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## CONTENTS.

Spiritualism and Secularism.....	185	Facts in Personal Experience.....	189
The Value of Prayer.....	186	The Question of Guardian Angels.....	189
Bohme and Swedenborg.....	186	Vaccination.....	190
Why no Tidings of Departed Friends?.....	187	Spirits; or Unconscious Cerebration?.....	190
A Plea for United Work.....	187	The Holy Dead—Poetry.....	191
Spiritualism—The Press and The Public.....	188	What our Contemporaries say.....	191
Dr. Galton on "Visions of Sane Persons".....	188	British National Association.....	192
		Spiritualism in the Provinces.....	192

## SPIRITUALISM AND SECULARISM.

Resuming the subject of our leader of last week, the question now arises—in what way and to what extent does Spiritualism effectively meet the Atheistic teachings of the present advocates of Secularism?

The primary and essential point is to have a clear common ground to start from. In the absence of this it is of no use to build up arguments. For our present purpose we take the following to be the position of the Secularist, the Materialist, the Positivist—terms not perhaps altogether convertible, but which may be used indifferently in relation to the Spiritualistic position:—The Secularist believes that all sensation, intelligence, life and spirit are developed from matter, and that spirit does not exist apart from and independent of matter; he has no belief in the existence of intelligent beings, or of an intelligent being, outside of humanity as living on this earth; as a necessary consequence of this he believes in the acquisition of knowledge through what are called the senses, and through the senses only; and he will admit no evidence save that which can be seen, felt, heard, smelt, or tasted. We have endeavoured to define the position of the Secularist fairly and yet clearly, and hope we have succeeded in doing so.

It is, therefore, necessary in meeting the Secularist, that we should make this the common ground between us, and strictly confine ourselves at starting to matters which come within the cognisance of the senses. The first question is—are there any facts and phenomena of an abnormal or unusual kind which we can present to him, supported by sufficient evidence to entitle them to claim his attention, and of which we have a right to demand from him an explanation in accordance with his philosophy?

The most systematic inquiry ever made in this direction was that instituted by the Dialectical Society. As more than ten years have since elapsed, some of our readers may not be familiar with the importance of the results arrived at; and we may perhaps, therefore, be permitted briefly to quote from the published report of Sub-Committee No. 2, which held 40 experimental meetings.

"Your committee have confined their report to facts witnessed by them in their collective capacity, which facts were palpable to the senses, and their reality capable of demonstrative proof." "The result . . . has been to establish conclusively . . . that a force is exhibited sufficient to set in motion heavy substances, without the employment of any muscular force, without contact or material connection of any kind between such substances and the body of any person present."

"In conclusion, your committee express their unanimous opinion that the one important physical fact thus proved to exist, that *motion may be produced in solid bodies without material contact, by some hitherto unrecognised force operating within an undefined distance from the human organism, and beyond the range of muscular action*, should be subject to further scientific examination with a view to ascertain its true source, nature, and power."\*

A large amount of evidence appealing to the senses of sight, hearing, and touch, from sources of unimpeachable reliability in all other matters, is accessible to those who will inquire, in support of facts and phenomena inexplicable by the recognised

laws of natural philosophy. We have ourselves seen a pencil rise up "of itself" and write what was appropriate to the subject in hand. We have been present when after two blank slates had been securely fastened together, writing was produced between them, the matter to be written being chosen by ourselves after the slates had been fastened, and the slates not going out of our hands or out of our sight the whole time.

We therefore claim that the evidence of the reality of external facts and phenomena called "Spiritual," rests upon precisely the same foundation as the evidence of external phenomena accepted as real by the Scientist and Secularist. Abstruse questions as to the "subjective" character of all phenomena are entirely outside the present considerations, and would apply as much to the Secularist as to ourselves. What we assert is, that we have an equal right with the Secularist to maintain the reality of our respective facts.

It will not do for our opponents at this point to turn round and allege the "unimportance," or "stupidity," or "frivolousness" of our facts. It would be entirely unworthy of them to do so. In this sense science knows "no great, no small"; an unexplained fact must be judged of, not by its apparent insignificance, but by what it may lead to. The least irregularity or unexpected variation in the movements of the heavenly bodies, say for instance the occurrence of an eclipse a very small fraction of time earlier or later than anticipated, would cause intense excitement among astronomers all over the world, and they would give themselves no rest till the "cause" had been discovered. We have, then, indisputable facts occurring outside all known causes, supported by evidence of a kind admitted by our adversaries to be reliable. This is the first great step.

The next point is—leaving the phenomena, what can we learn from them, as to their nature, or the causes which produce them?

We must refer again for one moment to the proceedings of the Dialectical Society. The same sub-committee enumerates among the conclusively established results—"That this force is frequently directed by intelligence." The facts being established, this conclusion very soon follows. It is not conceivable that the "unintelligent forces of nature" should impel a pencil to write a legible word, or should produce writing, according to request, between two slates. The phenomena called Spiritual explicable by natural causes, are very few in number compared with those which are manifestly controlled by intelligence.

We have now taken two steps without departing from the ground of evidence common to both parties. First: The phenomena are real. Second: They are frequently directed by intelligence. The next question is—What is the source and nature of the intelligence that controls them?

Where the intelligence gives any account of itself, it generally asserts itself to be that of human beings like ourselves, only living elsewhere. This is, of course, no evidence, and its claims must be subjected to the most severe cross-examination. We must proceed in the same way, on the same general principles, as would be accepted in a Court of Justice, and admit nothing which is not ultimately based on secular and scientific evidence.

No direct evidence is here possible. As in the majority of cases which come before our law courts, the reliability of the witnesses, and frequently also the identity of the plaintiff or defendant, have to be decided by the comparison of a vast amount of circumstantial evidence. If the testimony of a witness is confirmed by other and independent sources belief in him becomes involuntary. The same thing happens if a man returns to his family and friends after long absence. By what he tells them they may become gradually convinced of his identity. The tales of travellers are judged of on similar principles.

In precisely the same way, only with still more care, is it necessary to proceed in determining the source and nature of the intelligence which controls phenomena professing to be Spiritual. We are content to take the same cold hard ground as

\* See the Report on Spiritualism of the Committee of the London Dialectical Society, together with the evidence, oral and written, and a selection from the correspondence. London, J. Burns, 1873.

the Secularist. As Professor Huxley says in one of his lay sermons:—"Disbelieve as long as you can."

