incident of three young children communicating with me, I gave the names and the place, as they had been furnished to me in the messages. Mrs. Watts undertook to ascertain from Mrs. Leaf the particulars of the case she had mentioned. She did so on the very next day, and the names were the same.

Through the kindness of Mrs. Watts I made the acquaintance of Mrs. Leaf, and was much impressed with the perfect correspondence of every detail given to me with the facts as they occurred.

It is not a little remarkable that, on the very day on which this communication was made, Mrs. Watts, who possesses a very beautiful gift of automatic drawing, which had for some time been in abeyance, was impelled to draw three cherub's heads, which, she was afterwards spiritually informed, were drawn in typical allusion to this sad event. Other details, symbolic of the country in which it occurred, and of the attraction of the mother's spirit to her three little ones, were added. The drawing forms a very striking illustration of the various methods employed by spirit to reach various types of mind. Mrs. Watts—at that time, be it noted, unknown to me—had always been instructed in the language of symbolism, by poetic simile, and by artistic representation. The Voice appealed rather to Spirit and to the inner consciousness than to the outer sense and to methods of exact demonstration. I, on the contrary, had not progressed so far. I was on a material plane, seeking for truth after my own fashion, and craving hard logical demonstration. So to me came hard facts, clearly given, and nothing more. To her came the symbolic indication, the artistic delineation, the poetry of the incident. The source, however, was one. It was Spirit manifesting Truth to us according to our several needs.

To this account I find, in my copy of the book, the following memorandum in my wife's writing: "This proved by date in diary" (meaning her own diary) "showing spirit drawings made upon the same day that the little spirits came to 'M.A. (Oxon.),' then unknown to us."

With these bonds of union our acquaintance became more and more intimate, and finally settled down into a friendship maintained, without intermission, for the rest of the lives of two of us and in tender memory by the survivor.

Stainton Moses was then in all the stir and strife of the movement, with all the energy of early middle life, and in the fulness of his mediumistic power.

I must here permit myself a moment's digression to observe that Spiritualism was not, when he joined it, or, in so far as I am aware, at any time becoming "a degrading superstition," as you, with perhaps not unpardonable exaggeration, have been pleased to describe it. There were no doubt in its ranks then, and may possibly be even now, foolish and indiscriminating persons, deficient in judgment and power of exercising sober imagination. Such there are in all associations of human beings upon any subject whatever, and it is to be feared will always be, until some nostrum shall have been discovered for confining the right of opinion to the wise.

But to resume. He was then a prominent figure in the Society which was interesting itself in London in these matters; and to our own less lively circle he was glad at times to resort for sympathy and mental repose. It interested us to hear what was going on in the world, and it interested him to tell us. But in the midst of it all, the question of spirit identity continued to occupy and occasionally to perplex us. The following occurrence we found interesting in this relation. One evening, sitting in the drawing-room, after dining with us, he informed us that he had seen standing behind my chair during dinner a female spirit, who, he imagined, might have been an old servant. She was wrapped in a green plaid shawl and she had a hare lip. We could not identify her, having known no such person, but it occurred to me afterwards to inquire of my servant, who had been waiting at table, if she had ever had a friend who wore a green plaid shawl. Of the hare lip I naturally said nothing. She replied immediately in the affirmative, saying that her godmother, who lived in the next cottage to that of her parents, always went about wrapped up in such a shawl, adding that this woman was much attached to her as a child. I inquired generally as to her appearance, and she replied: "She was not good looking. She had what we used to call a hare lip."

At this time, as I have said, Stainton Moses was in all the plenitude of his power as a medium. He would pass readily, when the conditions were harmonious, into the state of trance. I remember on one occasion his announcing to us the presence in our midst of a valued friend of us all, L. M.; who told us afterwards that she had been thinking much of us at that very time, knowing that we were all to be together on that evening.

On another occasion, when he was dining with us, I was surprised at seeing on the tablecloth, between his seat and mine, what appeared to be a very small worm, and it seemed to be in motion. On more particular examination, however, I found it to be a rosary of very small beads, just large enough, perhaps, to go round the middle finger of the hand. Our friend said that just before I spoke he had observed in the air a speck, as it were, of bright light, immediately over the spot where the little rosary lay, and which, from some similar experiences, he believed, had been the immediate medium of its transmission. From its being in motion when I saw it, I should judge that it had fallen from some height—certainly it had not been deposited on the table by either him or me, or anybody else in the room.

With a little incident, which may possess a passing interest to the readers of "LIGHT," I will conclude these casual notes regarding our friend. One evening, at the close of the year 1880, he called upon us with the intelligence that arrangements had been made for the establishment of a newspaper in the interests and for the representation of Spiritualism, that he had undertaken to write the inaugural address on "Our Principles and Purposes," that he had made some notes for it, but could not get on. A little sympathy and encouragement soon brought him round; and the first leading article in "LIGHT" was concocted and completed at the desk at which I am now writing.

I cannot help recalling how he once rushed up from the Isle of Wight to render me the same assistance on a somewhat analogous occasion.—Sincerely yours, A. A. WATTS.

DEAR SIR,—I presume I am indebted to your attentions for a cablegram, unsigned, giving the melancholy intelligence of Mr. Moses's decease. The shock is not less because not unexpected. His last letter to me, dated August 23rd, was singularly foreboding and very sad. He was one of the strongest and best friends I ever had, and I mourn for him.

