

# Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

We should be very glad if Mrs. Hardinge Britten's proposal for a kind of training school for mediums could be carried out. It is only a question of funds. In the meantime, we could quite easily try a few 'rest homes' of a simple and private kind. Are there six wise and kindly families that would give a welcome, for a few weeks or more, to young mediums whose friends are vexed at their 'gift,' and who themselves do not understand it or are half frightened at it? We are persuaded that in this direction, of private sympathy and guidance, much, very much, good might be done. In time, this might give us the steady supply of disciplined mediums, so urgently needed.

The Psychological Research Society has held its last meeting for the season. May we venture to say that it seems to have nearly got to the end of its tether? But for Mr. Myers, its proceedings would be little more than the procession of a blinded horse round a clay mill. Unless it becomes receptive to spirit-communion, it will be exhausted and will die of inanition. Its meetings are well and even eagerly attended, but this is only because the majority are on the *qui vive*. The people are asking for bread, and the Society offers a stone. But practically it lives on what it does not formally admit—on what many of its ruling spirits even deny. An odd situation!

In Philadelphia an industrious raid upon 'fortune-tellers' is being carried out, with, of course, the result that respectable mediums are involved. We must repeat that the whole process seems to us to be rather ridiculous. The old law under which these proceedings are taken is a bit of somewhat silly grandmotherly legislation. Here is the vital clause:—

Any person who shall pretend for gain or lucre to predict future events by cards, tokens, the inspections of the head or hands of any person, or by anyone's age, or by consulting the movements of the heavenly bodies, or who shall for gain or lucre pretend to effect any purpose by spells, charms, necromancy or incantations, shall be guilty of a misdemeanour, punishable by any court of quarter sessions in this commonwealth with fine and imprisonment, or both, or either, at the discretion of the court.

It may be our stupidity, but we frankly confess that we see no reason why people should not play at this sort of thing if they like. It is a very harmless pastime, and not half as dangerous as cricket in a public park, or as offensive, to people who do not care for them, as barrel-organs in the public streets.

We think the word 'pretend' might be taken advantage of by some of those who might be interfered with: but, in any case, it is to be hoped that honest mediums will be both careful and courageous. If martyrs are wanted let them have them. It can only be a mild martyrdom after all.

Some of the Philadelphian Spiritualists are evidently put on their mettle. One suggests applying for a warrant against the 'weather prophet': and perhaps that clause respecting 'consulting the movements of the heavenly bodies' might get him in. Or perhaps the almanac makers who predict eclipses by 'consulting the movements of the heavenly bodies' might be netted. One medium says:—

Philadelphia is a city containing large areas of brick houses, antiquated and seedy-looking, but too well preserved to pull down, yet not good enough to be occupied by a very good class of tenants. These are occupied by a large population of lazzaroni of various nationalities, ignorant and superstitious, who are the prey of a number of fortune-tellers, card-readers, and charm-sellers, who are not the most desirable class of citizens; yet who are withal harmless, and by no means such robbers as the politicians who have the City of Brotherly Love in their clutches; or the countless multitudes of Catholic priests who grind out of the ignorant masses of their followers, by working on their superstition, all the money they can, keeping them on the verge of beggary by demanding pay for Masses to release the souls of their friends and relatives, represented by them as roasting in purgatory. The Protestant minister is no better who preaches eternal damnation to his congregation in order to frighten them into paying him a big salary. . . . Spiritualists should show their strength and stop this movement, which threatens to become general all over the United States.

We are not entirely sorry to hear it. There is nothing like ignorant persecution for the forwarding of the truth. But honest mediums must not descend to the level of gipsies.

About 6000 years ago, some time before the 'creation' of Adam and Eve, as some folks read the Book of Genesis, a highly-civilised people, far away from the garden of Eden, had elaborated and interwoven into the whole of its social and religious life a profoundly thoughtful system of beliefs and hopes in relation to natural immortality: and, to this day, the picturesque beauty and complexity of this system of beliefs and hopes is one of the wonders of the world. Dr. Wiedemann, the learned Egyptologist, in a small work entitled 'The Ancient Egyptian Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul' (London: H. Grevel and Co.), has just given us, in a very condensed form, a highly curious glimpse of these beliefs and hopes:—if anything, rather too condensed; his statements having too much the appearance of disconnected pieces of a clever puzzle. But the unity is sufficiently clear to lead to the conclusion that the ancient Egyptian, at the time we name, had carried to a high pitch of perfection his expectation concerning a life beyond this merely physical stage. In certain inscriptions, about which there is no doubt, belonging to a date at least 3000 B.C., 'the doctrine of immortality appears as a completed system with a long history of development behind it': and that 'long history' takes us back to at least the date assigned in the Bible, as some people read it, to the creation of Man!

The most curious thing about this system is that it presents the human being as a kind of limited liability

company. At death, the 'living, indestructible parts of a man (and there were several) each set out alone to find its way to the gods.' These parts were the Ka, the Ab, the Ba, the Sâhû, the Khaib; or the Double, the Heart, the Soul, the Form, and the Shadow. These all stood apart at the dissolution of the person, and then answered and acted for themselves. In time, they might go into partnership again, but, to continue our figure, that depended upon the Court of Bankruptcy, where sat the assessors, and where the life was weighed.

Of course, this led to confusion in anything that could be called a 'system,' and, according to Dr. Wiedemann, the confusion was very great. He says, 'The Egyptians never attained to any clear idea of the Osirian underworld: the same confusion and obscurity reigned over it as over their whole conception of the unseen world and of deity. They pondered deeply over a series of separate problems without being able to unite the results into one consistent whole.' But the probable explanation is that what we have called the 'system' is really a conglomeration and partial assimilation of 'many originally heterogeneous doctrines.'

One thing, and only one thing, was perfectly clear—that the life beyond was intensely real. 'The average Egyptian expected to lead as active a life in the world to come as he had led here': and he expected his chief employment would be agriculture, while, 'for change and recreation,' the blessed ones 'sailed upon the canals of the next world, played at draughts with their own souls, or made offerings to the gods.'

Altogether, it is a queer glimpse of the unseen which this book gives. The illustrations are uncommonly striking, especially as showing how sharply the Egyptians distinguished between the carcase and the self. Figure 9, 'The Ba (or Soul) visiting the mummy on its funeral couch' (from 'The Book of the Dead') is a good specimen of their teaching value.

Mr. J. N. Maskelyne has been once more hashing up his 'experiences' in the investigation of Spiritualism; this time for 'The Christian Commonwealth.' We find only the old old story: not one new gleam of light. If anything, he is a little more tiresome and a little less considerate. His style, his animus, his knowledge, and his manners may be judged from the following summary of his remarks:—

'I met with several Spiritualistic impostors, in my early days, whom I successfully ran to earth. Mrs. Besant needs watching. You cannot accept her word without corroboration; and when people talk about their honesty, it is time to button up your pocket. At one time, mediums were in favour. They were engaged to give séances in private houses just as conjurers and society clowns are. Spiritualism was then a cloak for flirtation, and led to a great deal of immorality. Mr. Stead is honest but a victim of self-deception. My wife unconsciously (thoughtlessly?) wrote on an envelope an address that was sixteen years out of date: (and, of course, that explains how Mr. Stead writes automatically descriptions of events then happening sixteen miles, or sixty miles, or six hundred miles away!) It is absurd to believe in Spirits, because they appear clothed. You cannot believe in the ghost of a pair of breeches (a remark which always indicates vast ignorance of the whole subject). Minds separated by long distances upon the earth may, in a state of violent agitation, as at times of great crisis, impress one another; but not from "the other world" (a mere assertion). Fraud and folly are abundant: unscrupulousness and chicanery exist without limit: blind ignorance and high mental culture go hand in hand: but, after a life devoted to the search for genuine Spiritualistic phenomena, I have found none.'

Is it really necessary to characterise or reply to this conjurer's chatter? We will only make one remark. He says he has devoted his life to the search. Perhaps his next interviewer will ask him with what mediums he has experimented, and for how long; and into what private Spiritualist families he has been admitted.

We ought to say, in justice to 'The Christian Commonwealth,' that it has inserted a long letter in defence of Spiritualism, the conclusion of which is very much to the point. The writer says:—

Surely, sir, if you really desired to get at the truth about any matter, you would go to its professed exponents. You would not consult the agnostic upon the truth of the Bible record, or a dustman upon the physico-teleological argument. Yet when you take up the question of Theosophy, and, we will say, 'alleged' spiritual phenomena, you straightway assume jugglery and fraud, and send to consult Mr. Maskelyne, of all people in the world.

That is sufficiently difficult to explain.

## TWO VIEWS.

### VIEW No. I.

In your impression of July 27th there appears a contribution from Mrs. Alice Bodington in which she says in reference to Spiritualism: 'It has given back a Christ and a Heaven I had lost; it has robbed death of every terror, and given the confidence that I have not lost any that I have loved. It promises rest to those who need it and work for those who serve God; it gives the hope that we shall see all those who have helped us—the philosophers, the poets, the saints who have gone before; it promises perpetual advancement in love and wisdom and knowledge; and yet the question can be asked, "Is Spiritualism a Religion?"'

Precisely so. And Spiritualism has done for me exactly what it has done for Mrs. Bodington, and yet I find no difficulty in declaring that Spiritualism is not in any sense a religion.

The telescope reveals to me the mighty wonders of the heavens; but the telescope is not, therefore, the science of astronomy. The finger-post which guides me in the right path to travel is not the destination I am seeking. The guide-book which enables me to find my way through an intricate locality, is not itself the locality which I wish to survey; and the good and evil phenomena of Spiritualism, which send me in search of a religion to enable me to avoid the pitfalls which surround me in my explorations, cannot themselves supply a religion from such shaky conditions. In discussing the subject, what we want are facts and logic.

### VIEW No. 2.

From my article on 'Immortality—Limited,' which appeared in your impression of August 3rd, a paragraph unaccountably dropped out. In speaking of the resurrection of the body I remarked that:—

'The disappearance of our Lord's dead body from the sepulchre in which it was laid, favoured the belief that the bodies of the dead are actually raised from the grave; but I contend that the isolated fact does not justify the general inference. I believe that our Saviour's body was removed by miraculous agency! Otherwise it would have been probably embalmed or mummified, and some day, perhaps, exhibited in a museum.'