The Dialectical Society did not pursue the subject to this extent. So far as we know there has never been any organised systematic investigation in this direction. This is very much to be deplored. The result is that we have only the more or less reliable testimony of isolated inquirers, and it must be admitted that a large portion of this is to so great an extent affected by inaccurate powers of observation, by undue enthusiasm, and by a general deficiency of critical and logical acumen, that it is practically valueless. Notwithstanding all this, however, and excluding everything which is not based on objective phenomena, there is, to our mind, and to the minds of numbers of those who have studied the subject, sufficient in many cases to prove absolutely the identity of the controlling intelligence with that of the deceased person which it claims to represent. We cannot, of course, bring forward evidence of such kind in an article like the present. But we claim that this third point is in many cases capable of proof by scientific and exact evidence of a precisely similar kind as is admitted to be valid by all parties, that those who have died retain their identity and intelligence, and are able to inform us of the fact.

The considerations involved in the present article are, in a certain sense, outside the subject of the lecture we referred to last week, but we hope to be able to lead up to it, and to shew that only in this way can it be successfully approached, and that we have not unnecessarily wandered away from the main issue from which we started.

### THE VALUE OF PRAYER.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In your issue of the 4th, you notice a pamphlet on the "Value of Prayer," the author of which is of opinion that answers to prayer may be accounted for on the supposition that we are surrounded by an extremely subtle element, which is the medium of inter-communication between mind and mind. I think the above is not left to supposition. Physical science has completed the demonstration of its truth. The marvellous results that have followed the discovery of magnetic induction; the difficulties to be overcome by interference in the working of the telephone; Professor Hughes' experiments in discovering means to overcome the difficulty; the invention of the microphone, and, most wonderful of all, the photophone, or the conveyance of thought by means of light,—all point in this direction. It is no supposition that thought waves are convertible into sound waves, and by their impact upon sensitive material are communicated to points far distant. And it is no supposition that under conditions exactly analogous to those governing in the physical world, the waves of thought are capable of transmission from one mind to another, and are subject to all the same modes of interference. Prayer is a force as positive as light, heat, or electricity, and liable to spiritual causes of failure of a similar kind. Prayer may fail, from being weak, to overcome resistance; it may fail from the message being stopped, and neutralized by interference. It may fail from spiritual induction, parted wires, or lines of mental light confusing one another.

Prayer to be successful must be an earnest, intense, and persistent force, and, if for a high and noble purpose, it will positively reach the ear open to all effort for good. I think it is Mr. A. J. Davis who tells a story to the point. He called one day upon an old widow, found her outer chamber empty, and heard the old lady in the inner room praying for a long lost son. While listening he passed into the spiritual state; and saw a beam of light proceeding from the old woman's brain, rising at an angle upwards, and reflected by the listening angel upon the brain of the wandering boy, who in one week returned to his old mother.

Each of our senses has but a limited compass; with their present powers we cannot even get near the spiritual frontier. But science has so immensely extended the breadth of our view, that we can now see beyond into the clear possibilities of spiritual existence. My space will not allow me, or I could give from my own experience proof of the action of mind upon mind by a form of prayer, force of desire, or of will. Prayer is a power for good, and if used for evil, it is feeble, as minds evilly disposed are usually small. The good man's life is one of perpetual prayer, or in other words, the vibrations of his inner being are in unison with beings above himself.

J. BEATTIE.

### BÖHME AND SWEDENBORG.

"When I consider and think why I write thus, and leave it not for other sharper wits, I find that my spirit is kindled in this matter, whereof I write; for there is a living running fire of these things in my spirit, and, thereupon (let me purpose what I will), yet this thing continually moveth and swimmeth on the top, and so I am captivated therewith in my spirit, and it is laid on me as a work which I must exercise."—*J. Böhme.*

I would not presume to enter the lists in contention with Mr. Podmore about his recent critique on the late Serjeant Cox's ideas of Spirit and body, both because I very imperfectly understand these, and because the subject is far beyond my grasp. As a disciple of Böhme's I cannot, of course, for one moment agree to any theory which would identify *soul* with any kind of *body*—"Mr. Cox tells us that the soul of man is a refined body." *Address delivered by F. Podmore, March 21st. See "LIGHT" for April 2nd*—but as I read Mr. Podmore's papers I felt eager to remind him that a body, such as Mr. Cox spoke of in the passage he quotes, is not necessarily more akin to matter than the hand is to an inclosing glove; and while waiting for some more competent pleader of the cause, I wished to draw attention to the advantages and honours of *body*, and to shew that Spirit does not gain but lose by being disembodied. In saying this I only verbally conform to what I believe to be one of our established misconceptions. Taught by Böhme, I understand it to be as impossible for *Spirits* to exist without bodies as for light to shine without the molecules which vibrate in its transit; for "there is no understanding without a body, and moreover the Spirit itself does not subsist without a body." (*J. Böhme's "Threefold Life." Chap. 4, par. 5.*)

A *soul* can exist without a body; it is in a most literal sense its damnation if it be so bereft of substance, but if it be possible—there are fearful conditions of *impossibility*—"the soul attracteth corporeity to it." (*Ibid. Chap. 6, par. 86.*) And this only through the agency of Spirit. But matter and substance are not identical, though like the bee imprisoned by a glass window-pane, we are all apt to mistake the one for the other; but when the bee does escape he finds out that the hard, obstructive barrier against which he beat, buzzing angrily, was not air, though air-coloured; that the matter which could break deprived him of his natural element, while this, the imperishable air, was pervious, and in proportion to his scope of action, illimitable. So shall we find, if leaving behind our material life, we are, to use St. Paul's expression, "clothed upon" by heavenly substance. In the appendix to "Hafed," worth, to my thinking, all the rest of the book, a Spirit at one of the séances of Mr. Duguid is reported to have said: "Spiritual bodies, though undiscernable by you, are just as truly matter as earthly bodies; only you have no power to perceive anything but the crudest condition of matter." (p. 344.) I do not question the truth of that statement within the limits of that Spirit's experience, but either he knew nothing of *substance*, or he spoke as if matter was only another name for it. Swedenborg knew better. To cite him as an authority is, I know, to row against the tide, though even at the present day I think I can detect a slight turn in that tide; but on this question he is, in my opinion, not only an authority for reason to accept, but an enormous benefactor to the Christian world—treated hitherto like most benefactors, with ingratitude; like all givers of new truth, with derision or obloquy, according to the nature of those who refuse attention to it. Saying this, I am self-condemned, as for many years I regarded his works as a repository for curious *fancies*, never for an instant thinking they could be facts, or doubting that he had been duped by mendacious Spirits in his reports of the unseen world, and that his good morality was far beneath the reverent study of one who aimed at spiritual attainments.

