

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—*Goethe.*

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

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

That was rather a keen saying of the witty or cynical Welshman who, lately, being asked as to the ethics of speculation, said: 'Well, you know, these things require a good deal of discretion. To the man who wishes to make the best of two worlds three things are necessary—an honourable place in the Church, good credit at his banker's, and a conscience that will stretch.' There was some mere jesting in it, but it has its serious side. We need not, however, go to Wales for the signs of its truth. London will do.

We are not quite sure who wrote the following touching little story. We can only hope it is true. It comes to us through a Scotch school journal:—

The crack batsman of a school cricket team was the only son of a gentleman who for many years had been blind. He had played and loved the game in his boyhood; and, when his son was old enough to take a part in it, he would be led to the field every time he played, and anxiously follow every stroke through the eyes of his companions. Upon returning home, the game was eagerly discussed, and the son advised in every detail. Last summer the father died suddenly. The next week, to the surprise of the school, Tom, who mourned bitterly for his father, asked to take his place in the team. He played with unusual care and brilliancy, and when the game was over, went to the umpire.

'How did I play?' he asked anxiously.

'Never better. You outdid yourself,' was the reply.

'Because,' the boy said, as he turned away, 'it was the first time my father ever saw me bat.'

Now that the typical Englishman is saying: 'It is a fine morning; let us go and shoot something;' and now that the typical Englishwoman, like some cockneyfied Indian squaw or brave, is bedecking herself with the plumage of birds, it may be useful to quote the fully-deserved attack of Ouida upon the wicked slaughter of our spiritual kinsfolk:—

Consider the marvellous life of a bird and the manner of its whole existence. Men must truly be brutes not to be moved by wonder and admiration before a creature so ingenious, so courageous, and so persecuted. Consider the powers of that little mind of which the inner light flashes from the round bright eye; the skill in building its home, in finding its food, in protecting its mate, in serving its offspring, in preserving its own existence, surrounded as it is on all sides by the most rapacious enemies.

There is no hospitality for the winged traveller; if he stoop to drink, if he pause to rest, if he plume his ruffled feathers on a tussock of grass, his enemy is down on him, the two-limbed human brute, who is more cruel than any bird or beast of prey. There is no sympathy with his courage, no aid to his weariness; even a drop of dew or a wayside seed is begrimed to him. He must perish, to be ground between the yellow teeth of peasants, or, perchance, lie dead in crates, or be skinned, that his pretty

plumage may be worn on the heads of female fools. Every rush-covered islet on a stream, or a lake, or a broad, has its murderous punt-shooting. Every stretch of waste land or belt of common wood has the caterer for the fashions of women, spreading his toils or setting his mirror traps for the songsters and the swallows. Every child is brought up to torment and hunt down the birds. No holiday seaside excursion is complete to the city cad and his 'flame' without wounding some winged creature and seeing it struggle helpless in the surf of its native shores. Sometimes, if shot on the shore and taken in rough hands, its wings are torn off to adorn the Sunday hat of some 'Arry's girl, and the bleeding, mutilated body is thrown back alive into the salt waves.

Science is not the criminal here. The offenders are the whole public, of nearly all nations, who for greed, for sport, for dress, or for mere brutal horseplay, destroy all over the world the loveliest and most marvellous of all the children of Nature.

It is, indeed, an odious crime—a veritable 'sin against the Holy Ghost.'

The true poets are always with us. The agnostics are, at best, only eloquent pilers up of words—mere craftsmen. And what is a true poet but a seer—one who abides with the abiding? The poet sees the meaning within the mercy: he takes the message with the gift; he feels the hand of purpose within the iron grip of seemingly heartless law. And, truly, he is the supreme witness beyond the ranges of what we boast as 'common-sense.' Whittier is right:—

So sometimes comes to soul and sense
The feeling which is evidence
That very near about us lies
The realm of spiritual mysteries;
The sphere of the supernal powers
Impinges on this world of ours.
The low and dark horizon lifts;
To light the scenic terror shifts;
The breath of a Diviner air
Bows down the answer of a prayer;
That all our sorrow, pain, and doubt,
A great compassion clasps about,
And law and goodness, love and force,
Are wedded fast beyond divorce.

The following is an extract from the memoirs of the Margravine of Anspach, published in 1826. Speaking of the powers of prophecy, she says:—

After I had been married to Lord Craven, and we were living together on terms of the greatest cordiality, I happened to meet with two young ladies who had determined to go to a celebrated woman who was famous for predicting future events, or, rather, for telling fortunes. Upon our being admitted, after saying a few words to my young friends, she addressed herself to me, by saying: 'I have not the pleasure of knowing who you are, but, from the very particular marks in your countenance, I must be allowed to draw your horoscope.' I smiled and consented, but, as she said she could not complete it directly, I was induced to give her my age and the day and hour of my birth, that she might write it down and send it to me in the course of a week. I returned home and thought little more about it. In about ten days I received a letter, which, on opening, I found to contain the Sibyl's prediction. She stated that I was to have a family of seven children; that I then was to separate from my husband, who would die before me; that I

should go abroad, and that I should marry again, some royal personage, and come into possession of great riches. I had at that time no idea of a separation, nor could I form the thought of a connection with any other person, much less one whose rank was so exalted as that of a Margrave.

It is a fact, recorded earlier in the memoirs, that Lady Craven had seven children; did separate from her husband; did go to live abroad; and did marry a royal personage.

A choice poem on 'Fate,' by Mrs. Spaulding, written in 1876, is occasionally asked for. We reproduce it, in the belief that many will be glad to see a correct version, and that its profound thought and delicate expression will give pure pleasure to all who can follow a subtle line of thought :—

Two shall be born the whole wide world apart,
And speak in different tongues, and have no thought
Each of the other's being, and no heed ;
And these o'er unknown seas to unknown lands
Shall cross, escaping wreck, defying death ;
And, all unconsciously, shape every act
And bend each wondering step to this one end ;
That, one day, out of darkness they shall meet,
And read life's meaning to each other's eyes.

And two shall walk some narrow way of life
So nearly side by side that, should one turn
Ever so little space to right or left,
They needs must stand acknowledged face to face,
And yet, with wistful eyes that never meet,
With groping hands that never clasp, and lips
Calling in vain to ears that never hear,
They seek each other all their days
And die unsatisfied : and this is Fate.

SPECIAL PROVIDENCES.

FROM 'THE WOMAN'S SIGNAL.'

One of the most eloquent and influential men in America, and president of one of the greatest railway corporations in the world, has recently been discoursing concerning his philosophy of life. In the course of his conversation he said many wise and many interesting things. Speaking of the happiness of life, he maintained that the secret of happiness is not in being wealthy, but in being able to command fun. 'Fun,' he says, 'consists first in not envying your neighbour; secondly, in not being struck on yourself; and, thirdly, in being willing to recognise your own weaknesses.' Speaking as a millionaire he said that immense wealth brought with it misery. 'The millionaire is in perpetual anxiety for fear he may lose his millions, and is perpetually jealous because he is not as rich as the man next door. He thinks that all the money in the world ought to belong to him.'

Mr. Depew said many interesting things concerning the influence of the other world upon his daily life. He said he had been brought up by a pious mother in the strictest of Calvinistic sects; and although it seemed absolutely inconsistent with predestination he firmly believed in special providences. He said he had passed through three crises in his life, in each of which, following exactly the lines which his mother had taught him, with no intellectual belief whatever, he humbly asked for a special providence. In one case his fortune was at stake, in the next his reputation and honour were involved.

Regardless of his conviction, he had not slept for a week; he went back to his mother's teaching, which was to appeal to the heavenly power for guidance. In each case a message came clearly. It was quite opposite to what he was intellectually convinced was right, but he followed the course indicated, against his own judgment, and against the advice of everybody; and in every case events proved that the guidance given in answer to his prayer was absolutely correct. Everything that makes him live happily, or live at all, was the result of the action which he took on these occasions. How many hard-headed men of business in the City of London would care to confess that they owed the whole of their success to their reliance upon the special providences in which they had been taught to believe at their mother's knee?

ARE SPIRIT-PHOTOGRAPHS NECESSARILY PHOTOGRAPHS OF SPIRITS?

FULL REPORT OF AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY MR. J. TRAILL TAYLOR, F.R.P.S., AT THE RECENT CONFERENCE OF SPIRITUALISTS, MAY 13TH, 1895.

The idea commonly entertained with respect to spirit photography is that a spirit form, although invisible to the human unaided eye, is yet capable of emitting actinic radiations which are amenable to the laws of refraction, and thus are conveyed by means of the camera lens on to the sensitive plate. Once admitting the phenomena of Spiritualism in the abstract, it is very easy to conceive of the possibility of this.

For the benefit of anyone present who may not know, let me here explain briefly by what means the modern practical photography is effected. A plate or surface is coated with a salt of silver, so prepared as to be in such a state of tottering equilibrium that its condition is changed by even the momentary impact of a faint ray of light transmitted by means of a lens or otherwise; a totally dark chamber or camera, suitably fitted, being employed when portraiture or landscape is the subject. After being impressed in the camera, a re-agent is applied by which the silver salt is reduced to a degree of opacity conforming to the greater or less degree of light which fell upon the sensitive surface during its exposure in the camera, and the image is thus said to be developed. Up to the application of the developer, nothing whatever is visible on the plate. The more tottering the equilibrium of the atoms (Sir J. Herschel's phrase), the greater is the sensitiveness of the plate. When the unacted-on salt of silver is removed, we then have a negative, from which positive prints, either on paper or other surfaces, are obtained.

I have said light is the agent in the production of a photograph. Please do not ask me to explain what light is, for I should break down in attempting to answer. There are some rays which, when reflected from an object on which they fall, are visible; so called, because they enable the normal eye to see such object; but there are other rays which if thus employed would fail to render an object visible, but would still cause photographic action. These are popularly termed invisible rays because their effects are not perceived by ordinary vision. If any thing or entity—call it a spirit if you like—emitted rays of this nature only, most assuredly it could be photographed by one possessing even rudimentary knowledge only of photography, although such figure could not be seen. It would be amenable to the laws of optics, by which the image will be projected by the lens on to the plate, and to those of chemistry, by which that image will subsequently be developed.