'No fate could have done more to materialise and vulgarise His mission; and we ought to be deeply grateful that no personal relic of Him is in existence, as it would have become inevitably an object of idolatry and fetish-worship.'

'What remains of Him is the wonderful and imperishable record of His divine words and deeds. Truly the noblest gift of God to man!'

NEWTON CROSLAND.

THE world is a great system of work; the same task is not laid upon everyone; but upon everyone is laid the duty to feel as the brother of his fellow men, and to consecrate himself as the keeper of himself and his brother. What we can do is only to be ready, to hold ourselves ready, and to make ourselves ready, as often as the call of our brother-man comes to us, to stand by his side with a helping hand.—*From the German.*

## SPIRITUALISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

## AN OPEN LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am so thoroughly convinced of your personal loyalty to truth and of your desire to consider, with entire fairness, the views of an honest-minded opponent that I have no hesitation in writing to you, in a very outspoken way, on a subject which is at present occupying the attention of many of your readers.

It will not be necessary for me to explain my own attitude towards Spiritualism, as you are fully acquainted with it, and have only very recently commented favourably upon an article of mine which I contributed to the pages of a well-known magazine. I am not only a whole-hearted believer in the objective truths of Spiritualism, but am also firmly convinced that, if rightly received and understood, it has a very important and emphatic message to the people of this present age. It offers, in my opinion, a scientific and, to all reasonable minds, conclusive demonstration of the persistence of the individual after physical death, and effectually destroys the arrogant claims of the materialistic philosophy of life. I know, moreover, from personal experience, that it has, in very many instances, proved a potent factor for good, kindling new hopes and aspirations in the heart, and leading the mind to a nobler conception of the aim and purpose of human life.

In the face of these convictions, therefore, it would manifestly be impossible for me to feel any measure of sympathy with the extreme views respecting the true character of Spiritualism, to which you refer in your leading article of August 10th.

But, while thus distinctly leaning to the brighter view of the matter, and while fully recognising the high value of the results of psychical research in their relation to natural religion, it seems to me to be impossible to deny that the matter has most certainly its 'darker side,' and that it cannot serve the interests of truth to hide this from view, or to attempt to diminish its proportions. The pages of your own paper are a constant witness to the fact that this 'darker side' is both felt and appreciated by very many of your readers, whom it would manifestly be unfair to suspect of bigotry or narrowness of thought.

There can be no doubt that this vague misgiving respecting the real meaning of Spiritualism is chiefly due to the attitude which the leaders of the movement are known to adopt with respect to revealed religion and the claims of Christ upon human life. And I am convinced that this misgiving will continue, so long as this attitude remains unchanged, and for the simple reason, that it is founded upon instincts and intuitive moral perceptions of our nature, which are far too firmly rooted to be shaken by the tenor of spirit communications.

Now you will, I am sure, forgive me when I say that I believe this negative attitude to be not only illogical, but to be based upon a fundamental and very common misconception respecting the nature and character of the Christian faith. In support of this statement I would adduce the well-known fact that, in numerous instances, those very truths which Spiritualists are in the habit of regarding as antagonistic to orthodox Christianity, are looked upon by certainly no less intelligent minds as the strongest arguments in favour of its truth.

Spiritualists assert, for instance, that since modern research has shown the appearance of each individual man on this earth to be, in the truest sense, an incarnation, it is unreasonable to suppose that the Incarnation of Jesus Christ was as unique and significant an event as orthodox Christianity represents it to be. They emphasize the force of this statement by the communications which individual spirits have made from time to time respecting this latter claim. But, surely, the argument may, with equal force, and perhaps with better logic, be used the other way. Modern research has shown that a true incarnation takes place when a human being is born; it is, therefore, reasonable to believe in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ—a Divine Person appearing in the world for a specific end. After all, we were asked to believe in *the* Incarnation before Spiritualism told us anything definite about incarnations.

Why it should be assumed that the first proposition represents a free and emancipated form of thought, and that the latter is the expression of an antiquated theology is somewhat difficult to conceive. Spiritualists are never tired of asserting that their teaching frees the human mind from the bondage of effete creeds, and that it supplies us with a more rational

philosophy of life. But do you not think it conceivable that a subtle error, and one into which very many superficial thinkers are apt to fall, may be found to lie at the root of this argument? There is unquestionably a kind of mental freedom in the Spiritualistic conception of God and of truth, but that freedom is surely the freedom of ignorance (I use the term in the sense of not knowing) which the human mind enjoyed before the coming of Christ, and from which it made supreme efforts to be free, because it found it to be an unutterable bondage.

Acknowledge, as I am sure you do, the existence of the instinctive and deep-seated desire of the heart to know God and to solve the mystery of life, is it really a condition of freedom to remain, respecting these questions, in a permanent state of doubt and uncertainty—to return to pre-Christian conceptions and erect altars to the unknown God? I have passed the earlier part of my life amongst confirmed Rationalists and have, in a clerical career of some years, come in contact with men of all shades of thought and belief, and I can testify most emphatically that such an attitude of the mind is the most pronounced bondage. It subjects the mind to its own constantly changing moods and dispositions, and robs life of every distinctive rule and guiding principle. It is the most effective means of destroying all definite personal religion and of throwing the aching human heart back upon itself.

Believe me, my dear Sir, Spiritualists are doing no real service to mankind by commending, for its acceptance, this principle of a pseudo liberty. The human mind, in every sphere of its energies, is manifestly free until a discovered fact or truth limits its operations. From that moment it is of necessity in bondage—tied by the law it has found to be at work. It can thenceforth only move within the action and circumference of that law. But this bondage, surely, is the highest freedom. It is the bondage of knowledge, of enlightenment—of truth. The civilised Christian man is the best illustration of this form of bondage. It is a bondage which has made him free, since it has saved him from himself, in the sphere both of his physical and his moral life.

Thus every newly discovered fact of natural science must be said to limit the operation of the intellect, bringing it into bondage to facts and truths known or ascertained.

And what is true in the sphere of the natural is equally true in the sphere of the spiritual. While men had only the light of nature to guide them in their search, they were certainly free in the matter of their religious ideas. They formed their own conception respecting God and the origin of life, and since there was no disclosure from without, there was no reason why one should not be as good and as true as another.

But this subjective conception did not satisfy their instincts; they searched and reasoned and questioned, and began to yearn for that fuller truth which could alone still the cravings of their hearts. And (as Christians believe) the higher truth came, the character and personality of the Deity were fully revealed; and in that revelation the mind found rest. In this particular sphere the coming of Christ unquestionably destroyed the freedom of thought; it brought the mind into bondage; but surely the bondage which it brought was the highest freedom, because it saved the mind from itself. With the fruits of this bondage and the testimony of two thousand years before us, can we wonder that thoughtful men hesitate to return to pre-Christian conceptions, and to seriously believe that they are thereby securing for themselves greater freedom of thought? It must be clear, surely, that such freedom might be found the greatest bondage!

And it does not really modify the argument to introduce the vexed question of Theology. It is a mere strife of words. All serious students of the subject know that there is but one Christianity, namely, that summarised in the Apostles' Creed, and that anything less than and different from it, is not Christianity in the historic sense. Christ was what He manifestly claimed to be, or He is nothing. There is no possibility of a compromise.

I have no desire to enter into any controverted point of theology. But, granting for a moment what I am sure few minds will find it difficult to grant, that in response to the longings of mankind a closer approach to man was contemplated by the Deity, in what form would a Spiritualist expect such an approach to come—how would he expect God to reveal Himself? Man has no faculty of concretely conceiving of anything higher than man; how then should he have come to conceive of God except under the limitations of man? What is

there, after all, from the Spiritualistic standpoint, unreasonable in the thought that He who put His highest creatures within a corporeal frame of marvellous construction, should, under the limitations of that same frame, approach them and hold converse with them? What is there unreasonable in the thought, that by receiving into our decaying spiritual organism the quickening elements of an absolutely pure and glorified nature, our spiritual bodies are repaired and invigorated, and the natural process of decay is stayed and arrested? It seems to me that it is just from Spiritualism, with its teaching respecting the spirit body, that we might expect support, on natural grounds, of this important doctrine of Revealed Truth!

But I venture to think that the persistent belief in the Divine character of orthodox Christianity has a far deeper and securer foundation than all this, and one which no passing arguments of any one school of thought is ever likely seriously and permanently to affect. The historic Faith appeals to the normal instincts and experiences of the complex human consciousness, and not only fully recognises men's moral needs, but provides means of entirely satisfying them. I am persuaded that, so long as men are conscious that they are out of harmony with the mind and purposes of God, that they have transgressed the law written on their hearts, and find themselves unable, unaided, to return to God, so long will they believe in the Atonement and the Divine scheme of Redemption and forgiveness. So long as they experience a real desire for a more immediate communion with the Source of life, so long will they believe in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, and the sacramental provisions.

And surely the entire reasonableness of these views has never been defended with greater success than in this present age. I need but refer to Mr. Gladstone's paper on the 'Atonement' and to Mr. Balfour's book on the 'Foundations of Belief.' Am I claiming too much, then, when I say that the best and maturest thought of this age is manifestly in favour of the orthodox conception of Jesus Christ and of the truth of the Catholic faith?

That it presents no intellectual difficulties, and leaves no problems to be solved, what honest thinkers would dare to assert? A Christian constantly asserts that, with his present powers of perception, he can only discern and understand in part—can only at best see 'as in a glass darkly.' He is content, while obeying the promptings of his heart, to acknowledge the limitations of his intellect.