I read St. Martin's summary of the merits of his writing—"Ils donnent à l'homme une secousse utile dans sa léthargie. S'ils ne lui donnent pas les plans exacts de la région spirituelle, ils l'engagent à moins à penser qu'elle existe."—(*"L'Homme de Désir." Par. 184*)—with full assent: and felt no wrong done by these words of the late Mr. Christopher Walton in his unpublished memorial of William Law: "I have no doubt that if Mr. Law had given his opinion of Swedenborg it would have put an entire extinguisher on Swedenborg's pretensions to the least regard from serious and enlightened Christians." (p. 598.)

And now I not only study his pages with growing belief in their value, but I feel convinced that neither the Christian world nor the world of deep thinkers have yet extracted from them half the treasure they contain. The conviction stole in upon my mind as gently, and as independently of any human influence, as morning light comes in. I had no bias in their

favour except that which they themselves offered ; the same sort of bias that a key gives when it opens a lock without effort. For many of the phenomena of Spiritist séances of which I read reminded me of long forgotten assertions of Swedenborg, and the more often I referred to these, the more plainly I saw that the everyday wonders of our time fall into intelligible sequence of cause and effect under the steady light of his long contemned vision.

So much for my acceptance of him as a seer and a teacher ; but this does not by any means include assent to all he teaches, or belief in all his deductions from what he saw. Not only was he a fallible man, but doubtless the Spirits he associated with were sometimes ignorant and sometimes mistook a correspondence (i.e., representative figure in worlds unseen by us) for absolute fact.

I observe a peculiar bitterness against him in the minds of those who most revere Böhme. Placing the two on a level of comparison, they exasperate angry incredulity by the evident discrepancies of the elder and the more modern seer. Surely such comparison is as unwise as trying to measure expanse above ground by central depths. To Böhme it was given to see into the abyssal depths of being in both a formative and prehistoric epoch ; his knowledge of the process of regeneration is unique—I may safely assume that no one else in any age has so accurately expounded its essentials ; whereas Swedenborg appears to me unconscious of the existence of soul as antecedent to spirit, and of all the tremendous issues which hang upon the evolution of spirits from souls he has not a word to say. His ideas of spiritual life are as calm and composed as the curls of his eighteenth century wig ; but what he can and does tell us about are the dynamic laws of that life when its initial stages are overpast.

It is, I imagine, his constant insistence upon *law* in spiritual life which has offended a large class of Christians, enlightened or otherwise ; we are used to think of it as so completely beyond accurate analysis that we allow the most momentous of its interests to remain under a soft haze of consecrated *somehow* ; and from placing our whole hope of salvation in the Saviour have come to think it almost profane to inquire into the *modus operandi* of deliverance ; much more so to believe that unless we take part in it instrumentally ourselves, for us His work is, until we do, made frustrate. On this ground Swedenborg's condemnation of current Christianity was unrelentingly severe, but, to my thinking, not in any degree unjust, though I quite admit that he never seems to have had any adequate notion of the profounder effects of the life and death of Jesus Christ.

With this, however, or any other of his shortcomings in Scriptural orthodoxy I have here nothing to do ; what I claim our deepest gratitude for is just the doctrine of Spirits having a bodily life which has exposed him to so much contempt for materialistic ideas, gross conceptions of the happiness of another world, and the like. He startles us, maybe, when he says most people think of Spirits as "puffs of intellect, or mere thinking principles ;" [See also Par. 456 in "Heaven and Hell" in his chapter on the theme "*That man after death is in a perfect human form.*"] but I remark that in all popular views of Spirits and Spirit life the farther they are distanced from anything that the body knows, feels, or does, the more heavenly, the more Spiritual they are supposed to be.\*

Swedenborg, at once clearing the ground of all such error by making it evident that matter is not substance, brings his readers face to face with a far more stringent and invariable reign of law in the inner world than religious teachers have been

used to recognise. While they combat feelings and states of mind, he turns from anything so vague, so open to the manipulation of self-love, and incessantly harps upon the certain indelible effect on the whole being of every smallest spiritual transaction. That "thoughts are things ;" that the body of the spirit must be moulded one way or other by every thought, by every admitted impression ; that the connection between evil and suffering is inseparable, till evil is given up and hated—are his key notes ; and would not truths such as these, if received, have worked out a far more spiritual state of mind—i.e., a state of mind more ruled by eternal interests—than all the warmest emotions of a piety that, treating the body as a temporary bridge between this life and a condition quite unimaginable, leaves to the despised body all its earthly delights, securing, as it is thought, the alien interests of the soul by modes that ignore their interaction ?

We may hear the rank materialism of Swedenborg's heaven denounced at a table where certainly the enjoyments of the body had not been in any degree despised, though its true well-being had, by people who groan and sigh a few hours later in hymn or prayer for deliverance from the burden of the flesh ; but in the clear atmosphere of Swedenborg's thought we learn that material pleasures are regarded as "filth" among purified Spirits, and as Spirits ourselves, though still heavily weighted, may begin in some degree to adopt their estimates.

A. J. PENNY.

Cullompton, Devon.

(To be continued.)

#### WHY NO TIDINGS OF DEPARTED FRIENDS ?

A valued correspondent writes us as follows :—"Why can we not get some tidings of those gone before ? The general experience is bitter failure. I, of course, know the stock arguments, but I do not think them satisfactory. Mr. — is in the same boat ; he would, I know, give much to hear direct from his wife ; and then, again, one would think that such writers as Cox, Sargent, &c., knowing as they did the vital needs of the cause, would come back and supply them, or at least put us in the way of getting such knowledge ourselves—but the fact is there—it is just as much a blank, and no tidings come from them. Why is this ?"

As a matter of fact, personally and privately, within our knowledge, both Serjeant Cox and Mr. Epes Sargent have returned, and afforded those present at the circle indubitable evidence of the fact that they were present, though the communications given, being private and personal, cannot be reproduced in print.

Again there may be several reasons why the newly departed do not return—among them being the fact that they are prevented doing so by attendant Spirits, because of the excessive grief of the friends or relatives left behind, which would cause the departed much pain and anguish if brought into contact with them. There may also be a lack of suitable opportunity, or of a proper medium ; or another cause may be the renewed distress in the minds of earthly friends which would ensue. Given proper times, places, and opportunities, communications will certainly come. But in such matters a fair margin must be allowed for the judgment of Spirits, who wiser than we, may, for our own and others' good, delay the realisation of communion with our newly departed, that in the end it may come with a more real comfort and lasting value, than if it came when reason and judgment were obscured by grief from recent bereavement.