It must be abundantly evident, as I will proceed to show, that the term photograph as applied to the phenomena called spirit photography is inadequate. Photography is derived from the Greek, Photos, light, and strictly speaking should be applied only to those drawings or pictures which owe their existence to the influence of what we popularly term light, or of one or other of those primary ether colour waves of which it is composed. I have ascertained, to my own satisfaction at any rate, that light so called, so far as concerns the experiments I have made, has nothing to do with the production of a psychic picture, and that the lens and camera of the photographer are consequently useless encumbrances.

At this stage, I wish to direct attention to certain experiments made by savants about the time Daguerre fixed the camera image on a polished metal plate. These were mainly made at that period (1840-2) by Professor Moser, of Königsberg, but were endorsed and repeated by leading philosophers of that day, and brought prominently

before the French Academy of Sciences by men embracing names like those of Arago, Fizeau, Knorr, Breguet, Regnault, Edmond Becquerel, and others of like eminence. First let me quote from the pregnant remarks of Mons. Arago, the recorder or compiler of numerous incidents and experiments which, he says, are of the most curious character and perhaps derive their singularity from their very mysterious nature. He had no doubt that numerous amateurs would apply themselves to repeat them; and as in all these experiments a slight modification in the manner of operating may bring about a totally different result, he earnestly recommended experimentalists to keep an exact record of their observations, as the multiplication of facts could alone lead to the explanation of such remarkable phenomena. Recorded facts serve as much to the advancement of the sciences as theories, and the collection of a multiplicity of experiments which at first sight appear only curious, taken together, may, in reality, serve to establish theories and consequently to give the explanation of a great number of isolated facts.

It would be an almost endless task for me to enumerate all the facts recorded by Moser and his *confrères*, so I content myself with giving only a few out of the many. I may state that I have introduced this particular topic because in it I imagine I can see certain things analogous in some respects to psychic photography, or at any rate, what may help to throw some light, however dimly, upon that phenomenon of psychic photography which is much more remarkable even than the more physical ones of Moser, from which he deduced, *inter alia*, the following:—

Light acts upon all bodies, and upon all in the same manner; the various actions of light hitherto known are only particular illustrations of this general fact. The action of light exhibits itself in modifying bodies in such a manner that after having experienced this action, they condense various vapours otherwise than they would do without it. All bodies radiate light, even in complete darkness. The rays emanating from different bodies act as light does upon all substances and produce like effects as solar light. Two bodies constantly imprint their images one upon the other, even when they are placed in complete darkness, and not necessarily even in contact. However, in order that the image may be discernable, the distance of the bodies from each other must not be very great on account of the divergence of the rays. To render such an image visible any vapour may be used, as, for example, the vapour of water, mercury, iodine, chlorine, or bromine. There exists latent light as well as latent heat.

I now quote a few words from Mons. Breguet, the eminent Parisian chronometer maker of the period, who in a letter to Arago, confirming the experiments of Moser, says: ‘The remarkable facts which have been discovered by Moser, the communication of which was lately made to the Academy, remind me of something analogous which we have observed from time to time on the inside of gold watch cases, and even in the interior of machines of which all the pieces were made of brass. Everyone knows that most watches contain an inner case on which is engraved the name of the maker. This inner case is in juxtaposition with the first; there exists between them a space not exceeding one tenth of a millimetre at most. We have often seen on the inside of the outer case a reversed and very distinct image of the name engraved on the inner one. In some machines wherein pieces were also placed at very small distances apart, we have also seen the representation of figures of a more or less remarkable character. We had considered these facts as very curious, and had even made them known to some of our friends; but not having had time to investigate this strange phenomenon we forebore, hitherto, noticing it publicly. But now that these phenomena belong to the domain of science, it will not be thought out

of place that we should present these facts without accompanying them with any observations; for the more facts are multiplied the sooner we shall obtain an explanation of so remarkable a phenomenon.’

I might go on for hours describing outcomes of the laws of Moser, from which I have quoted, but time would not permit. We shall presently see how they may probably be made to apply to an explanation of the production of psychic images.

Now let me step back for a period of over thirty-five years, when the spirit photographs of William Mumler, of Boston, burst upon the public. Some which I saw in Edinburgh were by myself and others (all of us exceedingly wise in our own estimation!) put down as impostures which had *we* been present, *we* would at once have detected.

After hearing the testimony of eminent experts, in whose presence certain experiments had been conducted, men who I knew were at the head of the ranks of professional and experimental photography in America, and the personal acquaintance of some of whom I subsequently made, I felt impelled to forego the rash judgment I had given as to fraud in the production of these abnormal figures which appeared on the plates. And since then I have been privileged to dictate the conditions under which a certain series of strictly test séances for psychic photographs were some time since held, and in which there was not left a single loophole for fraud to enter, yet during which I myself, using my own camera and plates beyond the control of not only the medium but of the other spectators, obtained numerous psychic figures so fraudulent looking and so shockingly inartistic as to induce the use of unparliamentary language. Here, however, is the point; these pictures were true and genuine throughout, so far, at any rate, as concerned all those who were present; my tests were too good to admit a doubt of this. I, therefore, can afford to look with the greatest charitableness upon editors and photographers who, not having had opportunities of acquiring a sufficiency of knowledge, relegate these photographs to the limbo of fraud. I myself did so at one time, and can therefore scarcely blame them for doing likewise. Where blame rests is in their not scientifically investigating a subject which ought to be replete with interest to a photographer; and where misfortune steps in is in the difficulty of being able to secure access to certain conditions necessary to the desiderated investigation, and this altogether apart from belief or even desire of belief in Spiritualism, either as a science or a religion.

As known to many, I was afforded exceptional facilities for endeavouring to satisfy myself, first, as to the reality of human abnormal forms appearing on the photographic plate, by means other than those regularly obtained in accordance with the well recognised photographic laws, accepted by every student of the phenomena of photography; and, secondly, if such were the case, to do what the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour suggested when in a presidential address to the Society for Psychical Research he spoke of the desirability of efforts being made ‘to discover what laws this strange class of phenomena obeys.’

But here a few words upon tests as applied in the case of psychic photography, not forgetting that it implies the suspicion of imposture on the part of the medium. The person conducting the tests is often quite incapable of efficiently performing this rôle. He ought first of all to qualify himself by becoming acquainted with every conceivable method by which chicanery is possible, for, as I have said on a former occasion, there are many ways by which, assuming the genuineness of only one of the many thousands of psychic photographs hitherto produced, a spurious article may be made much better than any alleged real ones I have yet seen, or been a party to assist in taking

myself. A plate secretly impressed previous or subsequent to being placed in the camera fulfils the condition; so does one at the back of which is placed a phosphorescent tablet in the dark slide. Pressure on the surface, such as that by a Woodbury relief film, also causes a developable image. Since the beginning of the present month I have ascertained by direct experiment that the aura emanating from a magnet in total darkness acts upon a sensitive photographic plate in a manner similar to light, as also does a sheet of plain paper previously exposed to light.

In all cases in which tests were applied by me, such as those in which Mr. Duguid was the medium, I adopted the very simple and the most efficacious test of all, viz., employing my own camera and appliances, using only new plates purchased indiscriminately from various dealers, and keeping my own eye upon them from the time the package was cut open until after they were impressed in the camera, developed, and fixed. Anyone who does otherwise cannot be said to be qualified to conduct a test experiment. In addition, I employed a stereoscopic or binocular camera.

Now for the results; and let it be well understood that such deductions as I have made are drawn from my own experiments only, and do not in any way impugn those of others. I found that the presence of persons of an uncongenial or hostile temperament acted detrimentally, and that under these circumstances it was vain to hope for any pictorial manifestations; hence I would conclude that if the medium were surrounded by strangers among whom there was a preponderance of strongly antagonistic minds, no abnormal results would be obtained, however willing the medium might be; and were I called upon to dictate conditions I would suggest that not more than two or three besides the medium and the photographer were allowed to be present, and these persons well-known to the host, the photographer himself, who should be of an unbiased disposition, conducting all the photographic operations.

In my experiments we got several, nay, many abnormal figures. In many, the figures presented the appearance of photographic representations of persons mysteriously transferred to the negative plate, and sometimes the figure of the sitter would be entirely blocked out by a super-imposed psychic figure. Where I was able to examine the abnormal figures stereoscopically, I found that in contradistinction to the living sitters, these were all flat and wanting in depth or solidity. The medium was in most cases seated at a distance of from six to ten feet away from the camera, and had nothing whatever to do with the photographic operation, although once or twice I asked him to lay his open hand upon the camera a few minutes previous to operating. I desire it to be particularly understood that Mr. Duguid had nothing to do with the photographic part of the experiments and that the figures came without any physical act of his. I carried the camera slides containing the plates to and from the darkened developing room in my own pocket.

A faint glimmer of light may be found to illumine these mysteries by the following incident. Two gentlemen were posed at the entrance to a conservatory and were taken by the stereoscopic camera. On developing the negative a figure of a female, clear and distinct, was seen immediately behind. On comparing one half of the stereoscopic figure with the other I found a slight, very slight, difference between them. The psychic figure was a shade higher upon the plate, as measured from the sitters, than the other. Here, then, was a proof that the impressing of the psychic figure was not spontaneous with that of the sitters. And in the stereoscope the psychic figure was quite flat, while the others showed rotundity and depth. The deduction from this was clear, to me at any rate; the psychic figure was not formed by the lens at all and therefore was capable of being produced without a camera or

lens. This deduction was verified by Mr. Glendinning after I left. A plate was placed in a dark slide and after having been held between the hands of a medium for a little was opened in the dark room and the developer applied, when a figure appeared.

It was the realisation of this that enabled me at a certain séance recently held, at which many cameras were in requisition, to obtain abnormal figures on my plates when all others failed to do so. After withdrawing the slide from the camera, I wrapped it up in the velvet focussing cloth and requested the medium to hold it in his hand, giving him no clue as to my reason for doing so. A general conversation favoured the delay in proceeding to the developing room for about five or more minutes, during which the medium still held the wrapped-up slide. I then relieved him of it, and in the presence of others applied the developer, which brought to view figures in addition to that of the sitter.