But are there no difficulties in the commonly received belief of Spiritualism? Does it say nothing of the present limitations of our powers of perception? I have endeavoured, in my recent article, to summarise briefly in what I believe the main results of psychical research to consist. They are unquestionably of an important character, and of high value. But can it be fairly maintained that they amount to more than mere outline knowledge of the world behind the veil and of the laws which govern its life? And is it not unsafe and unphilosophic, on the strength of such fragmentary knowledge, to hurl anathemas at orthodox belief, and to allow Spiritualism to become identified with pronounced antagonism to cherished beliefs and convictions, which have stood the test of nearly two thousand years? Would it not be well to remember that that antagonism has, after all, a very weak and insecure foundation? I am personally persuaded that there are already abundant signs of a great reaction of thought, and that the final gain will not be on the side of Spiritualism. It will be well nigh impossible, moreover, to explain away that certainly more than significant fact that the denial of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ (and the many truths it involves), which may be said to be a characteristic of Spiritualism, was foretold and warned against nearly two thousand years before the rise of the modern movement.

You will, I am sure, receive these statements in the spirit in which they are offered. I have, as you know, many personal friends amongst Spiritualists, and have received from them much help and uniform kindness. It would grieve me to be in any sense regarded as the critic of my friends; I know that earnest zeal for truth animates the hearts of many amongst them. But I think that occasionally the antagonist, too, should be heard, lest we forget that there is a zeal which is not according to knowledge, and that there are conclusions which are based upon *immature* knowledge and hasty generalisations. The noblest cause which we have at heart may be made to suffer and to languish because of the misdirected zeal of its champions. Let the constantly attacked, therefore, be given an opportunity of making his defence. Not

infrequently the conflict of opinion arises from fundamental misconceptions, and sometimes there comes a day when combatants look each other in the face and begin to wonder what they have been fighting about.

It is not inconceivable that some such misconception may hereafter be found to lie at the root of the present antagonism of Spiritualism to the truths of Revealed Religion.

Believe me, my dear Sir, with kindest regards,

Very sincerely yours,

August 14th, 1895.

J. GODFREY RAUPERT.

#### A QUESTION FOR GENERAL 'LORRISON.'—A REPLY.

BY GENERAL 'LORRISON.'

In 'LIGHT' of August 17th, Mr. A. Cochrane refers to three items connected with Spiritualism, on one of which he asks that I 'be a little more explicit.' I have been, and am, always pleased to give as much information as I am able, to those who have not been lucky enough to have as long, and as varied an experience as that which has fallen to my lot.

In answer to several inquirers who wished to know how they could obtain admission to private circles, I replied that 'it is difficult,' and that 'it is only by waiting and watching that such a result can be obtained.' This reply, it is stated, is ambiguous. Perhaps it may be so termed. I will, therefore, endeavour to more fully explain my meaning. In my own experience it seemed (although I do not believe it was) by mere chance that I heard of a private circle of Spiritualists, near where I was at the time residing, and I at once expressed a wish to be permitted to attend this circle. It was some months before my request was granted, and had I not at once been on the alert on hearing of this circle, I might never have known of Spiritualism. I was not aware that in my present neighbourhood there was any medium, but I have since ascertained that when I was speaking at a public meeting, at which a medium was present, there were seen around me certain conditions which informed the medium that I should be useful at a séance. This led to the husband of the medium calling on me, and eventually, after long and patient waiting, in our obtaining those remarkable manifestations, some of which have been reported in 'LIGHT.'

Those who are only superficially acquainted with the subject, are not aware of the subtlety of the laws which govern and lead to great results. No sooner did we obtain such results than the control impressed upon us the necessity of not admitting any person to our séances, at least for some time. 'If you bring any stranger to join this circle,' said the control, 'you will stop our being able to do anything. Wait until we tell you it can be done safely, and we will then by some means find out whether the visitor you propose is one who could work with you and us.' It does not necessarily follow that 'a fairly long course of study' renders a person fitted to join a circle.

Mr. Cochrane writes: 'And why throw so many difficulties in the way of the inquirer?' I fear this remark shows how easily some writers drift into error. The assertion as to throwing difficulties in the way is opposed to facts, and is an unjust accusation. If a séance were a mere peep-show, to which admission gratis might be granted, things would be different. When, however, the results are produced by certain powers, which give positive directions, these directions must be carried out. Why do not persons anxious to obtain phenomena form small circles of their own, and, by patience and obeying conditions, endeavour to obtain results? Since the experiences of my small circle were reported in 'LIGHT,' upwards of twenty persons have begged to be allowed to join the circle. Is it a proof of 'unspiritual conduct' that consent has not been given, when the ruling control assures us that even one person joining would stop everything?

Mr. Cochrane seems somewhat hasty and unjust in his condemnations. He again asks, 'Why are money and money-making apparently placed so much in the forefront?' This is again, as far as my experience goes, an unjust accusation. In many cases mediums have had to entirely give up their former occupations and means of earning their daily bread, in order to satisfy inquirers by holding séances. Are these mediums to be left to starve? How about paying clergymen?

Again, it is asked, 'Why should not writers sign their names? Why should interesting experiences be anonymous?' Surely such inquiries indicate a very limited knowledge of the

present condition of the outside world, especially when the additional inquiry is made, 'What is there in the principles of Spiritualism to be ashamed of?' If even a small majority of the so-called educated were reasonable, and were influenced more by facts than by prejudices, things would be different, and no doubt, in time they will become so. What was Mr. Newton Crosland's experience when he gave his name as a believer in Spiritualism? In a recent number of 'LIGHT' he stated that he had lost several hundreds per annum. Old friends pitied him and fought shy of him. I have known of many men, who, having given their names as writers on Spiritual matters, have at once been stamped as lunatics, or cranks, and would not be listened to, or what they wrote would not be read. If such proceedings were adopted by the ignorant only, it would not much matter, but when they are adopted by men, whom the indiscriminating public regard as great and infallible scientific authorities, it is an important question for consideration.

In a recent number of 'LIGHT' Mr. Robert Cooper quotes a letter of the late Professor Huxley, in which the Professor states that he has not read that which has been sent him about Spiritualism, and it was Mr. Huxley who was a paramount authority at the Royal Society, and who was mainly responsible for the society refusing to listen to Mr. Crookes. More than once it has been said to me by men occupying official scientific positions, 'Oh, X. is a believer in Spiritualism; that's quite enough for me; I won't either read or hear what he has to say, as he must be off his head.' Whilst such dogmatic ignorance is sitting in high places, as a teacher of science and truth, it requires consideration whether one shall be outlawed by giving one's name to be scoffed at in many ways. It is not, therefore, as Mr. Cochrane has put it, that there is anything in Spiritualism to be ashamed of, but it becomes a question whether any great advantage is to be gained by putting oneself up as a sort of Aunt Sally to be shied at by partially informed critics. More especially is this prudence necessary when, although we may personally be independent and have a contempt for such proceedings, those with whom we may be associated are more vulnerable. When the Editor of 'LIGHT' can assure his readers that he knows and has confidence in the writer of an article, I do not see that it matters much whether this article has been written by Smith, Jones, or Brown.

### THEOSOPHICAL MONTHLIES.

The 'Theosophist' and 'Lucifer' for August provide their readers with the usual monthly supply of 'ghostly comfort,' meaning thereby comfort not derived from ghosts or ghost stories, but from pious reflections and exhortations of a Theosophical nature. Of this kind are: 'The Theosophic Idea of Creation,' 'Right Beginnings for New Recruits,' and 'The Necessity of Spiritual Culture,' in the 'Theosophist'; and 'On the Watch Tower,' 'Theosophic Morals as applied to Education,' and 'The Doctrine of the Heart,' in 'Lucifer.' It is astonishing, after all, how similar all pious reflections and exhortations are, *mutatis mutandis*; the ideas are the same, the names different. Some Theosophy, however, approaches nearer to Lamaism than to Christianity; for the peculiarity of the religion of Tibet, where eight or ten per cent. of the males are monks or priests, is that the 'clergy' are priests to a multitude of good and evil spirits, particularly the latter, the worship of 'God' in the Christian sense being unknown. Take, for instance, the following Theosophical 'teaching' from 'The Doctrine of the Heart,' edited by Mrs. Besant:—

The feeling of pain is one to which any person who leads the life of the spirit becomes accustomed. We know that pain cannot last for ever, and even if it did it would not matter very much. We cannot hope to be of any service to Them or to Humanity without taking our full measure of suffering from the enemies. But the ire of these Monarchs of Darkness is sometimes terrible to face, and they perfectly startle one by the Maya they sometimes create.

All this is quite in the spirit of Lamaism, and such ideas apparently need only to be fully developed to land those who encourage them in the same apathy and superstitious terror that characterise the Tibetans.

'Karma,' too, by Mrs. Besant, may be almost described as 'ghostly comfort.' Karma itself is a kind of Theosophical kaleidoscope out of which even the least imaginative Theosophist can twist new moral patterns; for to the conception of Karma, as cause and effect, the Theosophist adds the religious idea of

an independent or divine will which 'adjusts effects to causes'; in other words a personal God, or very close imitation of one. This adulteration (as it seems to us) of the scientific law of cause and effect differentiates the Karma of Theosophy from Karma as recognised by modern science. Our readers may remember how Huxley, in his 'Evolution and Ethics,' defines character as that thing which is the product of an immense series of ancestral experiences, the sum or net product of which is born with us and develops as we grow. He says:—

The Indian philosophers called character, as thus defined, 'Karma.' It is this Karma which passes from life to life, and links them in the chain of transmigrations; and they held that it is modified in each life, not merely by confluence of parentage, but by its own acts. . . . As Professor Rhys Davis aptly says, the snowdrop 'is a snowdrop and not an oak, and just that kind of snowdrop, because it is the outcome of the Karma of an endless series of past existences.'

Mrs. Besant's 'Karma' is far less material. Man creates mental images of three kinds, she tells us, akashic, higher astral, and lower astral, and stores these mental images up for consumption after death:—

The devachanic life is one of assimilation; the experiences collected on earth have to be worked into the texture of the soul, and it is by these that the Ego grows; its development depends on the number and variety of the mental images it has formed during its earth-life and transmutes into their appropriate and more permanent types. Gathering together all the mental images of a special class, it extracts from them their essence; by meditation it creates a mental organ, and pours into it as faculty the essence it has extracted.

With regard to the 'transmutation' of mental images, 'Aspirations and Desires become Capacities; Repeated Thoughts become Tendencies; Wills to perform become Actions; Experiences become Wisdom; Painful Experiences become Conscience.'