The loss to Spiritualism in England is as great as that of Colonel Bundy to the same cause in America. The double blow falls very heavily, and not alone upon the personal friends of each of these noble men.

I have to day sent to the "Religio Philosophical Journal" such a notice of Mr. Moses as I could prepare, in my really little knowledge of his outside life, though I know the real man so intimately. It is a heartfelt tribute, however inadequate, either to his great efforts or to my own feelings. I hope it may reach Chicago in time for next week's "Journal." Your cablegram was delayed forty eight hours in reaching me by mail from Washington to this remote spot where I am summering.

Meanwhile, we must await full particulars till "Light" reaches us. Should there be anything for me that does not appear in "Light," kindly communicate privately. I hope you will make a memorial number, as we did for Bundy, and an sure the tributes to Mr. Moses's life and services and personal worth would not be less sincere, spontaneous, and universal. I trust we shall hear that "Light" goes on without interruption. I am at your service for anything I can do to promote the interests and contribute to the success of the paper. I was proud to call Mr. Moses "friend," and earnestly desire his good work to go on.

Cranberry, North Carolina.

ELIOT COLES.

September 8th, 1892.

The following, slightly modified, is from the "Bedfordshire Independent," of September 17th:

The remains of the late Mr. William Stainton Moses, who died on the 5th inst., at the residence of his mother in St. Peter's, Bedford, were interred at the Bedford Cemetery, on Friday, the 9th inst. The Rev. W. Hart Smith, rector of St. Peter's, conducted the funeral service, and there was a large attendance of sympathising friends, among whom were Colonel Cragg, Mr. F. Percival, Mr. A. A. Watts, Mrs. Street, Mrs. Mason, Mr. Ireland, Mr. W. G. Johnson, Mr. C. E. Cassal, Mr. H. Withall, the Rev. J. H. Edwards, Mrs. Edwards, Mr. Boulbee, Mr. E. D. Godfrey, and Mr. South. The undertaking arrangements were most satisfactorily carried out by Mr. DeLafield and his son, of 63, Harpurstreet. Beautiful floral tributes to the memory of the deceased were received from Mr. Charlton T. Speer, Mrs. C. T. Speer, Miss Speer, Mrs. Stanhope Speer, Miss Eves, Mr. F. Everard Colt, Mrs. Street, F. W. and S. S. Lovander, the Campbell Lodge of Freemasons, the London Spiritualist Alliance, "In affectionate remembrance" from his mother, and one "To the memory of a noble soul, a pure life, a lofty purpose, a self sacrificing, untiring devotion to a great work, from his attached friends, Charles and Cecilia Macrae."

The late Mr. Moses was well known in the literary world of London, and moved in a circle of men eminent for their genius, attainments, and authorship. Personally he had a charming presence, and excelled in the conversational art. By these gifts and his unvarying geniality he made many lasting friendships, and his death has created a deep sense of loss among his acquaintances. In literature he was known as "M.A. (Oxon.)," and he began contributing to Spiritualist periodicals as far back as 1875, but took over the entire Editorship of "Light" in 1887. His best known work was "Spirit Teachings," but he also gave to the world "The Higher Aspects of Spiritualism"; "Spirit Identity"; "Psychography, or Direct Spirit Writing," all of which, with the exception of the last, are practically out of print; and several pamphlets on kindred subjects have also proceeded from his pen.

The death of Mr. W. Stainton Moses, who was well known by his signature "M.A. (Oxon.)," removes one more of the remarkable men who have been converted to Spiritualism from Materialism. His most celebrated work, "Spirit Teachings," was claimed by him to be a production of other intelligences than his own, he being only the channel through which the "Teachings" came. He manifested a keen interest in the subject till the last, and, as the Editor of "Light," was anxious to warn his readers against imposture and self-delusion.—"Inquirer."

I see that Mr. Stainton Moses is dead; who was, I suppose, the leader of the more reasonable portion of the Spiritualists in England, as well as an esteemed master at University College School. He was once a parson and antagonistic to

Spiritualism; but becoming a convert, he also became an enthusiast in his new religion, writing much and soundly enough for the most part, over the signature "M.A. (Oxon.)." Mr. Moses was for some years the Editor of "Light," which paper is the Spiritualist's chiefest organ. "Vanity Fair."

The "Spiritualist's Weekly," published at Muldenburg, also pays the tribute of a black bordered eulogy to Mr. Stainton Moses and Colonel Bundy.

### MIRACULOUS SPIRITUALITY IN A CHURCH DOME.

FROM THE "NEW YORK HERALD."

ST. PAUL, MICH., September 14th, 1892. I visited Canton, Mich., to day, which has the last month become the religious Mecca of the North West. The place is being visited daily by hundreds of people from all parts of the North West, and travellers getting as far as St. Paul in many instances run down to the little place and now for themselves what truth there is in the story of a picture of the Holy Virgin, with a child in her arms, having been formed on one of the window panes in the Catholic church.

The picture is there, as everyone who has looked for it will admit, and according to the stories circulated by the good people of Canton, its presence cannot be accounted for by other than miraculous means. It is a very fair picture. I visited the place when services were being held in the church, which is in charge of Father D. Jones, a man about fifty years of age, and who has been in charge of the church ever since it was built, some ten years ago.