#### A PLEA FOR UNITED WORK.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In reading the different papers belonging to our movement, I am sorry to see so much of the spirit of destruction displayed. If friends of the cause would learn to build—"for one can easily destroy"—there might be much good done ; and if the time wasted in pulling down were devoted to building up, our cause would soon have grand and noble pillars whereon to rest. As it is, there seem to be a great many supposed pillars in the movement, but they are of the caterpillar kind, eating the fruits of other men's labour. However, we must hope for better and truer Spiritualism to be found in our midst before long.

F. O. MATTHEWS.

MR. BERKS T. HUTCHINSON leaves for Dublin this week, visiting Manchester and Liverpool on the way.

\* Much as Swedenborg is supposed to differ from Böhme, their teaching wholly accords in direct contradiction of this assumption. While the one says, "It is manifest that the Spirit of man is in a form as well as his body, and that the form of the Spirit is the human form, with sensories and senses as perfect when separated from the body as when in the body, and that the all of the life of the eye, and the all of the life of the ear, in a word, the all of the sensitive life which man possesses, is not of his body, but of his Spirit in those sensories and in their most minute particulars"—(*Heaven and Hell*, Par. 434)—the other, as usual, going deeper into causality, simply asserts, "*Out of the Spiritual form the corporeal is generated.*"—(*J. Böhme's "Three Principles"*)—and enlarges upon the senses, not only of the human Spirit, but of the divine source of all being. "He is an almighty, all-wise, all-knowing, all-seeing, all-hearing, all-smelling, all-feeling, all-tasting God." (*J. Böhme's "Aurora," Chap. 3, par 23.*) Very pertinent to this saying of Böhme's, which would horrify many theologians and philosophers too—uniting for once in the battle cry of "Anthropomorphism"—is this passage from Fordage's "*Theologica Mystica.*" "But you will say that these faculties, as likewise the senses of hearing, seeing, tasting, smelling and feeling, are only attributed to God to comply with our weakness and to make Him intelligible to our understanding, not that there are any such faculties or senses in God, but only by way of analogy and likeness. To which I answer that all the forementioned faculties and senses are most really and truly in God, even far more really than they are or can be in any creature ; for in Him they are originally and in truth, and in the creature only by way of participation, and by way of analogy and resemblance. So that understanding, will, wisdom, hearing, seeing, &c., are in God primarily, essentially, and by way of eminence ; and in the creature only derivatively and by way of resemblance, as the copy expresseth and resembleth its original."—(*T. M.* p. 35).

## TO CONTRIBUTORS.

Reports of the proceedings of Spiritualist Societies in as succinct a form as possible, and authenticated by the signature of a responsible officer, are solicited for insertion in "LIGHT." Members of private circles will also oblige by contributing brief records of noteworthy occurrences at their sances.

The Editor cannot undertake the return of manuscripts unless the writers expressly request it at the time of forwarding, and enclose stamps for the return postage.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

"The Spiritualists are in the throes of an election—electing a committee for their central society, the British National Association of Spiritualists. If only as a notable example of perseverance under the direst difficulties these good people ought to be favoured with success. Persons who can struggle up against the Fletcher, Slade, and Home cases can fight over any obstacle." So says the *County Gentleman*. Whether its remarks are intended as a sneer, or are meant to be taken as a good-natured comment on passing events, we cannot tell—though we must give the same journal credit for having on several occasions referred to Spiritualism and Spiritualists in a tone of honesty and fairness. We allude to the subject now simply to remind our contemporaries, and some other journals which are likely to fall into the same mistake, that though to outsiders the prospects of Spiritualism would naturally seem to have been compromised by "the Fletcher, Slade, and Home cases," the truth or falsity of Spirit communion is not so much as touched by the misconduct of some of its professors. If the persons referred to have been guilty of malpractices—which, by the way, we do not here either affirm or deny—it is to the interest of Spiritualism itself that their evil doings should be brought to light. Dishonest members are an injury to any society, and their removal brings a corresponding good. The *County Gentleman* need not therefore be surprised that the British National Association—having a firm faith that the truth will in the end overcome every obstacle—is affording "a notable example of perseverance under the direst difficulties."

Unfortunately, however, as we think, there are Spiritualists even, who are overcome with discouragement from repeated scandals and exposures; who hang down their heads with shame, as though they were conscious of a personal share in the causes of disgrace; and who have not the courage to continue the struggle for truth in the face of contumely and scorn. They seem not a little to resemble Peter, and to be almost ready to deny their Master when the popular voice against Him grows somewhat louder than usual. Just at the moment when the open testimony of honest men would be of the surest service, these half-hearted friends relax their efforts, and give up the work with heartless despondency. It is a pity—but we suppose that nothing can be done to convince such people of their folly and faithlessness. To our mind, once convinced of the righteousness of our cause, we are bound to fight on, regardless of the question whether our success is likely to be in the immediate present, or in the far off future. The issue is not doubtful, and it is not for us to be too anxious about the time of its accomplishment. Spiritualism has made rapid strides already, and is growing steadily still. It may make less noise in the world than has been its wont, but its progress is not the less certain on that account. A belief in the "facts" has a larger hold on the public mind than many of us seem to imagine. People everywhere are beginning to admit that there is at least "something in them," whether that something be good or bad. Soon, the value of the facts will demand fair consideration; and the demonstrative evidence which they afford, of the certainty of a future life will receive a welcome recognition. In a struggle on the side of truth there is never cause or reason for despair.

At the last meeting of the present series of *Fortnightly Discussion Meetings* held at 38, Great Russell-street, on Monday evening last, Mr. Desmond FitzGerald gave an admirable address on "Spiritualism in Relation to the Press and the Public." Reviewing the conduct of the Metropolitan daily papers in particular, he cited many instances of glaring injustice in the publication of false statements in regard to Spiritualism, and the suppression of the truth when correct information had actually been supplied; and he very properly denounced their action in this matter as simply disgraceful. In regard to the public attitude towards Spiritualism, he lamented the paucity of those who investigated with the sole desire of discovering the truth; and expressed the conviction that very much of the disgrace which had come upon the movement had come from the frauds perpetrated by materialising mediums, and from the attempts of some Spiritualists to hide or palliate the offence. In these strictures there is little doubt, we fear, that Mr. FitzGerald is justified by sad experiences in the past.