My last deduction is based upon the experiment just narrated, and I make it in the form of a categorical reply to the question which forms the title of this paper—"Are Spirit Photographs necessarily the Photographs of Spirits?" I reply no, not at any rate as I understand spirits to be. How then, it may be asked, do you account for recognisable likenesses of deceased persons having been so often obtained? I reply, probably by mental emanations from the medium projected, not necessarily consciously, on to the sensitive surface of the plate. When Mrs. Abraham Lincoln got her husband's portrait through Mumler, she probably had conjured up his likeness in her mind and this had been projected either by her own or by Mumler's mediumship on the plate. This is mere surmise on my part. I introduced the findings of the French Scientific Academicians of fifty years ago, by way of aiding such of you as have time for investigation in forming some satisfactory theory that will meet a class of phenomena that, while puzzling in the extreme, is real.

Granted the possibility of fraud in some instances, although I am not aware of such, fraudulent sovereigns and bank notes have been not quite unknown, while to meet possible sarcastic sneers indulged in by the uninformed, let not be forgotten the storm of sarcasm with which the idea of lighting up towns by means of gas was met, even Sir Walter Scott joining in, if not leading, that which was indulged in when Edinburgh was proposed as a fitting city for the experiment; while everyone knows how well the scientific obstructives of the period proved the impossibility of crossing the Atlantic by steam, the first attempt being made in the presence of a deriding multitude.

The influence of the mind of the medium in the obtaining of psychographs might be deduced from the fact of pictures having been obtained of angels with wings, a still popular belief of some, as ridiculous in its conception as it is false in its anatomy, but still no less true in its photopictorial outcome. This does not in the slightest degree impair the genuineness and honesty of the medium, but it inspires me, a disbeliever in the wing notion, with the belief that spirit photographs are not necessarily photographs of spirits.

A concluding word: A medium may, on passing through a picture gallery, become impressed by some picture which, although forgotten soon after, may yet make a persistent appearance on his negative on subsequent occasions. My caution is, that if such be published as a spirit photograph care must be taken that no copyright of such picture be infringed. I have cases of this nature in my mind's eye, but time does not permit of this being enlarged upon, else could I have cited several instances.

WHIT-MONDAY.—Next Monday, being a Bank Holiday, the offices of "LIGHT" and the London Spiritualist Alliance will be closed.

'THE THEOSOPHIST' AND 'LUCIFER.'

We have refrained from commenting on the unhappy split in the Theosophical Society lest our remarks should be misunderstood, but now that the dispute between Mrs. Besant and Mr. Judge has culminated in the secession of Mr. Judge and a great part of the American section of the Society, silence is no longer necessary, and we turn with considerable interest to the two chief Theosophical magazines for light on the present Theosophical path.

'The Theosophist' pursues the even tenour of its way much as usual; perhaps the earthquake wave has not reached it. Colonel Olcott continues his highly-interesting 'Old Diary Leaves,' the value of which will be inestimable if ever future disciples endeavour to establish a miraculous origin for the Society. Dr. Henry Pratt concludes his 'Outlines of Astronomical Motion,' a very curious and elaborate series of articles, which combine physical and psychical *data* and speculation in an interesting and ingenious manner. It strikes us that these articles are more worthy of a future life in book form than some Theosophical literature we could name. It need hardly be said the 'The Theosophist' contains the usual contributions to our knowledge of Eastern religions. 'Zoroastrianism,' 'Thoughts on the Vedic Pranayama,' 'Some Aspects of the Sikh Religion,' and 'Metempsychosis,' are articles of that kind. 'Overshadowed,' the impossible occult story which Theosophical magazines always put in to sweeten their contents, is thrilling, and the doings of 'The Cunning Mahout' are amusing. The Mahout is a Hindu priest who has charge of the ancient Buddhist temple of Buddha Gaya, the Jerusalem of the Buddhists, now in Hindu hands; and he hid away the statue of Buddha, which the Buddhists, with the aid of the Theosophical Society, got set up there lately, substituting his own idols instead. It seems that the Viceroy visited the temple, and, much to the joy of Theosophists, made the Mahout produce the statue of Buddha, which he had hidden. One is tempted to ask whether Theosophists regard these heathen statues and idols as gods or as playthings.

In 'Lucifer,' Mrs. Besant discharges some big guns at Mr. Judge from the 'Watch Tower,' and also in an article entitled, 'East and West.' Mrs. Besant, too, cannot but notice Solovyoff's book, and she defends her Teacher against that writer, and against Mr. Einmette Coleman, in a feeling and dignified manner. She treats Solovyoff himself with a contempt which it is easy to understand, but says:—

The letter to Aksakoff is, from the world's standpoint, a far more compromising document if it be authentic; I say if, because one cannot help wondering if Mr. Solovyoff is trying to hoax the public as he tried to hoax H. P. B. When a man has shown himself to be utterly unscrupulous as to truth, one cannot take his unverified assertions for granted. If these statements as to her early life be true, all one can say is that she was marvellously changed by her occult training, for by the common consent of those who knew her intimately in her later life, she was curiously devoid of the sex-element. What her early life was I do not know, nor do I particularly care, since errors in youth do not prevent usefulness in maturity. She is dead, and cannot defend herself or explain what occurred; and these accusations are kept back until Death's touch had sealed her lips. I refuse to rake through the muck-heaps of dead French and Russian scandals, rotting in the dark these forty years or more, to search for a rag from a dress she once wore. I can only speak of her as I knew her, as I found her while I lived beside her—pure in life, unselfish, laborious, forgiving, generous, most wise, and withal most free from vanity. Thus I knew her, and thus I bear witness to her, and I learned from her truths that changed the world to me, and have illumined all my life.

Mr. Garrett has also thrown a little illumination, in the columns of the 'Westminster Gazette,' upon Mrs. Besant's mental life, seen objectively, but she makes no reply to that critic in the current 'Lucifer.' It would be interesting to know how much of her opposition to Spiritualism and Hypnotism is due to supposed 'orders' from her Master through the mediumship of Mr. Judge, which orders she now knows to be bogus. It always struck us as somewhat strange that anyone who loves the truth so much as does Mrs. Besant should have denounced things of which she really knew so little save on hearsay. It seems that she was obeying the 'orders' of Mr. W. Q. Judge!

Mr. Mead concludes his learned article on Plotinus. 'Beyond the borderland of philosophy,' Mr. Mead tells us, 'lie the realms of pure mysticism and the great unknown. And if anyone can lead us by a safe path to those supernal realms, avoiding the

many dangers of the way, and in a manner suited to Western needs, Plotinus is a guide that can be highly recommended.'

Mr. Glass continues his learned 'Christianity and its Teachings,' making it plain that during the first few centuries there was a 'secret doctrine' in the Church, which seems to have been purely mystical.

'Two Houses,' is a story of changed personality, by Mrs. Ivy Hooper, which is becoming thrilling.

The other articles in this number are 'The Doctrine of the Heart,' 'An Article for the Time,' a reprint of an old article in 'The Path,' which hoists Mr. Judge with his own petard, 'A Samoyed Seeress,' 'Spiritual Culture,' and 'Unpublished Letters of Eliphas Lévi.'

THE 'UNKNOWN WORLD.'

The May number of the 'Unknown World' is to hand. The erudite vein in which its contents are usually cast is somewhat lightened on this occasion by the introduction of a serial story, 'The Shining Pyramid,' by Arthur Machen, whose book, 'The Great God Pan,' met with so favourable a reception recently. The translation of D'Eckartshausen's 'Cloud upon the Sanctuary' runs its course, while an article upon Crystallomancy, with diagrams, is useful as setting forth some of the ritual of crystal-gazing—those theatrical accompaniments for which Miss X (and we think rightly) had so little regard. 'G. W. A.' continues his 'Considerations towards a Philosophy of God and Man.' Other articles are—'Mystic Meaning of Cross Symbolism,' by Carl Michelsen; 'Suggestions from the Compound Pendulum' (with illustrations), by C. E. Benham; 'The Sleeping Beauty of Sion'; 'A Unique and Mystical Altar from Nineveh,' by C. Fox. In the correspondence appears a letter on 'Theosophy and Modern Spiritualism,' by Wm. Oxley, with which, as setting forth some of the principles of a pure and unadulterated Spiritualism, we are in entire agreement. The conductors of the magazine announce the establishment at their offices of a circulating library of occult and mystical works.

'THE YOGA OF CHRIST.'

On first glancing through this little book,* we were prepared to welcome a valuable addition to those works which seek to reconcile Christianity with other great religions; thus helping to break down sectarianism, and promote brotherhood and breadth of religious thought. Miss Müller, the editor, refers to its authorship in a way which encourages the reader to hope that unusual ability and depth of knowledge and insight will be displayed therein. She says: 'The manuscript of this work was placed in my hands by A. K. G., who had received it from an Indian teacher, for whom I have the deepest gratitude, love, and reverence, who requested that I should edit and publish it.' But we trust that the work of this mysterious 'Indian Teacher' is not a fair sample of the teaching to be found in India to-day, else would she quickly lose all pretension to be regarded as the spiritual teacher of the world. The best ideas are to be found in the earlier letters, where an effort is made to show the identity of the teaching of Krishna and Christ. But the arguments are often confused, and there is much that is emotional and even foolish. 'God' is a constantly varying quantity in this writer's mind. In one place we have the Infinite, Omnipresent Spirit, in another the most personal Being that orthodox Christian ever conceived—'The smile of His benign face sets all things right.' As to the latter part of the book; really one need not seek out 'Indian Teachers' (with a big T) to learn about the evils of bad temper, drunkenness, smoking (!), gossiping and untidiness, &c.

RECEIVED.

- 'The Mystical World,' for June. (London : H. A. Copley, Canning Town, E. 1½d.)
- 'The Astrologer's Magazine,' for June. (London : 12, Lugard-road, Peckham, S.E. 6d.)
- 'The Unknown World,' for May. (London : Elliott & Co., Temple-chambers, Falcon-court, Fleet-street, E.C. 6d.)
- Nos. 1 and 2, 'Black Flag Series,' Library of Practical Occultism. 50 cents each. (Occult Publishing Company, 909, Baltimore-avenue, Kansas City, U.S.A.)

* 'The Yoga of Christ, or the Science of the Soul.' Written down by A.K.G. Edited by F. Henrietta Müller, B.A. (London : The Theosophical Publishing Society. 2s. net.)

Light.

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

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CHRIST OR MOSES : WHICH ?