Immediately on approaching the building I beheld the picture. It appeared to be that of four persons, a man and a woman in the centre, quite distinct, a child on the left and another figure on the right.

About an hour after entering the church the picture vanished, and that of a plump, rosy checked little girl appeared. I saw the eyes grow dim, and about half an hour later it appeared to be the picture of a full grown woman, with a child at her right. It retained the latter form until I left, at six o'clock p.m.

I examined the window carefully on the inside, and could find nothing but a plain flat glass, which was perfectly clear. There is no possible chance for a shadow to be cast on the glass from the inside, as you may cover the whole window and the appearance on the outside will not be affected in the least.

I conversed with a great many persons during the day, and each one had his own views on the subject. On Tuesday a travelling man asked permission to wash the picture from the glass, feeling sure that he could do so. The permission was freely granted, but after scrubbing for nearly an hour the travelling man desisted. He is now a half convert to the belief that the picture is the result of a miracle.

In Canton itself and the vicinity this is the belief generally entertained. The people have seen a number of marvellous cures by simply touching or looking at the glass, and as no satisfactory explanation of the presence of the picture has yet been vouchsafed, notwithstanding the many offered, the belief is only natural.

A visit was paid to the church last week by one of Bishop Cotter's priests, who came at the request of the Bishop himself. The priest is a man of considerable scientific learning, and after carefully examining the glass said that to him it appeared as though the picture was the effect of molecular polarisation.

He told me that in all probability while the glass was being cast a party similar to that in the picture stood by, and in such a position that their image was reflected on the glass. The effect of the sun's rays during the ten years the glass has been in the dome of the Catholic church at Canton served to bring the picture out.

The above is the most scientific and satisfactory explanation yet offered, but even it will not stand water when it is remembered that the picture is not always the same, but that at some times it is that of a party of four and again at other times shows only two persons. The really miraculous cures that have apparently been brought about by it, also, cannot be thrown aside too lightly. The story of the appearance as related to me is about as follows:

On Saturday afternoon, July 30th, 1892, mass was held in the church as usual, being concluded about four o'clock. After it was over the priest, Father Jones, left the church

and went to his residence. About half an hour of instruction was then given to the younger children, when they went to their homes, with the exception of two small girls, one of whom was Lorinia Laum, the daughter of J. G. Laum, the saloon-keeper of the place. They stayed in the church a little longer than the remainder of the children, and it is now presumed must have suddenly caught a glimpse of the picture.

At any rate, a few minutes later Father Jones was surprised by their rushing into his room, sobbing affrightedly and stating that they had seen something very queer in the church. Father Jones endeavoured to get an explanation from them, but at last decided to visit the church and find out for himself what was the matter.

The three therefore again entered the church and the picture was pointed out to the priest. The window on which it appeared is situated directly in the dome of the church and consists of a round glass, about two feet in circumference. It is of clear glass, about an eighth of an inch in thickness, and, in fact, of common everyday glass.

Father Jones says that the glass is the same one which was put in the church at the time of its construction, and that he knows no change has been made. Other members of the congregation agree with him, and say that the glass has become too familiar for them to be mistaken.

A report is being spread in Canton by those who affect no belief in the phenomenon that it is a scheme on the part of Father Jones and J. G. Laum, the saloon-keeper, to revive interest in the church. It is related that about a year ago a controversy arose which ended in a dissonance of the members of the church. Laum had been elevated to a high position by Father Jones, and some of the congregation, believing in temperance, objected. Their objection was not heeded, however, and several members left the church. Their example has been followed by others, and the church at present has not nearly the standing which it had two years ago.

It is reported that on this account Father Jones and Laum in some way brought about the appearance of the picture. In Canton but few credit this story, but it serves to show just how the matter is viewed.

#### THE REV. J. PAGE HOPPS.

Mr. Page Hopps has, as we know, accepted the office of minister of the Croydon Free Christian Church, and in his printed announcement of the fact, he says:—

I naturally desire to give, to those who are or who may be at all interested, some indication of the main lines of thought that will determine the tone and tendency of my public teaching.

This cannot be satisfactorily done in any dry statement of belief. Much depends upon spiritual tone and atmosphere; and a mere statement of belief can have neither the one nor the other.

I therefore offer to all free-minded and earnest-hearted religious inquirers a brotherly invitation to the Free Christian Church during the month of October, when I intend to give Six Discourses, as "The Message of the Church to the World." The subjects of discourse will include a study of the Signs of the times, a description of Rational Religion, an inquiry into the true nature and uses of Prayer, and a contrast between nineteenth century Baals and The Ideal God.

We wish Mr. Page Hopps all the encouragement and success such a movement deserves.

**LIFE A STRUGGLE.**—A man's life is always more or less of a struggle; he is a swimmer upon an adverse sea, and to live at all he must keep his limbs in motion. If he grows faint-hearted or weary and no longer strives, for a little while he floats, and then at last, morally or physically, he vanishes. We struggle for our livelihoods, and for all that makes life worth living in the material sense, and not the less are we called upon to struggle with an army of spiritual woes and fears, which now we vanquish and now are vanquished by. Every man of refinement, and many women, will be able to recall periods in his or her existence when life has seemed not only valueless but hateful, when our small successes, such as they are, dwindled away and vanished in the gulf of our many failures, when our hopes and aspirations faded like a little sunset cloud, and were surrounded by black and lonely mental night, from which even the star of faith had passed.—RIDER HAGGARD.