Asking the question—How is it that Spiritualism is a byword and a reproach amongst so many, and what means can be adopted to remedy the evil?—Mr. FitzGerald suggested that physical mediums—possessed of real mediumistic power, but not hesitating to resort sometimes to deception—had been left to represent Spiritualism to the public, till, to the public and the Press, Spiritualism was simply what they had seen and heard of professional physical mediums; whereas they needed to be shewn that so far from this being the whole of Spiritualism, it was simply an incident in the movement. He thought it would be a good thing if people who had had experience in private circles would make the facts known; and it would moreover be a step in the right direction if when a young medium came forward—possessed of great physical mediumistic powers—he were watched over, guarded, and directed by Spiritualists of greater experience, so that he might be kept from the immense temptations to which such mediums were exposed from patrons who had more curiosity than discretion.

We have only been able to give the merest outline of Mr. FitzGerald's excellent address; but it will be seen that he raised some questions of considerable interest and importance. Unfortunately there was not time on Monday evening to discuss them so fully as they deserved. They demand careful thought and calm deliberation. Spiritualism, it cannot be doubted, has suffered greatly in reputation from the fact that a misleading aspect of its nature and professions has been presented to the public. There is, as we all know, a side of the question which is all sweetness, purity, and spiritual comfort; and one of the great works now to be achieved is to present this more attractive side to the popular gaze—or at least to the gaze of religiously disposed, sober-minded, and truth-loving men. If this can be accomplished it will be worth some little labour and a good deal of self-sacrifice. There are those in our ranks who are yearning to see the realisation of this noble work. Let them unite in a hearty effort and they will soon have their "heart's desire."

The current number of the *Fortnightly* contains an interesting article by Francis Galton, on "The Visions of Sane Persons." The writer says:—"A notable proportion of sane persons have had not only visions, but actual hallucinations of sight, sound, or other sense, at one or more periods of their lives." After mentioning various instances he goes on:—"Again, another lady, apparently in vigorous health, told me that during some past months she had been plagued by voices. The words were at first simple nonsense; then the word 'pray' was frequently repeated; this was followed by some more or less coherent sentences of little import, and finally the voices left her. In short, the familiar hallucinations of the insane are to be met with far more frequently than is commonly supposed among people moving in society and in normal health."

Towards the close of his article, Dr. Galton says:—"Great men are also apt to have touches of madness; the ideas by which they are haunted, and to whose pursuit they devote themselves, and by which they rise to eminence, have much in common with the monomania of insanity. Striking instances of great visionaries may be mentioned, who had almost beyond doubt those very nervous seizures with which the tendency to hallucinations is intimately connected. To take a single instance, Socrates, whose *daimon* was an audible, not a visual appearance, was subject to what admits of hardly any other interpretation

than cataleptic seizure, standing all night through in rigid attitude." In the concluding paragraph, the writer points out what he considers the cause of the rise and fall of "visionary tendency."

All this is suggestive to the "Spiritualists." Dr. Galton makes, however, no direct reference to Spiritualism, nor does he lead the reader to infer that any other explanation of analogous phenomena had ever been offered than that which he takes for granted is the true one. He does not even allude to the "coincidences" which not unfrequently present themselves between "visions" and actual objective occurrences. Possibly these have never been brought before him with sufficient force and definiteness to arrest his attention. His own special studies and tone of thought would naturally incline him to pay little regard to them. This would be in accordance with the tendency of some of his own remarks. To a great extent, both the senses and the mind perceive only that which they are trained to see, and which they desire to see.

It would be both interesting and valuable to have a small collection of "visions," such as are referred to in this article in the *Fortnightly*, accompanied by clear and distinct evidence of their connection with something which was happening at the same time elsewhere; and also of cases in which the same "vision" appealed to two different senses of two independent observers. These are not uncommon, and a number of them brought together might be sufficient to draw the attention of some scientific men away from the orthodox limits of inquiry. We commend the making of a small collection of this kind to those who have the means and leisure, and who would have the caution and judgment to exclude all cases of a doubtful and purely "visionary" character. Otherwise its value would be much diminished.

#### FACTS IN PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

[The persons who narrate the following incidents have furnished their names and addresses to the Editor as guarantees of good faith.]

Some of the best tests of the genuineness of Spirit manifestations I have had were suggested by the Spirits. Mr. Eglinton's "Joey" took a good deal of pains to satisfy me beyond all doubt that he was an individual quite distinct from his medium. One day he asked me to take a pencil and draw a figure of some person or thing on a sheet of paper, and place it with a pair of scissors on the mantelpiece. I did as desired, and turned off the light. Instantly I heard his voice—"Well, doctor, you have made the drawing. I have it in my hand; and here are the scissors. Now, I must be careful, and keep it to the line." Then we heard the "click-click" of the scissors in the perfect darkness. "Here it is," he said, placing the paper in my hand. I struck a match and found the bust and profile I had drawn cut out of the paper with accuracy—better, I think, than I could have done it in the light. At another time, when "Joey" had materialised and was sitting at table in the centre of the room, in a good light, while his medium was lying on a sofa behind a curtain at the end of the room, he ("Joey") wished to give another proof of his distinct individuality, and asked me to get him a glass of ink. I filled a gill tumbler with aniline purple, and placed it by him on the table. He dipped his index finger in the liquid, held it up for us to see, made a large cross and many dabs on a sheet of paper, dipping the finger again and again, and then said—"Now examine the hands of the medium." I went instantly to examine both of Mr. Eglinton's hands, and found them perfectly free from stain. This was a perfect demonstration that Mr. Eglinton was not "Joey," and there was no other person present who could have personated him. Perhaps an even closer test of Spirit power was when "Joey," speaking in the darkness, asked me to place my hands upon the cover of a large musical box, which he had just wound up and set going. I held the cover firmly with both hands so that any access to the works was physically impossible, when, at "Joey's" command, or my desire, the powerful machinery stopped, went on, played fast, slow, or any number of notes required. "How did you do it, Joey?" I asked. "By waves of magnetism," was his answer; but I don't see any the more how he did it.—T. L.