The little book just published by Williams and Norgate, entitled 'Christ or Moses : Which?' is of considerable interest to us, as specialists in relation to belief in Immortality. It is introduced (not written) by Madame Olga Novikoff, who prints, with some *éclat*, a letter from Mr. Gladstone on the subject ; though we are inclined to think Mr. Gladstone hardly knew what he seemed to be somewhat endorsing. The book was written by 'a very eminent and scientific friend' of Madame Novikoff's, a German, who had said, 'The Old Testament knows no Immortality,' and who added, 'The Old and New Testaments are based on opposite and irreconcileable principles. The doctrine of the first is principally materialistic. The doctrine of the second is purely idealistic. The Old Testament represents God as Jehovah, quite otherwise than He is pictured by Jesus Christ.'

This friend, at her request, put his arguments or proofs into form, and the product was published for private circulation in Germany. The work before us is a translation of that pamphlet.

Mr. Gladstone's letter does little more than reveal his good-nature and his interest in Madame Novikoff ; though we are rather struck with his cool admission that 'the question of Jewish opinion on a future state, as opened in the Old Testament, is a question quite open to discussion' ; and with his hesitating remark respecting 'the natural immortality of the human soul.' We note, however, with much interest, that Mr. Gladstone has 'been a good deal engaged latterly in examining the question of a future state.' We shall hope to hear from him as to this vital subject.

As we have indicated, the main contention of the book is that the Old Testament knows nothing, or next to nothing, of a future life. 'Nowhere,' says this typical scientific German, 'is an immortal, and hence self-supporting, unconditional "soul" ascribed to man.' 'When Jehovah wanted to save a man from annihilation he took him bodily.' And certainly there is a great deal to say in favour of this view—that, according to the Old Testament, man is naturally mortal, that death ends all. There are thousands of good Christians who, believing ardently in the infallibility of all that is in the Bible, would be greatly disturbed by two dozen pages in this book which track, with such remorseless keenness, the trail of the agnostics in 'Holy Writ,' culminating in that awful saying, 'That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts . . . as the one dieth, so dieth the other ; yea, they have all one breath, so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast.'

Of course there is a refuge. The agitated believer might quote passages on the other side. But that brings us at once to the solution — which, by the way, the 'believer' might as little relish as the German scientist's blunt negation. And what is that solution? Simply this, that the Old Testament is not consistent. The writer of this book admits it. He sees three stages : First, 'Man's desire for continuity of existence was completely satisfied by the assured continuing of his seed and his name—his family and race' ; second, 'Men began to grow discontented with

being counted as nothing in themselves, individually ; . . . thus posterity no longer afforded them consolation for not having immortality within themselves' ; and third, so far as the Jews were concerned, this discontent was appeased by the growth of the belief that 'the special intervention of Jehovah' would confer immortality upon all good Jews, in the form of a resurrection. (See Ezekiel xxxvi. 1-10.) As to this, we would only remark that this is not a bad typical instance of natural development, or evolution of ideas ; and that if, on any considerable scale, this growth of the longing for immortality has been a characteristic of mankind, it carries with it a strong argument in favour of that to which it bears witness. What is the good of a German scientist's doctrine of evolution if it does not apply to the longing of soul in a man as well as to the webbed foot of a duck?

But now as to this rather sweeping denial of immortality in the Old Testament. We have admitted the existence of material for a strongish case in favour of the German's view, but there are some very hard nuts to crack on the other side, which are treated pretty much as the Scotch preacher treated a Bible puzzle when he said, 'My freends, let us look the deeficulty in the face and—pass on.' Take, for instance, a host of passages referring to 'necromancy,' 'witchcraft,' and the like. These are forbidden or denounced, not as frauds, but as impieties—as rivals, one might say, to the true Spiritualism. Or take another class of passages, represented by Isaiah xiv. 9, 10. It will not do to treat this very passage as a kind of poetic 'taunt.' Even if it were that, it evidently has imbedded in it a popular picture of the condition of the dead. Even the agnostic and pessimistic Book of Ecclesiastes has its sharp distinction between the body and the spirit (chapter xii. 7), which is hardly to be dismissed with the remark that it refers only to an 'animating force lent to man temporarily.' But the crux is and must always be the 'calling up' of Samuel, the point of which is that it was regarded as an entirely possible thing to 'bring up' Samuel. Saul inquires for a good medium just as anyone might do in London (1 Samuel xxviii. 7), and then, having found one, disguises himself and goes to a séance which turns out to be a very successful one. The references of the German scientist to this story are lame in the extreme ; and his old chestnut about 'resurrected clothes' is lamentably poor ; moreover, the scornful explanation that the story is 'based on and conditioned by a belief in witchcraft and magic' only tells against his stubborn theory.

The writer of this pamphlet has, we think, one important task before him. He does not appear to know the main reason why resorting to mediums was forbidden. The plain truth is that it was forbidden to the Jews for the very reason it is now forbidden to many English people—because its results usually tell against the conventional creeds. In the Book of Leviticus (xix. 31) we read that 'the Lord' commanded the Jews not to resort to mediums, because 'I am the Lord your God.' This is on a par with the heated denunciation of Deut. xxxii., 'They sacrificed unto devils.' But all this is precisely what is said now in London. The guardians of the old creed and the old worship must always fight against spirit-communion as their most dangerous subverters ; and much of the denunciation of the Old Testament on this subject is directly traceable to jealousy cherished in Jehovah's name. This is the key to nearly all that is quotable against Spiritualism in the Old Testament.

LECTURES BY MRS. BESANT.—Five lectures are announced to be given by Mrs. Besant, in St. James's Small Hall, Piccadilly, on the Sunday evenings during June, commencing on Sunday evening next. The subjects will be (1) 'Man as Creator, in the Body' ; (2) 'Man as Creator, out of the Body' ; (3) 'The Making of Destiny' ; (4) 'The Working-out of Destiny' ; (5) 'The Ending of Bondage.'

THE MYSTERIES OF MEDIUMSHIP.

BY OUR SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE.

'GENERAL LORRISON.'

It is not his name; but it will serve as well as another. The General is no medium, although he has a quaint habit of appearing in double to his friends and thereby making their flesh creep in superstitious fear; but he is a very old, a very staunch, and a very distinguished Spiritualist, and knows as much of mediumship as probably any man living. He has served his country with distinction, is on familiar terms with many of the first literary and scientific men of the day, and himself is of high standing and repute in the scientific world. There are good and sufficient reasons why his real name should not be mentioned just now; but he is well known to the older generation of Spiritualists; and to the Editor of 'LIGHT,' who esteems him as a gentleman of very high intelligence, and the most absolute integrity.

The General is introduced into this series for the sake partly of what he has to tell of noted mediums of times that are gone, and partly because he is the only man at present who can furnish particulars of a medium of to-day who in one special phase at least—that of the passing of matter through matter, dematerialisation and rematerialisation, precipitation, or however you may prefer to describe it—is as wonderful as any medium that has ever preceded her.

The General, in the course of conversation, referred to the generality of people, who, receiving what appears to be a natural explanation of one class of phenomena, fancy their little knowledge applies equally to all abnormal phenomena, and thus go ludicrously wrong, as actuated by 'the Kaffir mind.' Theosophy and Psychical Research both afforded abundant examples of 'the Kaffir mind.'

'What do you mean by that?' I asked.

'When I was in South Africa, three Kaffirs, who had heard, perhaps, of my scientific experiments, came to me one day with a request to show them something in witchcraft. To humour them, and amuse myself at the same time, I stuck a needle in a cork and floated it in a bowl of water, informing them that I could make it swim in whatever direction I told it to go. "That is impossible," they said, gravely. Concealing a small magnet in the palm of my hand, I whistled coaxingly to the little craft, and with a beckoning finger led it whither I would. Filled with astonishment were the Kaffirs. "This is witchcraft indeed!" they cried. "Not at all; it is simply magnetism;" and I showed them the magnet, and explained how the thing was done. Murmuring the word as they pronounced it, "*emahnyeteem*," with awed expression, they departed. Some time later I was asked to go to their village to shoot some wild buffaloes that were destroying the natives' crops, and, the work being hot, I went provided with something to drink. The Kaffirs gathered in a crowd to see me refresh, and the idea occurred to me to have a little fun with them. Removing the wire from a soda-water bottle, I worked the cork up gradually until it flew into the air with a report; and, pouring the fizzing stuff into a glass, drank it off at a gulp. The Kaffirs filled the air with the sound of their amazement. "This is a great witch doctor," they exclaimed; "he not only makes water boil on the instant without fire, but he swallows it without scalding himself." But my three friends, who had been watching the performance with an air of amused superiority, came forward, and with much scorn characterised their brethren as a pack of fool-niggers for imagining this to be witchcraft. They knew better; it was nothing more than *emahnyeteem*. You see what I mean now by the Kaffir mind?'

'With perfect clearness. The story is first-rate, and the application very apt. Now, General, let me have some of your experiences with mediums. To begin with, I think I heard you mention that you were present at the famous sitting at which Tyndall settled the question of Spiritualism to his own satisfaction once for all?'

'Was I not? It was I who brought the thing about. I got a friend, who knew Faraday better than I did, to tell him of some of our experiences and invite him to a sitting. Faraday said, "I know you and Captain Lorrison believe in this. Now, when you and Captain Lorrison can produce by yourselves these raps and other phenomena, then I will come and look into the matter." When I heard this, "Tell him," I said, "that on your giving me his message I remarked that I was a sceptic as

regards a man having such an extraordinary tenor voice as Mario, and if I went to the opera of course there would be fraud, and all sorts of dodges to imitate it; but when Mr. Faraday could come and imitate him then I would believe in Mario." Faraday on that admitted that his logic was unsound, and excusing himself personally on the ground of being too busy, said he would send a very good man to investigate. So Tyndall came. He dined with us first, and laid down the law on the subject in a very dogmatic fashion. It was, he said, one of the peculiarities of the human mind that what people wanted to believe they did believe, and what they wanted to see they usually fancied they saw. I tried to convince him that this was, at any rate, not my experience; for, whilst hunting in India, I would have given my little finger to see a piece of a man-eating tiger big enough to shoot at, and never saw it, or imagined I saw it; but he only snorted. After dinner we sat, and the raps and movements began. In a moment Tyndall was under the table, and got hold of the medium's feet. She was a young lady, and she didn't like it, and said so. "Oh, you object to it," he shouted, "do you? Very well, that's quite sufficient." It was quietly pointed out to him that the young lady had a perfect right to object to having her feet handled by a man under the table, even if he was a scientist intent upon experiments; and he retorted, "Very well, then. These are what you call raps, are they? Now rap on that picture five times before I count ten." And he counted ten with such volubility that it was quite impossible to distinguish the utterance of any one of the numbers. "No raps. That settles the matter. I have done with it." And that was the style, extent, and end of Tyndall's investigation. Fancy a man calling himself a scientist, and pretending to be an investigator, behaving in that way!'