#### INDEPENDENT SLATE-WRITING.

Under the above heading the following appears in "Aleyone," a Spiritualist newspaper published in Springfield, Mass. :—

On August 4th, while at Onset, Mass., I sat with H. Newton Stansbury as a slate medium for a spiritual communication. On entering his place by previous appointment, at which I was of course requested to leave my name, there was placed before me a roll of thin paper which unrolled upon an incline through a groove and under a plate, having an oblong opening. Through this opening I was directed to write upon the alleged sensitised paper the names of all departed friends from whom I wished communications. The writing completed, and the piece of paper upon which it was written torn off, the machine was at once taken by the attendant to another room.

The paper upon which I had written was folded and placed in an envelope, which was carefully sealed, and I was directed by the attendant to hand this to the medium, which I did. The medium, Stansbury, placed it in a box which was locked and directly under my eye, placed upon a table in front of me, opposite which the medium sat. In front of him, and upon either side, on the table, were a profusion of new slates all alike, which he proceeded at once with a great show of effort to magnetise, calling myself and a lady assistant to aid him. This occupied some twenty minutes. When the slates had been sufficiently charged with the necessary supposititious "magnetism" they were put together in pairs and a rubber band passed around each pair. As soon as a sufficient number of pairs were thus obtained a signal, apparently of a visitor, called the lady from the room. Immediately upon her return the medium arose from the opposite side of the table, came around past the returning lady to my right, and while standing, rested the end of a pair of slates upon my right shoulder, he holding the other end; the writing apparently commenced. In a very short time two sets of slates were used, and when separated two messages appeared upon an inner surface. In connection with these messages all the names that had been written upon the sheet of paper were used, some of the names being signed and others referred to as being present, &c. As a matter of fact some of these names were wholly fictitious and meant nothing; surnames and Christian names were mixed in others so as to form an utter absurdity. In writing them, in the first place, I had some curiosity to know if taking such liberties of my own motion would confuse and mislead the spirits as to what had been their earthly appellations, at least those of them who had any existence outside of my imagination. The messages were all commonplace, full of platitude, rather badly spelt, and as a professional examiner of handwriting of many years' experience, I can say beyond peradventure that all the spirits interviewed employed the same amanuensis. The plan through which this fraud was perpetrated was in my judgment as follows:—

The visitor is invited to write upon a slip of paper so arranged as to leave an exact duplicate of what is written on another sheet underneath. This is passed with the machine to an attendant in another room, who immediately commences writing the messages which are to be communicated. The apparent performance of magnetising the slates, &c., goes on while the messages are being written. When completed, the assistant is called from the room by a pre-arranged signal, and returns with the slates on which the messages have been prepared in accordance with the names as read from the duplicated sheet, and presented to the dupo as if actually written in his presence from information divined by the spirits from the paper which he had written, folded and sealed in an envelope which remains in a box locked under his eyes. It is, indeed, a shrewd and cunning fraud, well calculated to deceive the visitor, and that such fraud should be perpetrated in the very Mecca of Spiritualists, and pass through a season without questioning, is certainly surprising.

207, Broadway, N. Y.

D. T. AMES.

It is not merely the right, it is the duty, of everyone competent to the task to do what in him lies to strengthen the fitful and uncertain influence of a sound intellect upon the vast and intricate jumble of conflicting opinions in the world at large.—LESLIE STEPHEN.

## WITCHCRAFT AND THE OCCULT.

FROM THE "LITERARY DIGEST."

On December 4th, 1484, Pope Innocent VIII. issued a Bull in which he wrote: "We have to our great sorrow learned that in some places in Germany, there are people who, forgetting their own salvation, leave the Catholic faith and make compacts with the evil spirits and hurt man by witchery, spoil the fruits of the field, and commit many crimes." That this heretical disorder shall not spread its poison to the home of the innocent, the Pope, in virtue of his "apostolic office," appoints two judges for such cases, James Springer and Henry Krämer, that "they may punish, without regard to social position, anyone found guilty of such things." These heresy judges were hated. Even some of the bishops opposed their appointment, because they limited their jurisdiction. Emperor Maximilian recognised the Pope's command, and exhorted his Ministers to support the Inquisition. Shortly after was published the famous "Malleus Maleficarum" ("Witch hammer"), a sort of witch dogmatics. It is divided into three parts. The first treats of human witchcraft and compacts with the devil; the second of the effects of witchcraft and sorcery and the means of protection against them; the third, the most comprehensive, of conducting witchcraft and the punishments for all kinds of sorcerers. But this book is not the only source of information we have regarding witchcraft, for before its time witches had been burned in France. For three centuries Europe was plagued with witch trials; even India, Mexico, Peru, &c., suffered, and Protestants imitated the Catholics. One of Germany's famous learned men has said: "It is an endless drama of misery, despair, and sufferings without end on one side, and superstition, insanity, and barbarism on the other; something entirely without parallel in history." And so it is, for the human mind has never invented anything more atrocious and senseless than the legal procedure at witch trials; never has the Church more shamefully abused the arm of justice; never has war brought such absolute misery as the inquisitors in the examination and torture of their victims; never before or since have the learned Popes, Emperors, princes, cities, Catholics, and Protestants been lost in such superstitions as those which surrounded sorcery trials. Many hundred thousands of people were sacrificed to that Moloch.