I send you a brief and authentic account of a remarkable incident in "trance mediumship," tending to shew what may be done with this phase of Spirit action in the matter of

practical and useful "tests." In the autumn of 1876 two gentlemen from Jersey visited one of the public circles held by Mrs. — a well-known trance medium. These gentlemen were total strangers to the friends assembled, and also to the medium. When their turn came for conversation one of them asked the medical control to diagnose the disease from which the inquirer's wife was suffering. The "doctor" replied that when he left the medium he would go to Jersey and see the lady, and return in about half-an-hour. After other "controls" had departed, the doctor spoke again, saying, "I have seen your wife; she has suffered for some years from an entire loss of taste and smell, but I think I can cure her to-night during her sleep." It is a fact that this lady did actually recover the lost senses during that night, knowing nothing, of course, of her husband's visit to the Spirit circle in London. When she came down to breakfast she astonished those present by exclaiming, "Why! I can smell the coffee, and taste it too!" This patient was previously bitterly opposed to Spiritualism, and it is not within my knowledge if she has altered her views, but it is certain her neighbours freely ascribed the cure to the Evil One, the husband replying that he wished there were a few more such "evil ones" to be found. At last account the cure was a permanent one. The names of these visitors were George De Carteret, Vale Farm, St. Peter's, Jersey; Mr. Metherell, Gargate Mill, St. Peter's, Jersey.—H. O.

#### GUARDIAN ANGELS.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I must commence my reply to "C.C.M." by strenuously objecting to his attempt to convert a matter of fact into a matter of argument. In this respect he seems to me to be inclined to resort to the tactics of the Agnostics. When I tell a materialist that I have seen such and such extraordinary phenomena, he immediately sets to work to prove that I am labouring under a delusion. Can any style of discussion be more barren and profitless?

As few living persons have had such an extensive experience of clairvoyance as I have enjoyed, although the faculty is not possessed by me, I may perhaps be permitted to say that through its instrumentality, and a careful study of its phenomena, I am enabled to assert, as a matter of absolute knowledge, (1) That all people have guardian angels; (2) That these guardian angels are more or less occupied in aiding those over whom they are appointed to watch; (3) That they have the power of conveying or communicating thoughts and impressions from one person to another; (4) That the degree and quality of these guardians are adapted to the nature of the persons with whom they are associated, and that the power of these angels in exercising their influence depends upon the favourable or unfavourable conditions which human beings supply to their spiritual co-operators or ministers.

If anyone tells me that I do not know these four facts as certainties, further controversy on the subject becomes simply useless.

But "C.C.M." wants to commit me to more than I am inclined or able to maintain; he says, that I "evidently assume that thoughts and impressions cannot be conveyed (apart from ordinary known means) from one to another *without* the intervention of individual disembodied intelligence." I beg leave to observe that I assume nothing of the kind. I do not know what other means may exist of conveying impressions from one mind to another at a distance, over and above the method which I have propounded; and I should deserve to be treated as an arrogant impostor if I presumed to think that I had exhausted induction; and that I knew precisely what was possible and what was impossible in the relation of man to all his surroundings.

On this point I can only speak as far as my limited knowledge and experience extend; and I do not wish to indulge in any discussion on a subject respecting which I am not qualified to give an opinion.

Your correspondent cites examples of physical impressions or shocks resulting to the actual observers from certain painful incidents enacted in their presence. I must confess that I do not see the relevancy of these facts to the question we are debating, which is—what is the most satisfactory and convincing theory to account for the communication of thoughts, impressions, and occurrences from one person to another, when such persons are separated from each other by any distance no matter how great?

The man who dreamed that he was going to be murdered by

some tramps on a journey, and who accordingly took precautions to avert such a catastrophe, I should say clearly acted under angelic guidance.

I see nothing derogatory to humanity or angelic ministration in attributing to the assistance and co-operation of guardian angels those special phenomena of individual interest which cannot be more readily explained; especially considering the myriads of Spirits who have no other or better occupation than that of watching over or controlling the conduct of human beings.

In earthly concerns it is not considered humiliating that a man should have a host of retainers ready to do his bidding; so in mental affairs why should it be deemed objectionable to have the spiritual aid of a multitude or body-guard of spiritual agents?

My explanation of the tiger incident is that one of my guardian angels happened to be taking a stroll about Wapping, saw the savage animal attacking people, and rushed immediately to my rescue by impressing me with a dread of such a catastrophe. "C.C.M.'s" interpretation is that the dynamic forces of the dreadful occurrence carried its pictorial presentment to a distance, and fixed it upon my imagination; but why this illumination singled me out, and there stopped short, we are not told, and on this point not a glimmer of even hypothetical information is vouchsafed to us.

Which then, I am constrained to ask, is the more reasonable and acceptable theory—mine or "C.C.M.'s"? "C.C.M." is compelled to admit that he believes in "a guardianship of some sort." Why does he not explain what this "some sort" is?

On the principle that we are most addicted to those pursuits in which we are best qualified to shine, "C.C.M." appears to me to be too partial to metaphysical problems and puzzles; and to be too anxious to support and propagate a kind of Spiritualism which shall have as little as possible to do with Spirits.—Yours truly,  
NEWTON CROSLAND.

### VACCINATION.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I observe that, as a rule, you do not admit anything into your pages on the subject of vaccination, but in your issue of the 4th inst., in a letter headed "Sister Dora" there was a passage to which I must ask you in justice to allow me to reply. The writer said: "Another set of people defy the Vaccination Laws and infect a whole parish with small-pox." The writer of this foolish remark has himself evidently no faith in vaccination which, according to Jenner, protects for ever the recipient, not only from death from small-pox, but from the remotest chance of taking it by infection. According to the latest reports of the Local Government Board, 95 and in some districts 98 per cent. of all children born are accounted for as to vaccination. I ask, sir, if vaccination is a preventative of small-pox, what cause of alarm or fear need any person have even if 80 or 90 per cent. of his neighbours choose to remain unvaccinated? Dr. Carpenter has recently endeavoured to shew that the residuum of the unvaccinated in our urban populations are the cause of the recurrent epidemics of small-pox. But his theory does not accord with fact and experience. In most of the epidemics of recent date the outbreak has invariably begun with the vaccinated, and if any statistics were wanting to shew that vaccination is powerless to prevent small-pox, they are supplied by a document now before me. In the "Annual Summary of the Registrar General for 1880," it is shewn that the small-pox mortality of London for the decade 1861 to 1870, with an estimated mean population of 3,018,193, was 8,347, whilst in the next decade during which vaccination has been enforced with such unparalleled rigour that hardly a child escapes the "mark of the beast" the small-pox mortality has risen to 15,543; the population in the meantime having risen to a mean estimate of 3,466,486.

Such facts, sir, destroy for ever the pretensions of the Jennerian priesthood, who would have us believe that the devil of small-pox can be cast out by the introduction of their no less destructive devil—Vaccination.—I am, Sir, yours very truly,  
W. YOUNG.