'I can't fancy it. The thing is incomprehensible. You knew most of the mediums of the last generation, did you not, General?'

'Pretty well all, and sat with them times out of number. With Miss "L. M.," a very wonderful medium (whose identity, before I have done, will be readily recognised by the older Spiritualists), I have had at least a thousand sittings, and in the course of them every idea, if not every word, contained in those much vaunted books, "The Perfect Way" and "Clothed with the Sun," was given to me through her hand years before they were written, and is in my possession in manuscript now. Home I sat with quite a hundred times, the Marshalls more than a thousand times, Forster dozens of times, Squire the same.'

'Tell me some of your more interesting experiences with them.'

'If you have patience to listen, I will with much pleasure. My first séance? How well I remember it! Miss "L. M." was the medium. Others present were Philip Bailey, author of that truly great and noble poem "Festus," the Rev. J. G. Wood, the naturalist, and the Newton Croslands. Raps came. I thought to myself, "If this is supernatural, perhaps my mind can be read," and I wished that the table would rise at my corner. Rise it did at once about a foot, and at the same time the medium said, "You have got your wish." "What wish?" I said. "You wished the table to go up at your end." "If I did, who was it moved it?" The answer startled me, "It was your brother," and still more the name, "Your brother Fred." "If it was my brother," I said, "ask him to give some message by which I shall know him." The medium said he would do that presently, and a few moments later she scribbled some words on a piece of paper and handed it to me. The message was, "Do you remember the thrashing I gave you because Gift killed a rabbit?" Reading that, brought the incident, which had never entered my mind since it occurred, vividly back to my recollection. There was a warren adjoining my father's garden, and when I was a little fellow of about seven I used to delight, when the dusk came, in taking out our greyhound Gift, creeping up to the warren, and when a rabbit came out to feed, slipping the dog upon it. My brother, who was several years older, caught me at this one night, and treated me to a sound castigation on the spot. I remembered the thrashing well enough, and the unearthing of that trivial incident from the forgotten past was a better proof to me than any test I could myself have possibly devised.'

'Very good indeed for a beginning, General. You were more fortunate than the great majority of inquirers.'

'I have been fortunate all along the piece, and I am told that this is due to my atmosphere, or aura, as you may prefer to call

it, being well suited to the production of physical phenomena. Given a fair medium, the invisibles can tap my supply of force to any extent required, and good manifestations invariably result. With Miss "L. M." I sat repeatedly after that at the Newton Croslands' house, the sittings affording numerous messages from friends with tests of identity, or from unknown people with names, dates of death, and other particulars, afterwards verified. Finally, the medium stayed at my house for a month, and gave me the opportunity of witnessing manifestations under test conditions, and that is the reason of the faith that is in me. She had not been long in the house when, one day, a friend or two dropping in, she went upstairs, leaving us to chat in the dining-room. Suddenly the heavy dining-table rose, advanced several feet towards us, and fell to the floor again with a bang. It did this entirely by itself, none of us being near it. The thought flashed across me that something was wrong and that this was a signal. We accordingly went upstairs and found the young lady stretched on the floor in a dead faint. Among the tests I remember getting with Miss "L. M." was this. A very dear friend, the Rev. W. T.—died in Lincolnshire, and upon receiving an intimation by wire, I went straight to the medium, telegram in pocket. After a cup of tea I asked her if she saw any spirit near me who had recently left the earth. She said she saw one who appeared most anxious to communicate and he was dressed in an artillery uniform. I thought she had made a mistake, as my mind was fully occupied with the deceased clergyman, and asked her how he had died. She replied that he told her his head had been cut off in China and his body thrown into a canal, and gave the name of an officer, B—, whom I knew very well. Now, I was not aware at the time either that B— had passed away or that he had left India. I learned shortly afterwards that he had taken a staff appointment with the army in China, and months later intelligence came to hand that he and two other Englishmen had been made prisoners by the Chinese and had disappeared, nothing being known positively as to their fate. After a lapse of fifteen years I met B—'s brother in India, and asked him if he ever knew what had become of B—, and he said he did, for after the war their father proceeded to China to make inquiries, and found that a Chinese general, whose sons had been killed in a battle, had in revenge ordered the three prisoners to be immediately beheaded, and their bodies thrown into the canal. Now, when that information came from the medium I was looking for and expecting something entirely different, and it was absolutely impossible for any person in England to be in possession of the news of the capture of B—, let alone the tragic manner of his death. A nut for the thought-transference folks to crack, eh ?'

"Yes ; a hard one."

"Here's another case with Miss "L. M.," or Mrs. "A.," as she had become. She was staying with a colonel of the Royal Artillery at Woolwich, and one evening she told him a spirit had informed her that he would shortly be ordered to India. He smiled at this, because the Royal Artillery never went to India ; but she assured him that the spirit was reliable and that he would certainly go. Meeting me next day, he remarked that this was the only instance he had known of "the little medium" being utterly and completely wrong. Ten days afterwards the news of the Indian Mutiny came to hand, and three days later the Colonel, with three other colonels of the Royal Artillery, was ordered to proceed with all despatch to the East. Again, how about thought-transference, telepathy, and the rest? Yet another case with Mrs. A—— which I call to mind, a much more recent case. I took a friend to see her, and in the course of conversation she told him she saw, standing by his side, a young man of about twenty-five, clad in the uniform of an Engineer officer, who gave his Christian name, and said he was brother to the gentleman present. My friend identified him at once as a brother who had been killed in the Indian Mutiny. For myself, I had never heard of this relation, and Mrs. A—— saw my friend for the first time. Such cases could be multiplied a hundredfold with the best medium I have ever known for this kind of thing."

(To be continued.)

CONFERENCE NUMBER OF 'LIGHT.'—We have a few copies left of the issue of 'LIGHT,' containing a report of the proceedings at the Conference ; 2½d. per copy, or 2s. 4½d. per dozen, post free. An excellent number for distribution amongst inquirers.

SOME RECENT MATERIALISATIONS.

BY EDINA.

No. 1.

Before dealing in detail with some interesting and (to us) profoundly convincing materialisations which we have recently had with Mrs. Titford in Edinburgh, I deem it necessary (with the view of presenting the whole links in the chain of identity of various spiritual personages) to state, as briefly as possible, my previous acquaintance with this rather abnormal form of psychic manifestation. In order to do this, it will be necessary to 'lift the family curtain' far more than I desire ; but the interests of spiritual truth are imperative, and the story, in my judgment, cannot be told otherwise. I premise that for twenty years prior to the spring of 1889 my theoretical belief in Spiritualism, derived almost entirely from perusal of some of the leading works on the new cult, rested on a very solid basis ; but until the above-mentioned date, my interest in the subject might be said to be purely academic—chiefly because I knew no medium or psychic in this city. A series of severe domestic bereavements, and the ever-recurring question which comes to most thoughtful minds sooner or later, 'If a man die, shall he live again ?' impelled me in April of that year to pass from the attitude of a student on to that of an experimenter. The story of my early experiences and 'gropings' after spiritual truth has already been fully told in these columns and need not be repeated now. As regards materialisations, it is true I had, in about the year 1870, received from a friend John D. G—, then on the literary staff of a leading Scottish newspaper, a graphic description of a séance he had attended in the West end of this city, where Miss Fairlamb, now Mrs. Mellon, was the medium, and whereat, under the most strict test conditions, including tying and sealing the psychic, the form of 'Geordie' appeared in the room, walked round the table, and shook hands with and conversed with some of the sitters. At the same time, I was favoured with a copy of 'Geordie's' photograph, taken in bright sunshine one summer's morning, during the same week, in the garden of a cottage at Granton, near Edinburgh, where the medium was lying entranced in a small tent on the lawn, and that photograph is still in my possession. But, as I have said before, my personal acquaintance with spiritual phenomena dates from the year 1889, and was originally limited to witnessing a good deal of successful clairvoyance by a medium (Mr. Alexander Duguid), table movements, raps, &c., all got in the family circle. In the month of November of that year, my wife and myself attended a series of select sittings held in private houses in this city, which were given by Messrs. Husk and Williams, of Lamb's Conduit-street, London. These sittings were on the whole not satisfactory to us, chiefly because (1) the circles were too large and mixed, while the sceptical element was much *en evidence*, and (2) the communications got by the direct voices were very silly and puerile. True, the phenomena were apparently genuine enough ; because no cabinet was used, and the mediums were held throughout by the most sceptical members of the circle. Such materialisations as took place only consisted in the forms showing their faces for a moment, as in a looking-glass, on three luminous cards rising up from the table around which we sat. But, on the whole, it appeared to be of little interest to us as investigators into spiritual phenomena to hear the deep bass voice of 'John King' crying 'God bless you' and little else, in various parts of the room ; or to listen to the stupid snuffling maulderings of 'Uncle,' the silly puerilities of 'Christopher,' or the fragmentary, though rather more spiritual, utterances of 'Ebenezer,' which formed a leading feature of this series of séances. But with all those drawbacks, and the fact that the séances took place in total darkness, we had evidence of spirit return to ourselves and at least two other members of the circle ; while such abnormal manifestations as levitation, passage of matter through matter, spirit lights, the playing of the fairy bells and of the piano by invisible agency, were clearly demonstrated in such a way as to give me undoubted evidence of the existence of unseen action from the 'other side.' The result of these séances, however, only served to whet my desire for further and more reverent investigation, while at the same time the main portion of the phenomena, and particularly the utterances of the spirits, left, as it were, a 'bad taste in the mouth,' and steady-going, 'canny Presbyterians,' &c., sincerely in search of the certainty of the 'beyond,' like some of us present on

these occasions, were left in the position of being able to say 'If that is all the spirits can tell us it is hardly worth their coming back.' These séances were never renewed, and, so far as I can learn, neither Mr. Husk nor Mr. Williams has ever since returned to Edinburgh.