In England special persons were appointed to hunt up witches; even in the middle of the seventeenth century they went from town to town, often invited by the magistrates, and made a profitable business of it; for who dared deny or who could disprove their assertions? Hundreds of unfortunate women were sent to the scaffold. In Scotland such a man allowed himself to be treated right royally, and to be paid twenty shillings for every victim. On the gallows he at last admitted that he had brought two hundred innocent women to the stake.

There have been witches at all times and among all people, viz., people who believed that they had supernatural powers and could do things out of the ordinary run of events and laws. No nation or time has sunk so low that it has not entertained a belief in witches, and no nation or time has risen so high, that it has emancipated itself from the belief. When Christianity became the ruling religion, it did not exterminate the belief, but transformed and regenerated it. The passages in Gen. vi. 1-4 were explained with reference to the belief in demons, and a doctrine was taught about intercourse between them and women, the offspring of which were witches, specially endowed by the devil with extraordinary powers. As the belief in miracles grew, and the times had run mad on the demonic, the Roman Church encouraged the belief. Sorcery was an illegitimate miracle, yet still a miracle. When one acted in the name of God and by the assistance of angels, he was said to perform a miracle and was counted a holy person and beatified after death. When one, by the means of demons or the devil's help, caused sickness and death, or destroyed the harvest in the fields, he was said to be a sorcerer. It was difficult to make the distinction; for instance, when one by means of demons effected cures. After all a demon is but an angel reversed, *demon est deus inversus*. The French considered the Maid of Orleans a special envoy from God; the English treated her as a witch, possessed of a devil.

At the end of the fifteenth century the Roman Catholic belief in demons and witches and their supernatural powers rose to its highest. Everybody believed that demons walked the earth in human form, and that compacts with the devil were possible and not scarce; they even knew how to enter upon such compacts; what powers they could attain by them; how things went on at the gatherings of witches and devils, &c. We will give a few illustrations, and we assure the reader that we are not romancing. Our narrative can be substantiated by hundreds of documents, many of which we have personally examined.

A compact with the devil is entered upon either privately or publicly, either verbally or by writing. A document from the seventeenth century runs thus: "I, Louis Gaudfridy, do hereby resign all spiritual and temporal values, God, the Holy Virgin, all saints, particularly my patron saint, my guardian angel, the holy John the Baptist, the Saints Peter, Paul, and Francis, and I give myself to Lucifer, now present, with body and soul, and all the graces I possess or ever possessed, excepting the graces attained through the holy sacrament." In return, the devil promises to make Louis Gaudfridy a famous priest and let him live thirty-four years without sickness and sorrow, and to cause all women, whom he might desire, to love him. Most of the documents are signed in blood. The devil attends to this business personally, ordinarily in the guise of a common citizen, but often dressed up as a *Junker*. His name differs according to the country he visits. He is called Alexander Klaus, Volland, Kasperle, Zucker, Hämmerlein, Tenerche, Knipperdolling, Maitre, Persil, Joly-Bois, Gabriel, &c. &c. To women he is very courteous and gives money, which, however, usually changes to pot-shares after he has attained his will.

The devil cult was arranged after the pattern of Church worship. An initiation required a baptism in blood, sulphur, and salt. The devil demanded of the candidates abjuration of God, Christ, Christianity, and eternal salvation, and an oath of absolute obedience. After that the candidate was named and a mark was stamped somewhere upon the body. The Spanish sorcerers say that he draws the outline of a turtle upon the eyeball of the left eye. He gives the candidate power to become invisible, to change himself into an animal. The mark on the left eyeball is the fellowship mark and known by all other sorcerers.

The witches' Sabbath is well known. The refrain to the devil's music is, in Germany:—

Harr harr, Teufel, Teufel, spring hie, spring da,  
Hüpf hie, hüpf da, spiel hie, spiel da.

In Scotland it is:—

Cummer gang ye before, Cummer gang ye,  
If ye will not gang before, Cummer let me.

If a witch falls in the dance, her partner says to her: "You get a red robe," viz., You will be burnt. A most interesting description of witches' balls and feasts was given by the nineteen witches who were burnt in 1610, in Logroño, in the kingdom of Navarre.

Christianity is God-worship. Witchcraft is Devil-worship. The Christian abjures the devil; the witch, God and the saints.

There have always been many more female witches than male, which is explained by woman's greater disposition to the occult.

THE worst of all superstitions is to hold your own for the most tolerable in the world.—LESSING.