The other articles in 'Lucifer' are 'Orpheus,' by G. R. S. Mead, an erudite discourse upon the Orphic philosophy; 'Early Christianity and its Teachings'; 'Two Houses'; and 'Unpublished Letters of Eliphas Levi.'

In the 'Theosophist' Colonel Olcott continues his Confessions, as we may almost call 'Old Diary Leaves,' a record of the early history of the Theosophical Society. We have a minute description of the first visit of 'the Founders' to Ceylon, and of their Theosophical junketings there. The highest honour the Island can confer on anyone is to show him Buddha's tooth, which is rarely exhibited, but was shown to the Prince of Wales and to 'the Founders.' When it had been taken out of its many consecutive jewelled cases, they found, not an elephant's tooth, as generally reported, but *something* about the size of an alligator's tooth, supported by a gold wire stem rising from a lotus flower of the same material. The 'something,' however, 'bears no resemblance to any tooth at all, whether animal or human. It is slightly curved, about two inches in length, and nearly one in breadth at the base, and rounded at the extremity.' When asked if she thought it genuine, Madame Blavatsky characteristically replied, 'Of course it is his tooth; one he had when he was born as a tiger.' The real relic was destroyed with much formality by the Inquisitors at Goa some centuries ago. The 'Theosophist' also contains articles on 'Aryan Worship in Siberia; Ordeals and Mysteries of Ancient Egypt; The Jain Theory of Re-incarnation'; 'The Radhaswami Society of Agra'; and 'Leaves.'

The writer of 'The Radhaswami Society of Agra,' gives us a curious glimpse of the relations between a *Guru* and his *Chela*. The *Chela* must serve his *Guru* in three ways—by being his 'menial servant,' by giving him as much money as he can, and by conversing and discussing with him. The process undergone by the *Chela* is obviously one of hypnotisation:—

To see and contemplate the *Guru* properly, the disciple should have *Arati*; that is, placing a flame of light between the *Guru* and himself, he should fix his eyes on those of the former, which also will be steadily turned towards his, while a fellow disciple recites some devotional poems from one of the books. This act establishes a magnetic current, which does the disciple great spiritual good.

The consequence is that when the *Chela* afterwards goes to sit in a retired place and closes his eyes and ears, 'he will see rivers, mountains, gardens, palaces, the stellar worlds, and the different suns; will smell spiritual scents, and drink the nectar that drops down from the higher regions'; to say nothing of communicating with Mahatmas and Dhyan Chohans, and learning all about Karma, Re-incarnation, and the 'Seven Principles of Man.'

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EDITOR ... .. E. DAWSON ROGERS  
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## Light,

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### SPIRITUALISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

We print with pleasure Mr. Raupert's communication, and very gladly say that, if all criticism were offered in the same tone, criticism and even controversy might be both profitable and pleasant: and, in truth, we have never been able to understand why people should wrangle over Christ's religion and be bitter in discussing God.

We may say at once that we agree with much that Mr. Raupert has said, and, we may as well add, that we wonder a little why some of his remonstrances were addressed to us. He has sent the cap to the wrong head. For instance, referring to our imperfect knowledge as Spiritualists, he says: 'Is it not unsafe and unphilosophic, on the strength of such fragmentary knowledge, to hurl anathemas at orthodox belief, and to allow Spiritualism to become identified with pronounced antagonism to cherished beliefs and convictions which have stood the test of nearly two thousand years?' To which question we can only say, *Very*: but

Let the galled jade wince: our withers are unwrung.

We do not believe in 'hurling anathemas' at anything or anyone: and we have no wish to cherish 'pronounced antagonism'; though we often find it difficult to avoid a smile when earnest men talk about 'cherished beliefs and convictions which have stood the test of nearly two thousand years,' when the truth is that hardly one Christian dogma has stood the test of two hundred.

Mr. Raupert will not think us rude if we say that his thoughtful letter is extremely vague in some important respects. For instance, he reproves certain leading Spiritualists for their 'attitude with respect to the claims of Christ upon human life.' What does he mean? He seems to affirm that 'the Incarnation of Jesus Christ was as unique and significant an event as orthodox Christianity represents it to be.' What does he mean? He should define; for these phrases have long come to mean almost anything: and there was never a time when men reputed to be 'orthodox' so differed as to these matters. That is undeniable.

Now we have not the slightest intention to drift into a theological discussion, any more than we have any intention to formulate a creed and advocate it. We have kept and we intend to keep the doors open. For us there are no closed questions and no closed doors: but neither do we intend to be excluded from rational references to the great spiritual subjects of Revelation and Inspiration, and references which fully recognise the progressive knowledges of mankind and the absolute need of freedom—as God's

instrument in man's education. It is here that we must part company with Mr. Raupert. He says that, before Christ, the human race enjoyed the freedom of ignorance, but that Christianity has brought us into the blessed 'bondage' of communicated knowledge. Before Christ, he says, men had 'only the light of Nature to guide them,' but, when Christ came, the 'character and personality of the Deity were fully revealed, and in that revelation the mind found rest.' A wonderful assertion! 'Rest'? Why, for 1800 years, Christians have excommunicated and even murdered one another, wherever there were Christians, in disputing about this very 'revelation,' and in the dear name of Christ. 'Rest'? Is it rest even to-day? We claim to be Christians: but we do not claim to be at rest in Christendom, and we see very little rest anywhere in the Churches or in the Schools.

But, as for this 'light of Nature,' is that not the light of God? Every unfolding of Nature is a manifestation of God, just as Jesus Christ was. That, surely, is the result of a spiritual interpretation of life. Our very unrest is natural and inevitable, as God's way of leading us on, or, rather, as God's way of making us lead ourselves and one another on. We say candidly that we do not want the 'bridge' of any finality by 'revelation.' The freedom of the search, and of responsibility in seeking, is best for us, though it may make us pilgrims, and deprive us of 'rest': and we hold that there is more of God in this programme than in the programme which begins and ends with God coming in once for all to reveal all the truth, especially when we have to add that the result of revealing all the truth is to set us by the ears in trying to find out where and what it is. Spiritualism explains all that.

As an alternative to accepting certain doctrines supposed to be Christian, Mr. Raupert strongly intimates that there is nothing for us but a 'return to pre-Christian conceptions': but that is about as arbitrary an assertion as one could make. There are many other alternatives very much better suited to nineteenth century English men and women: and even 'the light of Nature' has done something for us during these 1800 or 1900 years. But what does he mean by 'pre-Christian conceptions'? There were a score of these, wide as the poles asunder. To which of them should we have to return? We might choose Old Testament conceptions. Would that exclude us from the Divine 'revelation'?

But we now arrive at the heart of Mr. Raupert's testimony: and here we admit he is not vague. He gives us precisely what we wanted—a definition of 'Christianity in the historic sense,' or, in other words, Christianity as he wants us to accept it. He simply refers us to 'the Apostles' Creed.' Now we are not going to falsify our promise, as to not entering upon a theological discussion; we are only moved to point out what the so-called 'Apostles' Creed' really asserts: and we say 'so-called' because we do not believe that the Apostles had any hand in the construction of it. That Creed asserts the conception of Jesus Christ by the Holy Ghost and his birth from a virgin. It also asserts 'the resurrection of the body.' The first anyone can believe, and yet be a Spiritualist: the second seems incompatible with any clear notion of what Spiritualism is; but all we can say is that everyone must follow his own light. As we have said, we want to keep the doors open. We would say to the Christian and to the Jew, to the Catholic and to the Protestant, to the Trinitarian and to the Unitarian, to the very orthodox and to the veriest agnostic, 'Come and believe in the life beyond, if you can: and, at all events, give the splendid hope the benefit of the doubt.'

Our testimony is for breadth, for inclusion, for freedom, for humility, for charity; and for this reason, that no one knows everything yet: no one sees to the end yet: no one

is beyond the Divine process of education by the working out of natural law. But, while we say this, and seem yielding, we hope to stand like a rock against either Christian or antichristian excommunication ; and we cannot hold out any hope to Mr. Raupert that we shall ever advise Spiritualists to accept the 'bondage' of the 'Apostles' Creed,' or any other finality in the form of a Creed. In another article, from the Spiritualist's point of view, we will tell him why.

## THE MYSTERIES OF MEDIUMSHIP.

BY OUR SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE.

MR. JOHN SLATER.

(Continued from Page 404).

This week I give a set of examples of Mr. Slater's clairvoyant tests in America. They are cut at random from reports of public demonstrations, appearing in such papers as the 'San Francisco Examiner,' the 'Kansas City World,' the 'Denver Republican,' are recorded by reporters by no means friendly to the medium and his exhibition, and are all of either this or the end of last year's date. Next week I hope to give a similar set of equally striking experiences with Mr. Slater in this country, which have not so far seen the light of print.

I may preface the quotations by explaining that Mr. Slater's plan at all these meetings, as well as in England, was to retire to the rear of the hall after inviting the audience to come up and place articles belonging to them on a table on the platform. If, on returning, he found too large a heap, he would unceremoniously sweep off about half of them on to the floor, and from the remainder select at random, one by one, various things such as handkerchiefs, purses, photographs, and scraps of paper on which initials were written. He would then, in almost every case, point out the owner, and proceed to give information more or less extended and explicit. At times he would go down into the midst of the audience, and there grasp the hand of some timid questioner and tell him things face to face.

During his stay in Kansas City, Slater has given nearly one thousand tests of alleged 'spirit power.' In some of the tests the spooks played practical jokes upon him, and told him things which were not absolutely true ; but, taking his séances as a whole, the mistakes were comparatively few, and he has given some most remarkable tests.

A 'World' reporter attended his séance on Friday night and again last night. Friday night, Slater's 'guides' led him into only one error. Last night he seemed to have a firmer hold upon his spook friends and did not make a single error.

One of Slater's best tests last night was in connection with Mr. George Sheidley. Slater threw his head back and closed his eyes as he said, 'I see the spirit of a little fair-haired girl, about five years of age. I see the revolving paddle wheel of a boat. The little girl is caught in it and is being crushed to death. She tells me her name is Fanny, and that her brother is here. Does anyone know this little girl?'