My next experience in materialisation took place in my own house in September, 1890; and on that occasion the medium was Mrs. Mellon, of Newcastle-on-Tyne. To tell the events which then took place will require another article; and, meantime, I may add that, notwithstanding my impressions in November, 1889, I could not hold it as certain that materialisation was a proved fact in psychic phenomena.

(To be continued.)

THE RELATION OF SPIRITUALISM TO CHRISTIANITY.

The 'Banner of Light' reports at length a 'discourse' recently delivered in Boston by the Rev. T. E. Allen, of Grafton, Mass., on 'The Spiritual Reformation; or the Reconciliation of Christianity and Spiritualism.' Though spoken of as a 'discourse' it assumes, in reality, the form of a discussion, supposed to have taken place between Socrates, Theodore Parker, William Denton, John Stuart Mill, and W. Stainton Moses, on the question—What should be the next step in Religion? Several very interesting points are ably debated; we can only afford space, however, for some extracts from the opinions expressed by the former Editor of 'LIGHT.' Mr. Stainton Moses is represented as saying:—

I know that much fault can be found with the Spiritualistic movement, and that many just criticisms can be made upon the beliefs and acts of individual Spiritualists. But after all, what would it all amount to? What is needed is a piece of constructive work, an indication of what ought to be done in the future in a religious way to make the world better, a consideration of the question, Does the future belong to Christianity, to Spiritualism, or to a union of the two? . . . Many Spiritualists there are who have broken with Christianity, who have set it entirely aside, who have tried to begin with a clean slate, to build anew from the foundation, ignoring the literature and the traditions of that great religion. In my own case the process has been quite a different one. Instead of looking upon Christianity and Spiritualism as movements necessarily in antagonism, I have come to see that, on the contrary, they not only harmonise, but actually supplement each other; that Spiritualism came to the world not to destroy but to fulfil.

In my judgment the best standpoint from which to look at the Spiritualistic movement is not as an attempt to establish a new religion entirely distinct from Christianity, but as a reformation or reformation of Christianity itself. As I cast my eyes over the pages of history they first fall upon the Protestant Reformation of Luther as fitted to illustrate my meaning. This great religious crisis was the revolt of the conscience of the individual against the absolutism of the Catholic hierarchy. But if the reformers of that period fancied that the last necessary step had been taken in the purification and development of Christianity, they were greatly mistaken. In due time the Unitarian movement made its appearance. While from one standpoint this was a protest against the doctrine of the Trinity, a dogma felt to be repugnant to reason, its denial of the infallibility of the Bible and the affirmation of the supremacy of reason in religion was a step involving, probably, a far more thorough-going reconstruction of theology than could have been expected from a change in any other doctrine, since this went clean down to the bed-rock of religion and so powerfully influenced the canons of Biblical criticism.

The Unitarian movement was the *Rational Reformation*, the protest of Reason against an infallible Bible; nay, if we do it full justice, the emancipation of Reason from the bonds of any and every infallible authority. It marks, therefore, a great step in advance of its predecessor. Finally, I call the Spiritualistic movement the *Spiritual Reformation*, for the reason that it affirms the reality and vital relationship to human beings of intelligent spiritual entities whose existence as a factor in the environment of mortals is almost entirely ignored by Christians, even by Unitarians.

In thus speaking of the Spiritualistic movement, I by no means affirm that any considerable number of its adherents

understand what I believe to be its true significance. In order that a body of teaching shall properly be called a *reformation* of an existing religion, rather than a *new* one, entitled to set up for itself upon an independent foundation, it is necessary that it should be explicitly taught by that religion, logically bound up in it, or else be a natural product of its development. This analysis of the case, in my opinion, justifies my claim. For I maintain that the only adequate explanation of the so-called 'supernaturalism' of the New Testament is one that recognises life after death and spirit communion. Spirit communion, then, formed a part of primitive Christianity. That it was believed in by many Christians during the first Christian centuries is settled beyond controversy by the testimony of the Church Fathers. That Christians to-day can look into the Bible without finding the teaching of spirit communion—not to say what is worthy to be called evidence, if they accept its testimony as *evidence* upon other points—is an illustration of the blinding and distorting effects of prepossessions. I claim that the basic truths of Spiritualism were not first revealed to the world—indeed, no Spiritualist asserts that they were—at Hydesville, N. Y., upon March 31st, 1848; that they formed an indispensable factor in Christianity at its very origin; that they were manifested in Old Testament times; and that they can be traced back beyond that, no man knows how many centuries.

Like a buoyant balloon, Christianity first rose to a high altitude, then as she became weighted down with the material doctrines of unspiritual minds, she sank nearer and nearer to earth. The lowest point was reached. The Protestant Reformation threw out some of the dogmas, and she rose. The Rational Reformation further lightened the load and she again ascended. And now, the Spiritual Reformation has cut gashes in some of the bags, the sand is pouring out in a fine but steady stream, and Christianity is being wafted upwards toward its highest, initial altitude. In view of the foregoing and other considerations, then, I maintain that the next step in religion should be the marriage of Rational Christianity with Spiritualism, or, to state the case even more correctly, the recognition that both are indispensable elements of that true primitive Christianity the need of which the peoples of Europe and America have by no means outgrown.

I shall surprise some people by affirming that the Bible is still needed. Every branch of physical science is greatly dependent, both for its progress and usefulness, upon appropriate standards of measurement. In the fine arts, a constant effort is made to perfect and to sustain a standard. But judgment without comparison is in the very nature of things impossible. What is true in science and the fine arts, is true also in religion. The masterpiece for the English-speaking race is the Bible, and it is by a study of that that one's judgment in religious matters is cultivated. If a Mahomedan were to come to America to make converts, he would be met upon all sides, amongst intelligent people, with the demand that he point out the superiority of the Koran to the Bible, and of his religion to Christianity, and unless he succeeded in proving to their satisfaction that what he had to offer was, on the whole, better than what they already believed, he would have no grounds, logically, for expecting to succeed. It does not follow, however, because I take the Bible as the yardstick of religion, that I must accept it as a final authority. Wisdom dictates that I should reject such of its teachings as I see to be false, that I should supplement it by adding any religious truths I may find that are not recognised in it, and that I should simply let stand for the time whatever does not appeal to me as true or false. In this way I can use the Bible to measure my own growth. I can use it, too, to measure the development of Christianity, and the rise and fall of sects.

The insane desire—for truly I account it such—to begin with a clean slate, to denounce the accumulations of humanity as a mass of rubbish and tradition that had best be swept at once and without examination into a sea of oblivion, is the very suicide of progress. It means nothing less than the rejection of authority *per se*, which, Mr. Mill told you, 'is to declare science impossible.' Such a régime would mean, too, that the work, however valuable, of the man of colossal conceit, who believed that he had entirely cut himself off from the influence of the past, would be permitted to perish by an equally conceited man of the next generation!

I maintain, then, that there are many forcible reasons why Spiritualists should consider the modern outburst of phenomena, ordinarily accounted as having had its origin at Hydesville, as

the suggestor and occasion of another reformation in the dispensation commenced by the Prophet of Nazareth, rather than as the justification for founding a distinct religion improperly assumed to be new. One great practical advantage in what I suggest grows out of the fact that so many millions of people are already more or less familiar with the Bible and have some degree of faith in it—holding it, indeed, in even millions of instances, to be infallible. The chance of helping these men and women is immensely increased if one can candidly express his appreciation of the good, true, and beautiful in the Bible, and then point out the fact that in the light of modern knowledge they do not read it aright, that the truth of spirit communion is so deeply embedded therein that without it they cannot really understand or derive from it the maximum benefit.

At the close of the discussion Theodore Parker is supposed to have submitted the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted :—

Resolved, That, in our judgment, Rev. W. Stainton Moses has clearly shown that the next step in religion ought to be a union of Rational Christianity and Spiritualism in a new sect, to be known as Spiritual Christians or Neo-Christians ; and that this sect should be based upon the Bible and spirit communion, and affirm the supremacy of reason.

Before the friends separated Mr. Denton is said to have read the following from a paper which he held in his hand :—

In her work, 'Nineteenth Century Miracles,' Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten says that some of her most honoured spirit-guides urged as a reason why she should collect materials for a history of Spiritualism in America, that, using her own words, 'The first twenty years of Spiritualism in America would complete a special cycle in the movement. During that period,' it was said, 'the work of the Spiritualists would be to conduct a stern and unyielding warfare against the world without, to revolutionise old ideas, uproot stereotyped errors and do battle with priest-craft and schoolcraft, ignorance and bigotry ; and at the close of that epoch, it was asserted, that during the ensuing fifteen years many marked changes of a discouraging character would overshadow the Cause, but that these would proceed chiefly from within rather than from without the ranks. *The worst foes of Spiritualism would be those of its own household, and the cruellest slubs directed against it would be dealt by the hands of Spiritualists themselves.* Still another fifteen years would be required—said the guides—before the first principles of a true science could be evolved. During that period, the phenomena of spirit communion would be silently yet surely wrested from the hands of the spoiler, and its religious teachings be rescued from the vagaries of speculative theorists in order to ground it on the rock of immutable and well-proven truth. At the close of this third epoch, Modern Spiritualism would celebrate its year of JUBILEE, and triumphantly enter upon its possession of the promised land, wherein the unity of science and religion should be fully demonstrated.'

SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY.—At a meeting to be held at Myddleton Hall, Almeda-street, Upper-street, Islington, at 7.15 on the evening of Sunday, June 16th, under the auspices of the North London Lodge of the Theosophical Society, the subject of Spiritualism will be discussed, and our Theosophical friends may be expected to say what they can to deprecate the value of our experiences as Spiritualists. We hope that some of our Spiritualist friends will be able to attend and take part in the debate.

A FINE REPROOF.—This was a fine reproof which Victor Hugo gave to the scoffing *savants* :—To replace inquiry by mockery is convenient, but not very scientific. For our part, we think that the strict duty of science is to test all phenomena. Science is ignorant, and has no right to laugh ; a *savant* who laughs at the possible is very near being an idiot. The unexpected ought always to be expected by science. Her duty is to stop in its course, and search it, rejecting the chimerical, establishing the real. Science should verify and distinguish. The circumstance that the false is mingled with the true furnishes no excuse for rejecting the whole mass. When was the tare an excuse for refusing the corn ? The mission of science is to study and sound everything. All of us, according to our degree, are creditors of investigation ; we are its debtors also. It is due to us, and we owe it to others. To evade a phenomenon, to refuse to pay it that attention to which it has a right, to bow it out, to show it the door, to turn our back on it laughing, is to make truth a bankrupt, and to leave the signature of science to be protested.