MORE than twenty years ago a *spirit medium* was taught at a seance that an impression on the retina of an eye is fixed there until erased by another impression, and that the last impression received in life remained impressed in the dead eye, and that thereby a murderer might be detected, because his image would be the final one. This, of course, was but the maniacal dreaming of a spiritual medium, and the *ir-formed* pooh-poohed the whole affair; yet Kühne, by a series of experiments on rabbits, &c., has demonstrated the fact (*vide* Kühne's "Visual Purple," pp. 63, 74 *et infra*). Before men go out of their science and pledge themselves in support of an adverse proposition, it were well that they reflected on the lesson taught by Kühne's rabbits. Kühne's disclaimer (p. 68, "Visual Purple," of this connection does not make the medium's announcement the less curious, not to say the less important, to those who produce physical testimonies in support of spiritual experiences. If the spiritual hypothesis is to receive a root and branch condemnation, many a healthy faith would be involved in the ruin—"Scientific Materialism," by SIDNEY BILLING, p. 362.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

## "Outsider."

SIR,—Referring to "Outsider's" letter in last week's "LIGHT," I beg to say that I so fully realise the difficulties which intelligent and conscientious investigators have to surmount that, whilst I am unable to invite anyone to our own private circle, if "Outsider" will in next week's issue of "LIGHT" give some name and address by means of which a letter may safely reach him, I, "Insider," think I may give him some valuable information, as well as salutary warnings.

"INSIDER."

## The Spirit of a Mesmeric Sensitive Touching Another Person at a Distance.

SIR,—In reply to a recent letter of mine in "LIGHT,"—Mesmeric Telepathy, or What?—some good friend in Italy informs me the information desired will be found in Aksakow's "Animismus und Spiritismus," Vol. II., p. 576. Also in "Spirits Before Our Eyes," London, 1879, p. 215. These have reference to certain mesmeric experiments (conducted under and reported by Mr. Harrison, late Editor of "The Spiritualist Newspaper"), by Mr. and Mrs. Loomis, of America.

I am preparing a small work for the Press as a sequel to "How to Mesmerise," called "How to Thought-Read," and shall be glad if some friend, having the above publications, will favour me with the extracts.

Greta Bank, Crosshill, Glasgow.

JAS. COATES.

September 19th, 1892.

## "A Question."

SIR,—In the article with the above title I read: "But here comes in another side of the matter—how far frequent recalls may retard progress." "It follows that as the disembodied spirit develops, it must become more and more pure and unable to assimilate itself to the conditions of the séance, public or private."

An invitation to other "Outsiders" follows, to say what little they may have to say on this subject.

Some years ago I received a great number of answers to questions on various matters through a young daughter (impressional), purporting to come from her mother; she used to bend over a piece of paper holding a pencil (I don't know why), and write the answers—some fifteen hundred, of which a proportion were of interest.

I transcribe a few received on different occasions:—

Q I don't think you know anything that goes on here now, and far better you should not?

A I know anything that impresses Psyche much.

Q It seems, then, that intercourse with those left behind is considered prejudicial to the progress of spirits?

A No. It is not that so much, but the earth influence retards our progress.

Q About six months ago I asked if spirits told you that constantly coming to earth would act injuriously, and you replied, "No; they do not, because it does me good." Now, when I ask if intercourse is prejudicial, you say, "No; but the earth influence retards our progress."

A Yes. It was good for me then, because the influence did not affect me as it does now.

I appended the following notes a year or two afterwards.

Query: Does this bear upon the point, "By some occult law it would seem that a spirit returning takes on again the conditions under which it left this sphere of existence." (See "LIGHT," April 19th, 1884.)

She may have referred to the influence of our atmosphere upon her organism—not moral influence, as I thought. (See Crowell on "Memory," p. 160.)

With reference to permission being sometimes refused, I received the following:—

A Never think that; it is one of the privileges I am allowed.

A I may not. I would if I could. (But yet you may come to me.) Yes, that is allowed: I may not tell more.

A And I the same. You are not exacting. It is one of my pleasures. I must choose those I love best.

A I wish myself I could give you better proofs, but I am told I have been privileged in other ways.

A I have tried for permission often, but am told that I have been privileged already in coming to earth so often. But I will try again.

With reference to "Rising":—

A. I am not advanced enough yet.

Q. Was Payche correct in writing that you were going to a higher sphere?

A. Yes.

Q. Family ties, then, are broken; husbands and wives, parents and children are separated?

A. We do not call it "separated," for we soon meet again.

A. I shall wait for you: if we wish it, sometimes we can.

Q. What do you mean by "waiting"?

A. Because when I get a little higher, I may wait if I wish it.

Suffering as I am, sir, from the subliminal consciousness, multiplex personality, and other constantly developing diseases, I with great diffidence offer you this unscientific contribution to the "question" which you so justly say "demands anxious consideration." It certainly does not attempt to be didactic; simply human. It is just possible that it may be the means of eliciting confirmatory and more valuable information from other readers of "LIGHT."

Bristol.

DUBITO.

September 25th, 1892.

SIR,—If I may be allowed to occupy a little more of your space, I should like to say that I did not in my former letter refer to what seemed the main position of your article simply because I was not sure that I fully comprehended its significance. I was chiefly, and perhaps selfishly, concerned with what seemed to me a foreshadowed limitation of one's opportunities for gaining knowledge of a kind whose interest to humanity cannot be described as other than supreme. From the further remarks which you courteously make in the issue before me, I now see this main position intensified, and I confess it throws, in my view, an entirely new light on the question.