Mr. Sheidley was in the back part of the house near the door. He raised his hand and said, 'I do.'

'She tells me she was drowned in the Ohio river between forty and fifty years ago. Is this correct?'

'It is,' said Mr. Sheidley. 'It was just forty-four years ago.'

Slater walked to the back part of the house. 'She was your sister,' he continued. 'She was five years of age and you were three. You were playing upon the wharf in an Ohio river town, and she was tending you, her baby brother. Suddenly she fell off the wharf. One of those little flat-bottomed boats was passing. The little girl was caught in the paddle wheel and ground round and round by it. Is this true?'

'Yes ; all true.'

'Did I know this?'

'You could not have known it.'

'She brings you a message. It is to tell you that she will help you ; that you will weather the storm and come out all right. Do you understand the message?'

Mr. Sheidley said he understood, and many in the audience nodded knowingly, as if they understood, too.

Slater went into a sort of fit and described a man who was murdered by being kicked to death by a man named Fred. The dead man was a brother-in-law of a lady in the audience. Slater pointed her out and asked if she had a brother-in-law named Lewellyn Quinn. She said she had, but hadn't heard from him for a long time. He said Quinn was the murdered man, and, in order to convince her of the fact, described Quinn, and said he was born without his left hand.

Slater went to a young man and said, 'Your name is James Thayer. You were named after your father's brother, who is buried in Canada. He is here now. You said this evening, "Slater can tell me all that has happened, but nothing in the future." I am going to show you that I can tell the future. Last week you wrote a letter to your aunt in Canada. You wanted to know what she knew about some property in England. Now I want to tell you that you will receive an answer on Thursday of this week and it will make you happy.' The young man admitted that it was all true, and that no one except himself knew anything about the letter.

He picked up a photograph.

'This tells me a story of a once happy family,' he said. 'Everything was love and harmony. Then there came a break. That family was torn asunder. Who owns this photograph?'

A woman sitting near the medium said she did.

'Now, what you want me to tell you is, if that family will ever be reunited,' continued Slater. 'Is that right?'

'Yes,' said the woman, as she burst into tears.

'Well, it never will be. If you think so, you're a fool!' and he snapped his fingers in her face.

Slater told an old gentleman that he had had trouble over some insurance. The old gentleman said he had not—well, only just a little. Whereat the audience laughed. Slater then said he was in the power of a spook of the old negro mammy variety, which informed him that in ante-bellum days the old gentleman's father had taken all the family possessions in the shape of money, jewellery, and plate and buried them, and they had never since been found. The old gentleman acknowledged this to be so, but the medium had no consolation to offer him in the matter.

Mr. Slater took up a slip of paper lying upon the table, which had been placed there by one in the audience. Upon it were the initials F. C. He said, 'Two persons are connected with this paper. The initial of one is J. and of the other is F.' Then he described both men and pointed out the one who had placed it there. He then said the initials F. C. stood for Frank Crocker. The gentleman who had placed the paper there admitted all this was right. Then Slater took his hand and led him to his friend, who was seated in another part of the house.

As Slater loosed the gentleman's hand he said : 'I am very sensitive. As I touched you a terribly nauseous feeling came over my stomach. You have been feeling sick at your stomach to-day.'

'Yes.'

'You drank too much beer last night.'

'Yes.'

'And just before you came here you were talking about taking a seidlitz powder, but you didn't do it.'

The gentleman laughed and acknowledged the soft impeachment.

Walter Davis, formerly chief of police at Pueblo, Colo., and a brother of Mayor Webster Davis, was in the audience. Slater went to him and said, 'The spirit of one connected with you comes to me and says his initials are H. W.—Herman Davis. He stands by my side to-night, and says, "Tell mother not to worry about me. I am happy, and glad to think that I can get a word with my friends among all the millions of spirits present here to-night." He says he is a brother of the mayor of this city.'

An old gentleman and his wife were sitting near the south wall. Slater went to them. 'Some one at your breakfast table this morning was talking about going to Butler, Mo. The person talking was your daughter, and she was going to Butler to meet her husband. His name is John Wallen.' At each statement the gentleman said, 'Yes.'

'There is another spirit appears to me in your connection,' continued Slater. 'His name is Hill—John Hill. Do you know him?'

'I don't remember him,' replied the gentleman. His wife nudged him, and whispered something. Then he suddenly exclaimed, 'Oh, yes! I had forgotten. I know him. He was a Presbyterian minister.'

'Well, by gum! You ought to remember him. He married you.'

'Right you are,' said the old gentleman, and everybody laughed.

He picked up, at random, a photograph.

'I see the letter G,' he said, 'I can tell you something. Whom does this belong to?'

A man in the rear of the hall arose and acknowledged the photograph.

'I can tell you something which I don't suppose you want to be heard. Shall I tell them?'

The owner of the photograph told him to go ahead.

'Well you have had trouble. Your wife—your wife has given you trouble. She prepared to skip out with another man and you—'

'Hold on! that's enough,' cried the owner of the picture, leaping to his feet amid the roars of the crowd.

'Well,' resumed Mr. Slater, 'you have been getting along better since then, and I can tell you that you will have no more trouble if you behave yourself. You understand?' He understood.

'Last Sunday night I told a lady in this hall that she would get a letter in a day or two for which she had been anxiously waiting. If she is here to-night I want her to tell me if the letter came.'

A woman arose and held up a letter. She said it came, as Slater predicted, and that it contained good news, as he had promised. 'Have I seen you since last Sunday, and have I any means that you know of by which I could have learned about that letter?'

To both these questions the woman answered a decided negative.

A buzz of wonderment went round the hall.

He came upon a handkerchief. He said it belonged to a woman who had five children and had lost all of them. He asked her to get up and say if that were so. A matron arose and said he was right. Then Slater told her that one of the children had died by falling out of a window and that her name was Fanny. The woman broke down crying at this. Slater then told her how she had come there last night upon a sudden inspiration, not being a Spiritualist, and he related a number of little incidents connected with her coming, so that the woman at length could only sit and stare at him in deepest amazement.

'Too many cooks spoil the broth,' Slater cried out, taking up a bit of paper with two initials marked upon it. 'You understand that, don't you, whoever owns this paper?'

A man half rose in his chair and said he did.

'There is a woman in it and the quicker she gets out of it the better for you. You understand that. Let her go, man.'

The owner of the scrap of paper nodded his head and covered his face with his hands.

'A lady owns this handkerchief. Who is it? Yes, I see. Someone is writing to you asking you to—ah! to resume the old relations. Is that right?'

The woman said it was true.

'Well, don't do it. He was your husband. He left you without a dollar and now that you are better fixed he wants to come back. That's right, is it not?'

The answer he got was a timid yes.

'Reject all offers is my advice to you, madam. Let him go. It will be best for you.'

'The owner of this card wants to know about an investment. You are safe. Put your money in and you will succeed. Yes, I know; the woman by your side does not believe that. She said to you just now that she did not believe in me. Is that so?'

The man cried out rather excitedly that it was so. Slater again advised him to put his money into the enterprise.

To another person whose bit of property he held in his hand, Mr. Slater said that he had almost contracted a marriage but had backed out because he had discovered something. A man acknowledged that such was the case. Then Slater told him he was lucky and ought to thank God on his knees every night for escaping that marriage.

'Your mother,' he said to one woman, 'had a peculiar fancy for collecting blankets. That's odd, but it's what I get here first. Is it so?'

The woman said he spoke the truth.

He asked the owner of a purse if she had not come there to find out what she should do in regard to her domestic infelicities.

A woman stood up boldly and said with much eagerness that she did want to know what to do.

'Well, don't give up yet,' he advised her. 'Stick to it a while and all will be well. Your friends are causing all the trouble by their insinuations. Never mind what they say.'

'The owner of this piece of paper with the letter K marked on it is troubled about his son. Your son married against your wishes, and he is up in Wyoming or some Northern place now. Is that right?'

A man in a grey overcoat acknowledged that such was the case. He did not get any advice.

A piece of paper with another letter written upon it next caught his attention.

'A woman sent this up,' he said. 'She has, ah!—been duped. She has been defrauded out of money. Who owns it?'

A woman wearing widow's weeds stood up hesitatingly. She did not answer boldly enough, and Mr. Slater went down the aisle to where she sat, while all the audience craned their necks to see and hear.

'You are worried now about some money which may come to you from London. Well, it will come. But watch out. Don't trust Frank any more. You have listened to hundreds of lies already. Hang on to this money and don't trust him or it will go where the other money did. You understand?' She understood.

He told an engineer that his legs were going to get better, so that he could take his place in the cab again. He told an anxious looking man that he was about to stop work on a mining prospect and that he had better do it, as it would not 'pan out well.' He told a grey-haired, timid looking man who stood up in response to the usual query, that he was a wavering sort of man, but that he would some day have the laugh on his friends who poked fun at him for his uncertainty. He 'roasted' two or three people for sending up articles in a joking spirit. But he told a number of other people facts connected with their lives, and so astonished them apparently that they and all those who heard him were mystified completely and convinced of his wonderful power, whatever it may be.

(To be continued.)

#### RECEIVED.

- 'Review of Reviews,' for August. (London: 125, Fleet-street, E.C. 6d.)
- 'Ourselves,' The People's Theosophic Monthly. (London: 108, Tredegar-road, Bow, E. 1d.)
- 'The Mystical World,' for September. (London: H. A. Copley, Canning Town, E. 1½d.)
- 'The Theosophist,' for August. (London Agents: Theosophical Publishing Society, 7, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C. 2s.)
- 'Modern Song from Classic Story.' Verse suggested by some of the most interesting and instructive characters and events of mythology and classical history. By G. HUNT JACKSON. (Printed by Spottiswoode and Co., New-street-square, London, E.C. No publisher's name given. 2s. 6d. net.)

## 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.]

## Hypnotism and Magnetism.

SIR,—Under the above heading appears a letter in last week's 'LIGHT' by W. H. Edwards. At the close, in speaking of the risks to magnetisers, he says: 'The first is exhaustion, the second the danger of contracting the disease of the patient. This can be effectually guarded against, and should never be lost sight of.' May I ask him if he will kindly explain the method? not so much for myself as for a friend, who is extremely sensitive to the ailments of others whenever he comes in contact with them, which causes him to suffer in consequence; whereas, if he knew how to avoid it, he would be a very useful worker.