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.*]

Mr. Leicester Gataker, the Water Diviner.

SIR,—It may be interesting to your readers to learn that about two years ago I was sent for by a lady to go to Bath to give a séance, which invitation I accepted. On my arrival at Bath Railway Station I was met, to my surprise, by a clergyman, who told me that the séance was to be held in his church, if I did not mind ; to which I replied that it made no difference to me where the séance was held, providing the sitters were in sympathy with me. On reaching the church I was invited into the vestry and was asked whether I would see all present at one sitting, or would prefer to see each one individually. I preferred the latter course as most likely to lead to satisfactory results. Among the sitters was Mrs. Gataker, mother of Mr. Leicester Gataker. She wished to consult me about her son's health ; but instead of dealing with the question of his health, I was obliged to go upon the lines of his mediumship, as I then termed it. I told her that he would become a wonderful discoverer of water, and that before two years had expired she would prove what I said to be correct. This has, indeed, come true, as shown by the account in your columns. I also told her that if he followed this out his health would improve. The gentleman himself I had never seen, nor have I yet seen him, except clairvoyantly.

23, Devonshire-road, Forest Hill. A. VINCENT BLISS.

A Suggested Test.

SIR,—Fair-minded critics such as Mr. A. Lang and others have been puzzled to know how to devise a test which, *ipso facto*, should satisfactorily prove that a communication has come from a veritable disembodied spirit, and not from that little understood factor of unknown potency, one's own inner subliminal consciousness, called by Mr. Jay Hudson our 'subjective mind.'

Sir Walter Besant went so far as to say recently that spirits always failed to give any convincingly 'important' news—by which I presume he meant news of startling importance, which, on the face of it, could not possibly have come from the most knowing subjectivity of a medium.

I venture to think that those horrifying disclosures of cataleptic burials, spoken of by Mr. Williamson, offer a ready and conclusive test for proof of the existence of beneficent intelligences behind the veil. The fact of preparations being in progress for such a paralysing tragedy as the burying alive of a cataleptic patient must be thoroughly well known to the much talked of 'cloud of witnesses' if these really exist. Since they are able to converse freely through mediums on matters of very trivial importance, why do they not sometimes use their powers to warn bystanders of such unthinkable horrors ?

Depend upon it, a few cases of resuscitation of cataleptics before burial, due to timely warning given by the unseen witnesses, would go as far as Mr. Stead himself could wish to convert professors of Science and Conjuring to a belief in 'the angels.' Why not arrange for them ? WHAT IS TRUTH ?

A Necessary Caution.

SIR,—About a month ago I went to a materialisation séance at the West End of London, but I withhold the name of the medium for the present. By a report which I read in a Spiritualist paper (not 'LIGHT') about two months ago, I had been led to expect something good, but I was thoroughly disappointed ; and I think it is a duty I owe to the public to make plain my conviction that the séance from beginning to end was unsatisfactory. It was called a 'test' séance ; but when I asked to see the medium and spirit together, the leader of the circle refused. There was a 'Moorish' spirit appeared which looked no more like a Moor than I do. He would not speak, for reasons that are evident—viz., he was the medium and did not know the language of the Moors. Another 'spirit' appeared whose breath was so mingled with that of 'beer' that at once I thought that that was no genuine 'visitant.' Besides, when she 'vanished' through the floor (?) I distinctly heard her fall on her knees and creep back into the cabinet. She also did not speak—because I presume the medium could not sufficiently control his voice to represent a female.

Again, during a show of spirit-lights, one of the 'lights' dropped on the floor with the sound of a fallen match ; of course, the leader said it was a 'box' from off the sideboard.

Again, when the medium was under control, in the circle, of a trance-speaking spirit he managed to lisp at the beginning, and forgot to do so later on.

I hope that you will insert this in your paper, as I hear that there are many people going there just to be fooled ; and in the interest of truthseekers such cases ought to be exposed.

I should have written earlier, but I have been so extremely busy amidst other studies that it is only now that I have found time to write.

WILLIAM BALDWYN.

A South African Pioneer.

SIR,—After a passage of thirty-one days from Cape Town, my wife and four children and myself arrived safely at the East India Docks on Friday afternoon, the 24th ult., per ss. Dunbar Castle, and have got into quarters where we hope to remain for some little time. My first visit to London was in May, 1877, on which occasion I put up at Mrs. —— (I forget the name), situated, I think, in Bedford-place, Russell-square, and where a 'reception' was given to myself and Mrs. Hutchinson, which enabled me to make the acquaintance of many dear friends having a kindred spirit.

Since then many of those I became acquainted with have passed away to another sphere of existence, having, no doubt, fulfilled their lot on this mundane plane. I was then only on the threshold of 'spirit intercourse,' but, having read much and had some experience in Cape Town, I soon added knowledge to my new faith, and on my return myself and dear wife were fully satisfied with our experiences, and the reception given by the Spiritualists of this great city. In 1881 we again visited this country—with the object of improving my professional status, and I rejoice to say that I fully succeeded in accomplishing my object. When then in London, Mr. and Mrs. Tebb, then residing near by (Albert-road, Regent's Park), were kind enough to arrange another reception for us, which I shall always remember with feelings of pleasure, but, as we left very shortly afterwards, I have quite forgotten the names and addresses of the many sympathetic friends I met on that occasion.

My present visit is, I am very happy to say, one for pleasure as well as health, and as I contemplate making your great city my headquarters, at least for some time to come, I hope to have the gratification of again coming in contact with many of the leading, enlightened, and progressive friends of our great Truth, which I have faithfully tried, for the last twenty years, to speak, never losing an opportunity of giving 'LIGHT' (knowledge) where I thought it would do good. Dear and beloved Stainton Moses ('M.A. Oxon'), whom I met at a dinner party (specially given by dear Mrs. Makdougal Gregory, Green-street, so that I could meet him), said to me in conversation that he did not believe in proselytising, but he quite forgot that he was a far greater one than I was, only that instead of using his tongue, as I usually do, he used the pen, which in his case was far mightier than the sword.

At present I must not say much more—only that as I intend to devote much of the remainder of my mundane existence to the propagation of the knowledge of spirit intercourse *pure and simple*, I hope before long to mature plans which may prove novel as well as interesting to British believers, who I trust may assist me in bringing the same before the thinking public. I much regret that we were too late to attend the late Conference. I trust 'M.A. (Oxon's)' prediction, made at Mrs. Everitt's circle last year re next year's gathering, will be fully realised. I for one fully believe it.

BERKS T. HUTCHINSON, D.D.S.E.

8, Titchfield-terrace, Regent's Park.

Mesmerism and Hypnotism.

SIR,—May I venture to broach a subject, through the medium of your valuable journal, of great importance to humanity at large ?

It is well known, to those who have studied it, that the wonderful power called Mesmerism, Animal Magnetism, and now more popularly known as Hypnotism, has in the past met with very strong opposition from the general public, and still more deadly opposition from the medical faculty, until quite recently.

The reason of this action on the part of the public, no doubt, lay in religious bigotry, ignorance, and, in modern times, a fear of the power being put to an evil use. But the opposition offered by the medical faculty as a body was of a far different kind. And one of the chief motive powers in this opposition was undoubtedly a most unrighteous egotism and self-interest. Therefore, like everything else that is new and contrary to the

self-satisfied opinions of medical men, it was left to the layman to sustain and investigate one of God's most merciful blessings to mankind. But now, as of old, after all the hard labour and trial of investigating the truth has been borne by others, these said medicos, its once bitter enemies, are about to bestir themselves with a view of acquiring the sole right of the use of hypnotism for their own selfish interests.

My reason for this statement may be seen in the warning note sounded in an evening paper of the 18th ult., where a West End physician is said to have recommended 'the making of the practice of hypnotism illegal, except when undertaken by properly qualified *medical* men,' in order to guard against the so-called danger of a criminal use of the power.

Now, Sir, it has been my opinion for some time past that the time has arrived for those who have studied and practised mesmerism for the treatment of disease, and who really have sustained the modern life of the science against all odds, to combine and form themselves into a society for the placing of mesmerism and hypnotism upon a firm and scientific basis before the world, and for mutual protection.

The essential qualifications and knowledge of a mesmerist are not *entirely* those of a surgeon and physician ; and a medical man's diploma does not qualify him by any means as a mesmerist ; neither is it essential. One of the chief qualifications of a mesmerist, or hypnotist, is a sympathetic, upright, moral nature. We have a large number of honourable men in the 'Faculty,' I admit. But what proportion of them are so superior, in a moral sense, as to justify them, as a body, in saying 'We are the only body of men fit to possess and exercise this power,' as this physician of the newspaper would have ?

All the knowledge and certificates in the world will not and do not make a man moral, and 'high morals' are the essential qualification of a mesmerist. Therefore, instead of allowing a body of men, who have done all in their power to retard the progress of mesmeric science, to claim the entire right to God's universal gift to man, mesmerists and hypnotists generally should combine at once for the following purposes : To place Hypnotism and Mesmerism before the world as a true science, and disabuse the public mind of all prejudice ; to further the study of mesmeric phenomena ; for mutual protection ; for the strict investigation of the moral character of all public mesmeric practitioners ; and to obtain the right to issue licences to such as are satisfactory, and prove their knowledge of the science, to enable them to practise it.

Many other purposes can doubtless be added, which a legitimate discussion alone can suggest, and should this suggestion meet with the approval of my brother mesmerists, perhaps some arrangement can be arrived at to call a meeting of hypnotists in London to consider the best way to effect the end in view.

A. W. J. L.

Mr. J. J. Vango.

SIR,—Mrs. Lenty Collins' testimony to the well developed mediumship of Mr. J. J. Vango reminds me of several test messages and clairvoyance that I myself have received from him at various times. His psychical powers in this direction are extraordinary, and if as successful in séance with others as in my own case, I believe his gift will force conviction upon any truthseeking investigator who may consult him.

Canterbury.

A. F. COLBORNE.

Mind and Matter.

SIR,—Two or three weeks ago Dr. Hensoldt stated that matter had no existence independently of mind. To this I objected, on the grounds that he did not give his reasons for his statement. Now Mr. Kenyon affirms that matter *does* exist independently of mind ! He makes an assertion in direct contradiction to Dr. Hensoldt's, and he gives no reasons for this. Thus he is as objectionable in his statements as Dr. Hensoldt.