If spirits of the departed can be compelled to return to surroundings where they have no wish to be, or to conditions which they have no desire to assume, meanwhile suffering pain in consequence, then assuredly I would say, even if the coercion were the expression of the power of love, that your parallel between the practice of vivisection and the functioning of such a séance is undoubtedly as apt as a parallel could well be. Indeed, the two processes would then cease to be merely parallel, and become absolutely coincident—line with line—the vivisection lines being, perhaps, more deeply shaded.

I must, however, say that your words, "there seems fair reason to suppose that pain must often be incurred," have almost completely upset the results of my reading on this point in this branch of literature; for I cannot recall a single instance of such a revelation having been made as would afford even a slender foundation for a speculation of that kind. What I have gleaned from published sources has indeed yielded reasons for quite an opposite conclusion. The communicating spirits appear to have been always pleased when they had the chance of manifesting, and were always ready to use for such a purpose whatever influences of sufficient power were at their disposal. I am, of course, very far from being in a position to say that I have exhausted many—or, indeed, any—sources of information, but those of most recent dates which I have been able to consult were, if my memory serves me rightly, unanimous on this point. May I, therefore, ask if there has been recently, or of a past date, any known direct communication made by returning spirits to the effect that the effort to manifest causes them pain, or retards their progress; or, again, that they have, at any time, manifested under compulsion? I mean, have there been any messages on these points from sources which experienced Spiritualists consider likely to be trustworthy? The question, in view of what you have said, appears to be of such momentous import, that I trust I may be excused for asking it, especially as, in your article of this week, it is mooted without advocacy either way.

With regard to the uncertainty of identification, I should like to be allowed to say that I would not personally consider that point to be one of much preliminary importance. I fancy that almost everyone in my position would also so look at it. A humble, expectant seeker of truth who stands at the door and knocks, I should be only too glad to know—were it but by the sound of a footfall—that a spiritual intelligence was on the other side. Hitherto—unfortunately, I suppose—I have knocked in vain, but the failure has not been caused from the other side. Of that I am, as far as I

can be, certain, as I could only too surely trace it to the human elements of opposition, levity, carelessness, and indifference. I am, therefore, naturally anxious to know if there is any solid ground for even entertaining the prospect of viewing the practice of the séance with disfavour. That there should be proper regulation of the séance I can quite understand, but an abridgment of the field of missionary operations is the last thing I should have expected would advance the cause of Spiritualism, as it certainly would be the first thing to damp the ardour of those who, like me, are waiting and watching for their "turn"—keeping alive their interest in the meantime by studying your best writers—such men as the late Mr. Stainton Moses, for example, of whom it might well be said:—

With reverent mien, brave, unobtrusive speech,  
Into the region of God's silence moved  
One who, not fearful though beyond the reach  
Of human hands, sought in domains unproved  
Some token of the Father's love laid by—  
Perchance for such like daring souls to find—  
And, as a man whom Jesus, drawing nigh,  
Might so inspire with hopeful words and kind,  
That, stepping boldly from the brink of light,  
Would wander through its shadows till the night  
Close round him, leaving naught in the dim land  
Save the warm, parting pressure of Christ's hand.  
So went he with good hardihood right on,  
All but the memory of God's touch gone.

OUTSIDER.

#### Spiritualism the Regenerator.

SIR.—As one who is deeply in sympathy with many of the aims of Spiritualism, perhaps you will let me say a few words as to some of the causes which appear to me to have hindered the legitimate evolution of the movement in its public aspect. If Spiritualism is to be a vital force in social regeneration, a potent factor in the attainment of that supreme ideal to which we are tending—a real brotherhood of man, and a perfectly expanded spiritual nature—the whole *modus vivendi* of the propaganda must be remodelled. The movement must be vitalised. Spiritualism, we cannot too much insist, is essentially virile, yet on the principle that extremes meet it is peculiarly liable to be made the sheet-anchor for the morbid, the neurose, the maudlin man, and the drivelling woman. This, and its connection with decayed creeds, its internecine strife, its lack of culture, its persistence in accepting *au pied de la lettre* the raving of trance orators, and the crude halting phenomena of the mixed séance, and its indiscriminating proselytising among the weak-brained and the wonder-seeker, all these things have combined to make what might become a grand reformatory movement "caviare to the general," and a thing to be especially avoided by young men who are working for a better and brighter social régime.

Now the remedy for this state of things seems plain enough to me. The failure to-day of Spiritualism to fulfil its mission is entirely the result of confusion of aim, and wrong methods of work. As I understand it the object of the Neo-Spiritualist will be to shake himself free from every preconceived fetter of creed, prejudice, and wish, and to adopt as his *motif* the securing of the highest development of the spiritual faculties in all, side by side with the realisation of a scheme of wide social reform.

Instead of the largely obsolete society work, with its deadly monotonous iteration of the veriest a b c of Spiritualism, its wishy-washy ill-digested lectures, its isolation from the great emancipatory movement of the toilers going on all around, and its well-deserved hole-and-corner existence generally, I would have every Neo-Spiritualist strive to become a nucleus for the dissemination of a stream of healthy influence, resulting from a pure unselfish life, on the deep problems of a full national life, and a full spiritual life, and then, Sir, I venture to hope that Spiritualism will take its proper place, second to none, as the mightiest power for good the world has seen.

3, Dalgarno-gardens,  
North Kensington, W.