J. S.

## The Mysteries of Mediumship.

SIR,—The series of interviews illustrating 'The Mysteries of Mediumship' by your special representative has been to me—and probably to a large number of your readers—a most interesting as well as instructive feature. It has already shown how varied and numerous are the phases of individual experience of spiritual gifts, and how rife they are, even in these degenerate days. What is, however, required to bring such records under wider notice is their collection and publication in book form at a price to command a popular sale. Such a book would, I venture to think, prove invaluable as an aid in extending a clearer conception of the basic facts of spirit-communion in the minds of the masses of the people. Would not work of this character fall within the province of the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance? With a view to suggest the desirability of action in this direction, perhaps you may be disposed to insert this brief letter.

SAMOHT NOTYLB.

## Assisted Mediums.

SIR,—What is in a name? I understand the desire of our worthy friend Mrs. Britten is to combine the 'home-idea' of Mr. Enmore Jones with the further aim of helping all inmates, physically, mentally, and mediumistically, in the development of their gifts and graces for public ministrations.

Surely a 'Home College' is not a Utopian idea! Undoubtedly 'our angels' will supply the evidence that 'there "is no death,"' but it is not theirs to do the rougher, material work of rubbing off the rust of our raw, immature, unpolished instruments. This we must do, and a 'Home College' is what is needed; so that even the grand truth of a proven immortality may be presented in an attractive and not a repulsive form, and thus remove the thick cloud of materialism that darkens the horizon of so many. Yes, let us have a 'Home College' that shall be a real 'Home from Home,' and along with it guides and instructors who shall be able to teach the mysteries of this Kingdom of Heaven.

Nottingham.

BEVAN HARRIS.

## Seance with Mr. Slater.

SIR,—As I have no doubt that I am the military officer referred to in the interview with Mr. Slater, recorded in your issue of August 17th, I think it as well to send you an account of what occurred at the two visits I paid to him. Mr. Slater began by telling me that I had travelled a good deal and asked me if I had not been in India. I replied, 'Yes.' He then said, 'Some years ago, whilst you were there, your life and future were much affected by the sudden and violent death of a near relative. Was it not so?' I replied, 'No; I have never lost any relative, either suddenly or by violence.' Mr. Slater said, 'Oh! but you have; I see him dead or dying in your arms.' It then occurred to me that he might be referring to an event which happened eight or nine years ago, when, in action in India, I attempted to raise a native soldier, who was mortally wounded close by me. The man was an entire stranger to me, though at the time under my command. I then told Mr. Slater that a man had once died in my arms after having been shot, and added, 'I cannot believe you are referring to this, as the man was no relation, and his death in no way changed my life or affected my future.' Mr. Slater then abruptly left the room, and my guinea was returned to me by Mr. Morse. I had gone with full belief in Mr. Slater, having witnessed his marvellous powers in the Cavendish Rooms. About a fortnight afterwards I paid another visit to Mr. Slater. On this occasion he apologised for the way he had treated me

on my first visit, and gave me a curious indication of his powers. He said, 'You have a photograph in your pocket.' I assented and showed it to him, and he gave me, with very little hesitation, the correct initials of the individual, and added that he died after much suffering, which was perfectly correct, the original of the photograph having passed away over ten years ago. Possibly, after reading the above, your representative may change his opinion that Mr. Slater is to be pitied for encountering me.

A REGULAR SUBSCRIBER TO 'LIGHT.'

## Materialisations.

SIR,—Do materialisations prove 'Spirit Return'? To me they do not seem to prove it at all, if Spiritualists are correct when they say that the materialised form is built from the medium and sitters. I would suggest that it is impossible for medium and sitters to give off their bodily substance, every particle of which is endowed with vitality, without at the same time giving off a portion of all that goes to make up the Ego; the resultant materialised form being a mental composite of all who take part in the séance, akin to a composite photograph, although not always so perfect. There will always be, in any given séance, a few whose mental or brain power will be fairly evenly balanced, and each will therefore want to be the dominant power in the materialised form, with a consequent lack of cohesive intelligence; but when there is a thoroughly dominant mind in action, there will be cohesive intelligence, and that intelligence will be in accord with the intelligence of the dominant mind, without the intervention of a 'Returned Spirit.'

87, Blackcroft, Dundee.

MATTHEW FORBES.

## Spiritualism in Canada.

SIR,—I am exceedingly glad you have in 'LIGHT' of July 27th called my attention to a very grave omission on my part when compiling the pamphlet I printed on June 26th. I purposely selected the three paragraphs ending page two and the four paragraphs beginning page three from the Rev. J. Page Hopps's discourse, but I had no intention of claiming the authorship of the same, though it certainly looks as if I had. When I compiled the pamphlet (which was the work of a day) I selected the whole of Mr. Hopps's discourse with his name at the head, but, owing to want of space, I did not print it, but selected the paragraphs in question, which should have been printed as quotations. In my introduction, however, I stated that the following pages were 'compiled,' &c., which is an evidence of my sincerity in the matter, though I frankly admit the error, which was an unconscious one, but one I hope I have rectified by attaching a copy of an explanatory circular to every pamphlet, and duplicating free copies to every one to whom pamphlets have been given.

A week before its publication I had no idea of issuing a pamphlet, but some very strong sermons in 'Hamilton' against Spiritualists and Spiritualism roused my indignation, and I concluded to string together a few of the leading principles of the subject, opinions of a few recognised leaders, and the testimonials of distinguished men and women who had investigated the matter. These I hurriedly gathered together, and being an actively-employed commercial man, I had no time to go into details; hence the omission referred to.

Without being, I trust, considered egotistical, I may say that I have during my six years' residence in Canada been an active missionary, so to speak, for the Cause dear to all Spiritualists. I have given hundreds of lectures and private sittings, free to one and all. The only payments I have ever received were for a fortnight's engagement at Lake Brady, when I gave up a fortnight's work; ten dollars for two lectures in Toronto, and ten for the same in Guelph. I have done considerable travelling commercially, but I find time for publicly stirring up the subject wherever I go, as I did during my three years' travelling in Scotland before coming to this country. And I hope to be able to continue in the same good work, for in Canada, perhaps, above all other places I am acquainted with, there is more than a need for active workers. Intolerance is rampant in most of our cities and towns, but in spite of many drawbacks I am proud to say that Spiritualism has found a resting place in hundreds of households.

Thanking you sincerely for pointing out my error regarding the pamphlet in question, and hoping you will find space to print this letter in an early issue of 'LIGHT,'

Hamilton, Ontario.

GEORGE W. WALBOND.

## Miss X.'s Experiences and Conclusions.

SIR,—Although I differ from Miss X. when she seems to indicate that no evidence of spirit return is verifiable, if the facts stated in the alleged spirit communication are known to some living person, still I think her cautious attitude is worthy of all commendation, and it would be well if most Spiritualists adopted it. There are so many incontrovertible evidences obtained and obtainable that we do not need to depend upon what is weak and halting. Telepathic communication from the living to the living is the weak spot in the evidence in this case as in most others. There is no fraud or hoaxing in the matter. Telepathy is a proven scientific fact admitting of no doubt whatever, and it has to be reckoned with in every case of alleged spirit communication. A sensitive does not know the facts communicated, but may receive them unconsciously from a living person and communicate them as if from a deceased person; because, at the time, the idea was in her mind, but afterwards, on mature reflection, she sees that the evidence is incomplete.

Mr. Mitchener, in his query as to how any communication not within the knowledge of at least one living person could be verified, has overlooked cases like the following:—

1. A merchant dies at the age of seventy-five. When thirty years of age he forged a signature on a bill of exchange and discounted the document. The object was to engage in a speculation, which proved successful. Of course, no one but himself knew of the forgery as the bill was returned at maturity. The bill was not destroyed but is afterwards found among the deceased's papers in a secret drawer unknown to anyone, which was discovered in consequence of the spirit communication.

2. A lady dies two hundred years since and leaves a sum of money to a then living relative whose heirs are now in poverty. She has concealed the will in a place known only to herself, and that place is given in the spirit communication, and the will found.

3. A robber, ninety years since, committed a robbery from a palace in Scotland and hid the proceeds in a field, unknown to anyone. The place being indicated in a communication from this deceased robber, who died shortly after committing the deed, the articles stolen are found and restored to their rightful owner.

These are actual experiences, but if due record of spirit communications were kept hundreds of similar cases could be found. The unfortunate thing is that most Spiritualists take no interest in communications that have nothing of a personal interest for themselves. They want to hear from some dead relative whom they knew and loved. Now this is just the kind of communication which cannot be proven, because Telepathy is sufficient to account for all that may be communicated, unless, indeed, some striking secret is divulged which was never known except to the deceased person, and of which she indicates the proof which can still be independently examined, and has never seen the light before. Such cases as I have given are what we want to place the evidence for spirit return on a scientific basis, acceptable to most reasonable and unbiassed men. Clairvoyance, materialisation, and trance addresses are, from their very nature, incapable of giving such proof, because they can all be accounted for by telepathic sensitiveness and other peculiarities of the hysteric temperament.

VIR.

## A Séance with Mr. Husk.

SIR,—About twelve months since my wife and myself attended a séance at the house of Mr. Husk, when about twelve persons were present. My wife sat next to Mr. Husk, with her right hand holding his left. On the right of Mr. Husk, and holding his right hand, was a gentleman whom I do not know. I sat next, my left hand holding his right, and I held with my right the hand of the person next to me on that side. A ring, made of half-inch round iron, and sufficiently large to pass easily over the arm, lay on the table about three feet distant from my wife. She was told to count 'one, two, three' quickly, in less than as many seconds, and then, immediately, by order of the control, a light was struck, and the ring was found on the right arm of my wife, above the elbow. The hands during this time were held fast and never let go.

As a second test I was told to stand up, and the chair on which I had been sitting was hung on to the shoulder of my wife, with her arm through the back, the condition of the sitters being the same as before. It is impossible that my wife could have been deceived, and we consider ourselves quite as capable of judging of the facts as any scientist, so-called.