Grays Inn Chambers, 20, High Holborn,  
London, W.C.

June 9, 1881.

### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

SINCERITY.—Kindly send your name and address.

### SPIRITS; OR UNCONSCIOUS CEREBRATION?

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The letter of "Pseudo-Medium" is a candid abandonment of Spiritualism. I am not surprised that he has failed to elicit satisfactory phenomena. His method of reaching the generalisation of "unconscious cerebration" would lead to some grotesque results if pursued in chemical analysis or astronomical research.

There are several factors one would like to know something about. What was the health of the sitters? What was their stage of moral development? What was their general mental calibre? How long a time did their sittings extend over? What was the state of temper that generally prevailed in the circle? Was there an unnatural kind of awe present while the rappings of the mysterious power came? If any or all of these things were present, they would be quite enough to account for the vagueness of the phenomena.

In "Pseudo-Medium's" second conclusion he says, "That whatever the Spirits have spoken which was not in my mind at the time has been wholly untrue." And from this he generalises "unconscious cerebration,"—that is to say, it came from himself, or the collected individuality of the circle. If that be so, it would surely shew a state of great inharmony, to say the least.

I would like to know, too, if the communications were invariably false. Was there no incident that seemed to point to a better side of the thing?

There is a tone and style about "Pseudo-Medium's" letter not quite explanatory to me of his inability to reach satisfaction. For instance, he says, "But in one point nearly [mark that 'nearly'] all my observations agree; no one in Spirit-life either speaks the truth or fulfils solemn engagements." That would shew two things apparently; firstly, the word "nearly" would point to some better facts, and, secondly, there is a clear admission of objective Spirit in the phrase, "No one in Spirit-life." Yet the next sentence but one is this:—"Hence it follows that I am driven to accept the theory of unconscious cerebration." I again repeat that in face of such reasoning I am not surprised that "Pseudo-Medium" failed. He is evidently in identity the *nom de plume* he has assumed.

Spiritualistic research demands much more rigorous examination than this. If there be another sphere of human life, it is manifest that Spirits of all grades of development are there. And if there be a possibility of communication, it is equally manifest that there must be a law which regulates the intercourse. That law is the law of affinity—like to like. It is equally clear that in the case of the medium there must be a stage of development into the proper conditions of success. Scientific generalisations and discoveries are not reached without a painful, laborious education in method. To understand the simplest generalisation of astronomy it is necessary to go through years of severe discipline in the higher mathematics. A tyro is useless in scientific research. It is high time that this quackery in Spiritualism was put an end to. Its investigation is a science of method, or its facts are a science of laws. My early experience as a solitary medium was not dissimilar from that of "Pseudo-Medium," but, like him, I observed that it was only "nearly" totally bad. I pursued the investigation and found the light more and more successfully battling with the darkness. I found a strife of intense malignity with supreme benevolence; at last I reached entire communion with the holy and true. My angel-guides have performed feats for me that rival many of the so-called miracles of the New Testament, and my experience makes me "driven to accept the theory of" objective men and women living in another sphere of existence, "a result somewhat" encouraging "to one who" also "hoped that Spiritualism might prove an objective basis for religious faith." And I am fully persuaded that before long it will do so.—I am, Sir, yours truly,  
EPSILON.

June 12th, 1881.

MR. J. MYLNE is spending a few weeks in England, being here on a visit from Bengal.

MR. F. O. MATTHEWS, with a view to elicit the opinion of Metropolitan Spiritualists upon the question of "the law in relation to public mediums," and also to celebrate the anniversary of his release from imprisonment, is arranging a series of three meetings for Sunday, July 3rd, over which Mr. J. J. Morse has consented to preside. Some prominent speakers are expected to attend.

## OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

## "The Spiritualist."

Mr. Berke T. Hutchinson details some very satisfactory experiences lately had by him through the mediumship of Mr. F. O. Matthews, the clairvoyant. He says:—"All I can say is that Mr. Matthews, who had never seen my brother before, told him events and stated facts that utterly astonished him. In my own case some remarkable communications were made, some of which have already been verified. I speak of everyone as I find him, and having had undoubted proof of Mr. Matthews' powers of clairvoyance, as an honest, and I trust impartial, inquirer, I speak as I find him."

In a review of Professor William Denton's new book, "Is Darwin Right?" just published in America, and which review is in opposition, mainly, to Denton's plea for Spiritual direction in the origin of man, the reviewer thus writes:—

"I do not think that Professor Denton nor all the anti-evolutionists, can ever undo one tittle of what has been done. Each new discovery of science only makes it the more certain that the whole order of phenomena is one order. And you cannot retrace that step now, by picking a hole here and there in the armour of the 'Materialist:' by trying to discern a spirit-finger directing this or that wheel of your cosmic machinery. Man from the ape, is natural too. You cannot leave all the rest of the world to the guidance of law, and reserve a special favoured nook for the guidance of spirit. You cannot say the planets are driven round by gravitation, but the actions and the thoughts of a man are moved by the Spirit of God. If you do not want a Will to guide the rise and fall of the mercury in your barometer, you do not want a Will to nerve the arm of the warrior, or to direct the counsels of the statesman."

## "The Medium."

The character of our contemporary has, latterly, undergone a noticeable variation, the religious aspect of the relations of Spiritualism having quite a prominent place assigned it. There is a catering now for Biblical readers which must prove very acceptable, and the editor remarks:—"In Bible times the Word of God was a living fact, personally experienced by the men of these ages. None of the Bible teachers based their operations on the records of the past, though they alluded to them sometimes for parallels. Their Bible was the power of God acting in their midst. Has God lost His power, that we may not rely on it to-day? Is His work not, now as in the past, sufficient evidence in itself to establish its existence? 'Though ye believe not me, believe the works,' said Jesus. That is—Spiritual truths should not be a matter of testimony, but of personal experience." In another place in the same article, referring to worship, priest-craft, creeds, &c., it is said:—

"On all such matters we must have in Spiritualism, as in Gospel times, the most liberal free-thought; or perhaps as our Jersey correspondent would phrase it—Godly free-thought. It seems to be the most ungodly of all proceedings to take the great liberty with the Deity of making Him responsible for thoughts, words and acts, as is so frequently done by the orthodox. Let us then, one and all, place Spiritualism on its own merits, as a living Word, spoken to mankind to-day, and therefore in spirit harmonious with what the Spirit-world has spoken in the past."