Amongst other interesting things, Mr. Kenyon says : 'We are quite certain that the external universe will exist after our death, but we are not certain whether or not our minds will do so,' &c. ; in reply to which I may state that we have much more evidence of the existence of our minds after our death than we have of that of matter ; and if Mr. Kenyon wishes to know in what this evidence consists, he has but to read 'LIGHT,' or some of the publications of the Society for Psychical Research, or such a work as Mr. W. Crookes' 'Spiritualism in the Light of Modern Science.'

If Mr. Kenyon considers himself as one of those practical persons who say, with Lord Byron, that 'When Bishop

Berkeley said there was no matter, it was no matter what he said, 'I do not understand why he took the trouble to write about a thing which is "no matter"; and if he does not consider himself as one of the aforesaid persons, what is the object of his opening paragraph? I am also curious to learn what connection he finds between the sensation produced by putting a piece of sugar in a man's mouth and the existence of matter apart from mind.'

Finally, it would, I think, be most interesting if these two gentlemen—each of whom asserts, as confidently as if he were the Creator Himself, a thing in direct opposition to the other's statement, without giving any reasons for so doing—were to enlighten us by a knowledge of the processes through which they have each arrived at their respective conclusions.

Paris.

BERTRAM W. B. GREENE.

SOCIETY WORK.

WELCOME HALL, 218, JUBILEE-STREET, MILE END.—On Sunday last we had a most interesting evening with Mr. Marsh, who gave his experiences in Spiritualism. Sunday next, Miss Marsh, clairvoyance.—W. M.

WINCHESTER HALL, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—Circles were held on Sunday and Thursday evenings by Miss Hammond Hills—a programme which will be repeated next week, with, in addition, free magnetic healing by the hon. secretary.—H. E. B.

111, CLARENCE-ROAD, NOTTING HILL, W.—On Sunday last Mr. Walker's controls delivered an interesting discourse upon 'Eternal Progress and Spiritual Truth.' Sunday next, at 7 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason; Tuesday, 8 p.m., Mrs. Mason; Saturday, open circle. Inquirers welcome.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

CARDIFF.—On Sunday last we were privileged to listen to Brother E. W. Wallis, of Manchester, whose guides gave two fine addresses—morning, 'Spiritualism: Its Basis'; evening, 'Spiritualism; Its Value.' Mr. Wallis will also speak for us next Sunday at St. John's Hall, St. John's-square; 11 a.m., 'Spiritualism: Its Message'; 6.30 p.m., 'Spiritualism: Its Revelations.'

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—A crowded audience assembled last Sunday, when Mrs. Groom, from Birmingham, occupied the platform. After an address, the medium, in her normal state, gave ten clairvoyant descriptions, mostly successful, although some were not immediately pronounced correct. Madame de Monastery most kindly sang 'Easter Eve' (violin and pianoforte accompaniment). Next Sunday, June 2nd, at 7 p.m., the controls of Mr. J. J. Morse will give the first of a series of addresses, 'The Day of Life.' June 9th, 'The Night of Death.' June 16th, 'The Dawn of Immortality.' June 23rd, 'Life on the Threshold.' June 30th, 'Through the Gates.' All who possibly can are specially invited to attend.—L. H.

'THE GATHERING OF THE CLANS.'—Mr. Thomas McCallum, the mainspring of the Stratford Society of Spiritualists, presided on Saturday last over the sixth annual 'Gathering of the Clans,' being an excursion of Scottish Spiritualists and others to Epping Forest. The party proceeded thither in brakes, and the tartans of the various Highland septs were conspicuously displayed in the form of sashes, tartans, and waist-belts. After tea at a house in the forest, the party proceeded to a glade in the recesses of the woods, where an enjoyable time was spent in going through a programme of Scottish songs, dances, and other sports. Amongst the northern visitors present were Miss MacNab and Miss Alice MacNab (of Howwood, Renfrewshire), Miss MacCreadie (of Milngavie), Mr. Gow (of Bothwell), Mr. Robertson (of Tigh-na-bruaich), Mr. Hamish Scott (of Glasgow), and others. We are pleased to hear from Mr. McCallum that the society at Stratford is progressing by leaps and bounds.—D. G.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—Mr. Butcher will occupy our platform on Sunday, June 2nd. Our annual general meeting took place on Sunday last after the services, and was well attended. The following officers of the society were elected by ballot: Dr. Reynolds, president; Mr. J. Allen and Mr. Breeze, vice-presidents; Mr. J. Chapman and Mr. E. J. Gozzett, trustees; general committee, Mrs. McCallum, Mr. W. Spruce, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Brown, Mrs. Lambert, Mr. Landridge, Mr. Wrench, Mr. C. Chapman, Mr. Gardiner; treasurer, Mr. J. Robertson; hon. secretary, Mr. T. McCallum. The committee return their sincere thanks to all our members, and for their efforts to promote our glorious cause. We have added thirty-five new members to our society since January. Dr. Reynolds, our new president, is, we are all pleased to say, a most valuable worker for our cause, and we all hope that he will long be spared us. Dr. Reynolds returned thanks to all the members, and said that he, as far as he could, would endeavour to devote his time and abilities to our cause. Mr. McCallum then proposed that a most hearty vote of thanks be given to their late president, Mr. J. Allen. This was seconded by Mr.

Robertson, and carried with acclamation. A vote of thanks was also, on the motion of Dr. Reynolds, seconded by Mr. C. Chapman, given to Mrs. Lambert and Mrs. McCallum, for their kindness in opening their houses for the use of the committee every month. This also was carried unanimously.—THOMAS McCALLUM, Hon. Sec.

LONDON DISTRICT COUNCIL.—The second monthly meeting of delegates was held at the Forest Hill Rooms, on Friday, 24th ult. The following extract from the secretary's report may prove interesting: 'It is generally believed that London in no sense desires federation, but from actual personal converse with a large number of London's principal workers in the cause, I am pleased to be able to assure you that the idea is erroneous. The desire for organisation is practically unanimous, and we must ignore the individuals who, although expressing their own convictions most distinctly in favour of organisation, yet, nevertheless, look mistrustfully at every effort which tends to that end. The London District Council seems to meet with the approval of the majority, by reason of the fact that its basis of operations is so simple that it presents no opportunity for quibbling over its meaning and purpose. I therefore suggest to you that we make no attempt to extend its working powers until the majority of the London societies join its ranks. The extension of its propaganda can then be made with greater certainty of success, by reason of the fact that the actual workers in London Spiritualism will be able to mould its action as the needs of the moment demand. Four societies are now affiliated, and I am only waiting the result of committee meetings when I hope to be able to report that London has decided the question of affiliation by affiliating. It is hoped that the London Spiritualist Alliance will make its headquarters the centre of our activity, and Mr. Dawson Rogers will be officially approached with that end in view.'—H. BODDINGTON, Hon. Sec.

SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last Miss MacCreadie gave a number of clairvoyant descriptions. The proceedings were opened by a short address on 'Spiritual Gifts' from the chairman, Mr. C. M. Payne. Miss MacCreadie then, under the influence of an intelligence associated with her mediumship, who purports to have been a preacher in earth-life, delivered a stirring and fluent discourse, after which, passing under the control of 'Sunshine,' she gave some fourteen descriptions of spirit-friends, accompanied in some cases by names, messages, personal advice, &c. Ten of these delineations were publicly recognised, the remainder being, to quote the chairman, 'held in abeyance.' There was a large audience, including many strangers, for whom the chairman improved the occasion by commenting upon the evidential value of the successful clairvoyance that had been given that evening, as illustrating the faculty of soul-sight. Mr. W. E. Long afterwards addressed the meeting, referring to his experiences in Ramsgate in connection with Mrs. Besant's Theosophical campaign there. He gave as an example of the variable character of Theosophy that (judging from Mrs. Besant's lecture there) Theosophists now recognised as spiritual beings—men and women—the visitants whom they had formerly dismissed as spooks or shells, and appeared to be cultivating a greater respect for the so-called ignorant and misguided Spiritualists. On Sunday next, at 6.30, Mr. W. E. Long; subject, 'The Séance of Pentecost.' In the course of his address it is Mr. Long's intention to elaborate the plan of public spirit circles which he briefly suggested at the late Conference while discussing the 'Ideal Religious Service.' Persons interested in this subject are earnestly requested to attend.—G.

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:—Africa, Mr. B. Stead, care of Hazell, Ballan and Co., Kimberley; America, Mrs. M. R. Palmer, 3101, North Broad-street, Philadelphia; Argentine Republic, Sr. Don A. Ugarte, President "Fraternidad" Society, Buenos Ayres; Australia, Mr. H. Junior Browne, "The Grand Hotel," Melbourne; Belgium, Mons. F. Paulsen, Spiritualistic Federation of Liège, Angleur-lez-Liège; Brazil, Sr. Don. A. C. Munhoz, Director de "A Luz," Curitiba; Canada, Captain G. W. Walrond, 198, Locke-street, Hamilton, Ontario; France, P. G. Leymarie, 1, Rue Chabanais, Paris; Germany, E. Schlochauer, 1, Monbijou-place, Berlin, N.; Holland, Den Herr Van Straaten, te Apeldoorn Middellaan, 682; India, Mr. T. Hatton, State Cotton Mills, Baroda; Italy, Signor M. Falcomer, President "Armonia Spiritista," Ternano; Mexico, Dr. L. E. Calleja, Director de "Lux ex Tenebris," Puerto de Vera Cruz; New Zealand, Mr. J. H. Graham, Huntley, Waikato; Norway, Herr Torestenson, "Advocate," Christiania; Russia, Mons. Etienne Geispitz, Grande Belozerski, No. 7, Lod. 6, St. Petersburg; Spain, Sr. Don E. E. Garcia, Hita, 6, Bajo izqda, Madrid; Sweden, Herr M. Fidler, Gothenburg; Switzerland, M. L. Gardy, Geneva; England, J. Allen, Hon. Sec., 115, White Post-lane, Manor Park, Essex; or W. C. Robson, French correspondent, 166, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne.—Special notice to inquirers and members. The meetings held in connection with the above society at 115, White Post-lane, Manor Park, E., will be closed during June, July, and August.—J.A., Hon. Sec.