'INVESTIGATOR.'

## The Ring on Mr. Husk's Wrist.

SIR,—One would think that the case of the ring round Mr. Husk's wrist, judging by the way it is treated in the hair-splitting controversy in 'LIGHT,' was the only case of the kind that ever occurred; whereas it was a very common experiment at Williams and Herne's séances a few years ago. I have myself been the subject of this phenomenon in more instances than one, the most remarkable of which was at the Eddy's. I there, while my hand was in contact with the medium, in a good light, saw a spirit hand and arm reach forth from behind me and take two iron rings which were handed up by a person sitting in front. The next minute I felt a sort of shock at my elbow, and found both rings round my arm. These rings were about five inches in diameter, of three-eighths substance, and were lying about all day, so that anybody could see they were solid iron rings and not trick rings. While I was in Boston a successful experiment was made with a ring just large enough to encircle a medium's neck. Of course there would be no room for hair-splitting in this case.

I have just read in an article in 'Woman,' 'The best inspector in the Havre Custom-house is a woman; her instinct is so keen that she can detect dutiable goods without the opening of a lock.' What is the nature of this 'instinct'? Is it clairvoyance, telepathy, or subliminal consciousness? Perhaps the Psychical Researchers can tell us.

Eastbourne.

ROBERT COOPER.

SIR,—I have read the article by Dr. Wyld in the issue of 'LIGHT' for August 3rd, and the letter of Mr. Myers in that for August 10th, in reference to the iron ring on Mr. Husk's wrist, which has been *in situ* for ten years. The statements by these two gentlemen are at direct variance, Dr. Wyld saying that the ring measurement is 182.5, whilst the largest measurement of the compressed hands of Husk and another were 186, 189, 192, 194 millimetres. So the problem is—can the ring, with a capacity of 182.5, be taken off the hand without laceration? To my view it cannot, and if the representative of the Psychical Research Society is so very anxious to have good, and not *bad* evidence, I would suggest that he should try the experiment on himself, with an iron ring four millimetres less than the widest part of his own compressed hand; but, knowing as I do something of the animus of the said society, the experiment must be made in the presence of experts on the other side. It will be seen that there is a dual process involved, viz., to get the ring over the hand, and then to get it off. Should it prove painful, the experimenter would doubtless not object to 'a few whiffs of chloroform.' Until this is done all impartial minds will say that Dr. Wyld 'holds the field.'

Dr. Wyld says: 'The fact of this ring and its permanence *in situ* is, I believe, unique in the history of Spiritualism,' but the learned doctor is not quite correct, as it is evident that he has not known of what I am about to speak, and which will go far to support, not the theory, but the fact of which he speaks so rightly and confidently in reference to Husk's case. I refer to the case of F. W. Monck, the most wonderful and powerful psychic sensitive I have come across in all the time of my study, research, and experiment, which now reaches back to some thirty years.

In 1876 F. W. Monck was a visitor in my house for a fortnight, when I had the opportunity of witnessing many marvellous psychic experiences through his mediumship, many of which were reported in the Spiritualistic journals of that date. Soon after he came I saw a mahogany curtain ring on his wrist, which, of course, aroused my curiosity. He told me the particulars, and the occasion when, at a séance, it was put on his wrist by some occult power about two or three years previously; that he and many others had tried to remove it without success, and so he had to quietly submit until the same power that caused it to be placed there should see fit to remove it. I tried on more than one occasion to get it over the hand, and for this purpose used lard, thinking it might facilitate the operation, but I found it was simply impossible, as it always stuck just below the knuckles of the compressed hand, and I gave it up as I saw it only caused great pain to the medium.

Now for the sequel. Shortly after leaving this city he was arrested and tried at Huddersfield, as Slade and others had been, was convicted and sentenced to three months with hard labour in Wakefield Prison. On his arrival in the prison he was subjected to the usual personal examination, and, of course, the ring was seen, and, being called upon to give the explana-

tion, Monck said he had none to give ; all he knew was that it was put there and he could not remove it. This, of course, was regarded as 'a piece of nonsense,' and forthwith one of the attendants, who was very rough, said he would soon settle the matter, and proceeded to draw the ring over the hand, disregarding the ejaculations of Monck in consequence of the pain, but he could not succeed and gave up the attempt as fruitless. The affair was reported to the governor, who, with the official surgeon of the prison, examined the case, and the surgeon said, 'however the ring got there, it could not be removed whole without injury to the hand.' It was then *sawn asunder* into two pieces, which Monck was permitted to retain. On his coming to see me after his release, I asked how he came off with the ring, when he gave me the above particulars, and showed me the pieces, which I tested and found to be the same as I had seen whole. Although interested at the time, and being perfectly satisfied as to the genuineness of the case, I did not care to pursue the matter further by taking measurements, &c. Indeed, I had, and still have, such 'proof palpable' of the action of some extraneous occult power, that this ring affair was but of secondary importance to me, and it went out of my mind until recalled by the correspondence in 'LIGHT,' in regard to Husk's ring.

If Mr. Myers will act on my suggestion, the result, I am sure, will be that he will be convinced, in Husk's case, that the phenomenon is due to the action of extraneous psycho-physical power ; but whether it would be convincing to the Psychical Research Society, of which he is a representative, is quite another question.

Higher Broughton, Manchester.

WILLIAM OXLEY.

'Life in the Unseen.'

SIR,—Again I read a moving appeal for 'more light' on the conditions of spirit life, and as 'M. B.' seems so earnestly seeking for truth, one longs to impart any wider experience which may have fallen to one's own lot. It is easy to say, 'Ask no questions' (as to merely external conditions), but it is only human to crave for every atom of knowledge of that mysterious state, so far as it is vouchsafed to us by spirits who are above deluding us. But we must not wonder if accounts differ greatly, for the seeing faculty, being subjective, will vary according to the medium's idiosyncracies. And how can an ethereal form be described by mere words any more than the blue of an Italian sky, the scent of a rose, the song of a lark? Still, in my daily intercourse for three years with a seeing and hearing medium, I have gleaned from her a few details which must be of interest to those who are not so favoured themselves.

To begin with, this medium declares that no pictures of angelic beings she has ever seen, represent in the least the spirits who surround us. Wings she has not been able to trace. Drapery seems always to be present, and to vary much in colour. Sometimes, she says, it looks like the sky, the tender rose-cream of the dawn ; luminous, diaphanous ; this is the general effect of it. In some way this filmy covering appears to replace our human hair, for the heads are, as it were, veiled with the light ! By night the forms are much more distinct than by day. Often this young girl awakes to see the bright ones enclosing her bed in a circle, elevated a little above the floor, erect, gracious, and benignant beyond description. In a sense, I gather, they liken rather a sculptured presentment than anything of living flesh and blood, for eyes and features do not appear to move, as with us, and thoughts would seem to be literally transmitted from mind and mind without language, though at times she distinctly hears spoken words, though not always such as she can understand.

When words are audible to her, she says they sound like exquisite music. I am not a seer, but I often receive messages, spoken by the medium's lips while she is in a trance, and even I can detect extraordinary sweetness in the tones when certain spirits are communicating ; a softness best expressed by the German 'Hauch.' It is curious that she can trace, and has spontaneously noticed, likenesses between certain spirits who had in earth life affinities, mental as well as personal, and recognised photographs. It appears, from numerous indications, that those whom, before their departure, we knew to be in common parlance 'good,' and believed to be fit for 'heaven,' really do retain their chief characteristics, something recognisable, of looks, tones, and above all, of their former love, their sympathy, for those left desolate. To them, Heaven is not a Nirvana of inaction, whence the blessed look down on us

waging the world-old conflicts ! No ; it would seem as if a chief part of the spirits' occupation (work never dies, only changes) consists in helping us perpetually. To me they appear as God's sentries and messengers, trying, if we will but hearken to them, to bring order out of chaos, to avert accident and mischief (as in countless cases they do by dreams and special interpositions). In a word, they are a kind of tangible Providence, by whom our very hairs are numbered ; and, may we not be forgiven for better grasping the fact that this minute care for us is rather deputed to these legions of ministering friends, than personally exercised by the great Creator of the Universe Himself ?

Some will say that it must torture those who have passed on to watch the sorrows and struggles of their dear ones. It would, the spirits say, but for two causes, which take away the sting of all they see going wrong. Firstly, they clearly hold the key to many of our difficulties, and enjoy a certain power to steer us through them, if only they can open communication with us, and I suppose for this happy condition they are continually hoping, influencing us to pray more and more for heavenly guidance, which may take this shape. Secondly, they 'look to the end.' I have been told, when asked this question, that to them these mighty passions and agonies of ours seem only like a swell in mid-ocean, and on the calm shore beyond they see the wavelets rippling in, and the mariner safe at anchor.

But more momentous than all else is the knowledge, based on the strongest proofs, that, as in their translated state their powers of mind and reason are intensified, so their love becomes a higher thing. Those for whom we wept so bitterly, cling to us now in a far closer, more heart-whole tie, than the very dearest of them could know on earth, where fleshly failings, fleshly blindnesses, so often interposed a cloud between loving hearts. Now, in a state of being where body and self do not exist, their feelings have expanded, the originally divine glows with a brighter, stronger flame ; and now the sense that they can help and protect us gives to their love a weight unknown before. Doubtless they, too,

Watch, like God, the rolling hours,  
With larger, other eyes than ours,  
To make allowance for us all.

S. T. A. N.

The Cyprian Priestess.

SIR,—I fear that any suggestion as to the possible original of the picture of the Cyprian Priestess must now arrive too late to be of any use ; but I should be glad to know whether it has ever been suggested that the picture bears a strong likeness to a medallion of Thorwaldsen's (the Danish sculptor) called 'Morning,' a companion to one called 'Night,' by the same artist. The latter is represented by a shrouded female figure, with two sleeping infants in her arms, and the former by one strongly resembling the picture of the Cyprian Priestess, only that she is surrounded by Cupids scattering flowers. It is some years since I saw the medallion but that is my recollection of it, and it has surprised me that no one should apparently have already offered this suggestion.