FRANK SYKES.

[Yes! but how is it to be done?—ED. "LIGHT."]

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Editor thanks several friends for their communications in aid of the Stainton Moses Memorial Number. These communications are held over for use in that number, which will be produced later on.

If our correspondents would kindly abstain from poetry we should, indeed, be grateful.

#### SOCIETY WORK.

[Correspondents who send us notices of the work of the Societies with which they are associated will oblige by writing as distinctly as possible, and by appending their signatures to their communications. Attention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions. No notice received later than the first post on Tuesday is sure of admission.]

PECKHAM SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WINCHESTER HALL, 22, HIGH-STREET.—An address given on Sunday by Mr. Butcher upon "Love, the Conqueror," was well received. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Rev. Dr. Rowland Young; subject, "Eternal Punishment, a Human Fiction." Mr. Young will also speak on the 9th October. Sunday mornings at 11, discussion; Thursdays, at 8.30 p.m., healing.—J. T. AUDY.

THE STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, WORKMAN HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—Spiritual services each Sunday at 7 p.m. Speaker for next Sunday, Mr. J. Veitch. Mr. Bradley will sing a solo previous to the address. The Committee tender their thanks to the speakers who gave their services during September; also to Mr. Bradley for various solos.—J. RAINBOW, Hon. Sec.

SPIRITUAL HALL, 86, HIGH-STREET, MARYLEBONE.—On Sunday last the Rev. Dr. Young lectured on "The Genesis of Righteousness," a discourse full of great, good, and lofty thoughts, urging to live a true and righteous life. Sunday next, at 11 a.m. and at 7 p.m., Mr. Horatio Hunt, subject, "The Revelations of Death." Monday, 3rd, at 7.45 p.m., Mr. H. Hunt's séance. Tickets, 1s., from the secretary. Saturday, 8th, at 7.45 p.m., Mr. Mason, Séance.—C.I.H.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—At our service on Sunday, Mrs. Ashton Bingham gave an interesting account of her experiences as a Christian Spiritualist. Mr. Mason presided at the organ. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Towns; Tuesday, at 8 p.m., séance. Mrs. Mason. On Saturday, October 8th, Mr. W. Walker has kindly consented to give a special séance at 8 p.m. on behalf of Mr. Norton, who has recently met with a serious accident. Tickets, 1s. each, may be obtained of our president. Mr. Mason, 14, Orchard-road, W.—J.H.B., Hon. Sec.

SOUTH LONDON SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, 311, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—Sunday, at 11.30 a.m. and 7 p.m., spirit circle; at 3 p.m., Lyceum; Wednesday, at 8.30 p.m., public séance. Our meetings and circles are being well attended and we are able to help many to realise the light and teachings of true Spiritualism, viz., the development and unfolding of the spiritual nature embodied in each individual. Sunday evening Mr. W. E. Long spoke on "The Handwriting on the Wall." The address was much appreciated and was followed by short speeches from the members assembled.—W. G. COOTE, Hon. Sec.

THE SPIRITUALISTS' INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.—Information and assistance given to inquirers into Spiritualism. Literature on the subject and list of members will be sent on receipt of stamped envelope by any of the following International Committee:—America, Mrs. M. Palmer, 3101, North Broad-street, Philadelphia; Australia, Mr. Webster, 3, Peckville-street, North Melbourne; Canada, Mr. Woodcock, "Waterniche," Brookville; France, P. G. Leymarie, 1, Rue Chabanaus, Paris; Holland, F. W. H. Van Straaten, Apeldoorn, Middellaaan, 682; India, Mr. Thomas Hatton, Ahmedabad; New Zealand, Mr. Graham, Huntley, Waikato; Sweden, B. Fortenson, Adé, Christiania; England, J. Allen, Hon. Sec., 14, Berkley-terrace, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or W. C. Robson, French Correspondent, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne. The Manor Park branch will hold the following meetings at 14, Berkley-terrace: the last Sunday in each month at 7.15 p.m., reception for inquirers. Friday, at 8.15 p.m., for Spiritualists only, The Study of Mediumship. And at 1, Winifred-road, the first Sunday in each month at 7.15 p.m., for reception of inquirers. Tuesday, at 8.15 p.m., inquirers' meeting.—J.A.

PECKHAM RYE.—Mr. R. J. Lees having received a request that he would take as his subject "The General Theological Teachings of Spiritualism," he spoke on that subject on Sunday last. His theme was most ably and exhaustively handled, and though not passing without objections, yet as a whole Mr. Lees must be congratulated on a very successful lecture. At one time during its delivery a serious disturbance seemed likely to interrupt the meeting. The Christian Evidence Society's usual placard-bearer, accompanied by another, and each with an offensive placard held aloft, took their stand among the audience. Mr. Lees again desired the police to interfere, but, although they took up a more prominent position amongst the audience, they declined to remove the nuisance. However, at the desire of Mr. Lees, no interference by his supporters took place. At the conclusion there seemed a disposition on the part of the opposition to take up an aggressive position, and this led to a serious riot; but Mr. Lees was able to avoid the crush of the disturbers. The question of the right of free speech has become very acute, and it will have to be solved in some way or other, for every Sunday there is danger of a very serious collision. The crowd must have numbered some two thousand people.—J. C.