C. C. BAKER.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- 'W. B. B.'—Thanks for your words of appreciation. They are encouraging ; the more so that, as a rule, people are much more ready to blame than to commend.
- 'WATCHING.'—No—the subject has not been forgotten. So far from that being the case, it is involving a good deal of correspondence. This matter cannot be hurried.
- 'A. B.' (British Columbia).—We are sorry to have been obliged to keep your MS. so long without using it. But our space is precious and your communication has not suffered by keeping. It is in time, however, and will certainly appear very shortly.

A GOOD EXAMPLE.—A gentleman resident in Newton, Kimberley, South Africa, has ordered a quantity of Spiritualist literature to be sent out to him, and in the course of his communication, says : 'Having for some time past felt the necessity of bringing the facts of Spiritualism to the notice of the Dutch population of this country, I have started the ball rolling by taking the liberty of getting your 'Rules for the Conduct of Circles' translated and printed in the Dutch language. Thinking you might be interested in the matter, I enclose a copy herewith, and trust my action will meet with your approval. The Rev. James Hughes, Baptist minister, has been preaching lately upon Spiritualism, causing some controversy in the columns of the "Diamond Fields Advertiser."'

### SOCIETY WORK.

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

**DAWN OF DAY SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, 132, ST. JOHN'S-HILL, CLAPHAM JUNCTION.**—On Thursday, September 5th, at 8 o'clock, Mrs. Ashton Bingham will hold a séance in the place of Mrs. Charles Spring. It will be the last until further orders have been received from the guide.—A. B.

**STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.**—On Sunday last Mr. Veitch gave an able discourse on Spiritualism, which was well appreciated by a large audience. Mr. Chapman rendered a solo, which was well received. Dr. Reynolds will occupy our platform on Sunday, September 1st.—THOS. W. MACCALLUM, Hon. Sec.

**SPIRITUAL HALL, 111, CLARENDON-ROAD, NOTTING HILL, W.**—On Sunday last Mrs. Stanley's controls gave an inspirational discourse upon Spirit Life. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. H. Evans on 'Spirit Photography; his Experiences; an Answer to Prayer.' Tuesday next, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Mason. Inquirers welcome. September 8th, Mr. Wallace.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

**WINCHESTER HALL, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM, S.E.**—On Sunday last Mr. Dale was the lecturer, an instructive and elevating address being given; a public séance followed. Many strangers were present, and the conditions were most harmonious. On Monday a debate on Spiritualism took place between Messrs. W. H. Edwards (for) and R. J. Bell (against), and was adjourned to the following week. The usual meeting will be held on Thursday.—H. E. B., Hon. Sec.

**NORTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY.—FINSBURY PARK OPEN-AIR WORK UNDER THE TREES.**—Last Sunday the usual Sunday morning meeting was held from eleven to one o'clock, addressed by Messrs. Jones and Rodger. A large number of 'LIGHT' and other literature kindly supplied by friends was given away and eagerly accepted. There will be no meeting next Sunday, but two meetings will be held in Regent's Park at 3 and 6 p.m. Tea at five. The attendance and support of local friends may help us to determine whether it will be desirable to continue meetings in this place.—A. M. R.

**WELCOME HALL, 218, JUBILEE-STREET, MILE END.**—Miss Marsh hopes that the friends will accept an apology for her inability to take the platform on Sunday last. She will give her services at the earliest opportunity. In her absence the platform was occupied by Mr. Bradley, whose guides gave an excellent address which was highly appreciated by a very large audience. A large number of strangers were present, several of whom stayed behind at the close of the meeting to ask questions and view spirit drawings Mr. Marsh exhibited. On Sunday next Mr. Rodger will give an address.—E. FLINT, Sec.

**SPIRITUAL MISSION, CHEPSTOW HALL, PECKHAM.**—On Sunday last we had a most enjoyable evening. Mr. W. Millard presided, and Mr. Paul Preyss gave an address on 'Prayer and Natural Law,' which was listened to with great attention. We desire to tender our thanks to him, and express our wish to hear him again at an early date. The platform was prettily decorated with flowers by Mrs. C. Wright. Miss Johnson presided at the pianoforte and sang 'Ora pro nobis' with great pathos, the secretary also rendering a solo from 'St. Paul,' 'Be thou faithful unto death.' Sunday next, Mr. W. Millard, on 'Religion: Its Childhood.' On Tuesday next we shall hold our first monthly social meeting, for which we have arranged a good programme.—J. C. JONES, Hon. Sec.

**SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.**—'Haunted House Experiences.' On Sunday last Mr. Long continued this subject, giving the reasons why spirits manifested themselves on the scene of their earth life. He explained that they could so manifest only because the necessary conditions for doing so were present. Mr. Drake, of Notting Hill, in graphic language, recounted an experience of having a deceased person (a former occupant of the house) visiting him in Lime-grove, Shepherd's Bush. He saw the spirit very clearly, and the description, subsequently received from a gentleman who knew the person intimately in the body, exactly tallied with his own. Upwards of a hundred and fifty persons were present at the meeting, which seemed to be very much appreciated by them.—W. P.

**SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, 4, CARLTON-PLACE, GLASGOW.**—On Sunday morning last Mr. Goodman, a Jewish convert to Spiritualism, read a learned paper on Evolution, from the spiritual point of view. Mr. McDowell took exception to some of the points in the paper, and contended that science would have to upset all its theories before accepting Spiritualism. Mr. Finlay, in his criticism, made the following important statements: "All the elements are eternal because the mind cannot conceive them non-existent." "All form must have a beginning because there are purposes." "God is the most highly developed mass of this eternal element, and is making an effort to develop that which is not so highly developed." In the evening there was a most enjoyable open meeting, in which Mr.

Robertson, Mrs. Waddington, and Messrs. Birnie, Vall, and Sharp took part.—T. H.

**CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.**—On Sunday last Miss Rowan Vincent answered upwards of eighteen written questions which had from time to time been left in the question box at these rooms. Seldom, if ever, has this lady been heard to better advantage than upon this occasion. The questions embraced a variety of matters connected with the investigation and study of Spiritualism, psychic science, and religious history. Every answer was given in the concise and common-sense manner which always characterises Miss Vincent's utterances, and even when differing in opinion from some of those present she, with great ability, made her position clearly understood, and merited the hearty thanks of all for the very many useful hints and suggestions she gave during the evening. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. W. Long on 'The Resurrection of Man: How and When.' We trust that all who can will avail themselves of this opportunity of hearing him.—L. H.

**ST. JOHN'S HALL, CARDIFF.**—On Sunday last we were glad to welcome our good friend Mrs. M. H. Wallis, of Manchester, whose inspirers gave fine, elevating addresses. In the morning 'The Redemption of Humanity' was an able effort. To the question, 'Does man stand in need of redemption?' the reply was that we would unhesitatingly answer in the affirmative, though not in the erroneous sense and manner set forth in the popular religious beliefs. Ignorance is the greatest source of evil, and therefore creates the greatest dangers from which mankind needs to be saved. The object of life is to convey lessons to mankind; its purpose the development of the human spirit. Can it be for a moment imagined possible that all the grand mental energies of mankind which are developed in the conflict of physical existence, shall be laid aside and be of no use when the physical body has finished its work? We know that man is destined to progress unendingly, and that somewhere, somehow, somewhen, within the grand plan of the Infinite Wisdom of God, all souls, even the most degraded, shall find some sphere in which the work of redemption shall be begun and accomplished. We would not then, even if we could, save mankind from the sorrows, trials, and conflict of life; for how could he understand the blessedness of spiritual freedom and joy if he had no experience of the depths of sin and suffering? Through conflict man is made strong, and as he lights the lamp of knowledge, so shall he be redeemed from the darkness and bondage of ignorance. Space forbids adequate notice of this fine address, as also of the equally able evening address upon 'The Psychology of Prayer.' On Monday evening replies were given to written questions, followed by clairvoyant descriptions. Mrs. Wallis will speak for us again next Sunday—morning, 'Growth on Earth'; evening, 'Growth in the Spirit-realm.'—E. A.

**LONDON DISTRICT COUNCIL.**—A delegate meeting was held on the 25th inst., at Chepstow Hall. The secretary's minutes having been read, exception was taken to the clause relating to associates, which was referred back for further consideration. The minutes were then passed. Clarendon-road and the Peckham Society of Spiritualists were removed from the list of affiliated societies until they can satisfy the Council that they come within the meaning of the word 'society.' The nomination of the 'Peckham Spiritual Mission,' now holding its meetings at Chepstow Hall, was discussed and formally accepted. In the 'Open Council,' Mr. W. E. Long commended the action of the Council in removing the names of meeting places which had no claim to the term 'society.' He suggested that fuller inquiry be made in future into the constitution of societies affiliating. He also took exception to the rejected clause in the minutes which gave associates equal power with delegates. Each delegate represents twenty-five members, therefore to equalise voting power it would be necessary to give each delegate twenty-five votes. In conclusion, he hoped the Council would adhere strictly to its constitution. Mr. H. Boddington suggested the adoption of the constitution of the National Federation of Spiritualists as far as practicable. He pointed out the fact that as at present constituted a delegate has first to report to his society the resolutions proposed in Council and gain their acceptance, and then go back to the Council to see if all other societies have agreed. Should one disagree, the whole routine has to be gone over again and again. There is no possibility of dealing with urgent matters outside the somewhat limited scope of their constitution; and work was considerably hampered thereby. Messrs. R. Boddington, Millard, Kenyon, Jones, and Mesdames Bliss and Boddington took part in the discussion following.—H. BODDINGTON, 30, Upper Tulse-hill, Hon. Sec.

THE race of mankind would perish did they cease to aid each other. From the time that the mother binds the child's head till the moment that some kind assistant wipes the death damp from the brow of the dying, we cannot exist without mutual help. All, therefore, that need aid have a right to ask it from their fellow-mortals; no one who holds the power of granting can refuse it without guilt.—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

NEW EDITION. 'A Scientific Basis of Belief in a Future Life.' By JOHN PAGE HOPPS. Sixpence. London and Edinburgh: Williams & Norgate. And all booksellers.