It is editorially stated with regard to the business details for obtaining lecturers by societies:—

"As to an organisation to make provision for lecturers, that is a purely business matter, which has no relation whatever with Spiritualism. Lecturers, like other professional men, must make such arrangements as suit their requirements, or lecture on more popular topics. Let every tub stand on its own bottom: Spiritualism is one thing, and the necessities and purposes of individuals quite another."

Yet without the business "provision for lecturers" which resulted in the addresses of Peebles, Britten, Richmond, Burns, Morse, Wallis and others, the public would not have known so much of Spiritualism, nor would there have been so many Spiritualists in the world as there now are.

## "The Banner of Light."

Further details respecting the departure of Dr. William Fishbough, which was adverted to in the last issue of "LIGHT," are given in the *Banner*. We quote the following abstract of the proceedings at the funeral:—

A very large assemblage, filling every part of it, gathered Monday evening, May 23, at the residence of Dr. Fishbough, to pay their tribute of respect to his memory. The floral decorations were profuse, and a peaceful smile rested upon the face of our risen brother. The Rev. Almon Gunnison, pastor of All Souls' Church (Universalist), had charge, and invited Professor Henry Kiddle to give the opening address, which was a touching tribute to the virtues of Bro. Fishbough. He spoke of the brother's faith in Spirit-presence and communion, and also of his deep and earnest religious faith, and said that when he visited Dr. F., only the Tuesday evening before, when he met Dr. J. M. Peebles, Dr. Eugene Crowell, and some others, he little thought that his next visit would be to pay tribute to his character and virtues. Mr. Bernard Peters, editor of the *Brooklyn Daily Times*, said: "My acquaintance with Dr. F. dates back some 25 years. I have ever found him, on all the living questions of the day, on the right side. During those years

he was a frequent contributor to our paper, and his articles were always welcome. I did not fully agree with him as to his faith in Spiritualism, but it was a pleasure for me to visit him and listen to his explanations of his peculiar views; and I always found him deeply philosophical, and can but hope that he now realises in his new home the highest aspirations of his soul." Dr. Wm. H. Atkinson, of New York City, said: "Dr. Fishbough and myself have been friends, near and dear, for nearly a lifetime. Our belief in Spiritualism, in its higher and religious aspects, brought us together in close sympathy, and I knew him to be in every respect an honest man, a pure man in all the relations of life, also a deeply religious man from the unfolding of his interior life. We shall miss his face, but in spirit we shall feel that he is ever with us." Rev. Mr. Gunnison said:—"When I first decided to make Brooklyn my home, a friend, who was a candidate for the Governor in one of the New England States, said to me: 'If you ever find a book called "The Macrocosm and Microcosm; or Universe Without and Universe Within," by Wm. Fishbough, read it, as it is the most profoundly philosophical book ever given to the world.' I made the acquaintance of Dr. F., and we became from the first warm friends. I loved to come to his home, to sit at his feet and listen to his words of wisdom, and he said to me, 'Many years ago, when everything seemed dark, and I was like a mariner at sea, without chart or compass, I turned to the Sermon on the Mount as a rock upon which I could stand;' and I know that our brother felt the inspiration and blessing of the Master's presence as but few experience in this life, and that in his hours of illumination his interior life was blessed by clear glimpses of the life beyond."

"A 'Cyclopædia of British and American Poetry,' by Epes Sargent, is published by Harper and Brothers, in a sumptuous volume of nearly 1,000 pages. It is a wonderfully perfect work, combining rare judgment and knowledge of English literature; and, as the labour of the last years of Mr. Sargent's life, it is fitly his crowning work."

Professor William Denton, the well-known lecturer on geology, sailed from San Francisco on the 4th inst. for Australia on a lecturing tour.

## "The Herald of Progress."

In a reply to a correspondent, "J. J.," it is stated that "the present editor of *Herald* is merely honorary, and proffered his services for three months only, which were duly accepted, with many thanks, by the gentlemen who were deputed by the Board of Consultation to devise means to carry it on. What may happen after the three months we cannot say, but if all pull together, the paper may be brought to a paying point during that period of time."

Three interesting letters appear upon the question of "Orthodox Spiritualism," one by Mr. J. Enmore Jones, one by the "Controls of J. C. Wright," and one by Mr. W. C. Robson.

## THE HOLY DEAD.

The following beautiful lines are printed in the recently issued second volume of the "Life of Bishop Wilberforce." They were composed by him on the occasion of the death of his son:—

## Voice of the Holy Dead!

Our thirsty senses listen, till thy note,  
Which sounds of earth too long have banished,  
Around us float,  
Stealing upon the watcher's ear,  
Like music near,  
In this deep hush of darkness and of fear.

## Feet of the Holy Dead!

Sure in night's stillness we shall hear your fall,  
As those who march around with measured tread  
The crumbling wall,  
Which erst shut in the holy seed  
In time of need,

With the battlements of Faith and Hope and saintly deed.

## Bands of the Holy Dead!

Our straining eyes would mark your shadowy forms,  
Now that the summer leaves are withered,  
And winter storms  
Are gathering round us, glide  
At eventide

To take your friendly station at our side.

## Souls of the Holy Dead!

Though fancy whispers thus to musing hearts,  
We would not call ye back whence ye are fled,  
To take your parts  
In the old battle-strife: or break  
With one heart-ache

The rest which ye have won and in God's presence take.

Ye float above our way,  
Like some bright cloud bred of calm evening's air  
And bathed in sunbeams: in that golden ray  
Your witness to our God ye bear—

Ye bid us freely trust, nor seek,  
Tho' faint and weak,

For other help than His, whose strength is with the meek.

S.O., 1856.

## BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

## Meeting of Council.

The Council met on Tuesday evening last—Mr. E. Dawson Rogers in the chair.

The Secretary read a letter from Mr. J. G. Meugens, of Calcutta, in which that gentleman said :—

“I am glad that ‘LIGHT’ is doing so well, and trust its sphere of usefulness will continue to expand. I hope also that the Association will continue to agitate until the law as it at present affects mediums is altered.”

From Mr. S. C. Hall a letter had been received in which that gentleman said :—

“I very much regret that Dr. Davies has left England. We shall miss the bold and manly daring of a highly intellectual man.

“I wish your ‘report’ were less unsatisfactory as regards your financial position. So it ought to be undoubtedly; and it is too bad that you are too little encouraged to labour for the general cause. What would Serjeant Cox now give if he had left you £1,000 out of his half-a-million?”

“I send you a dozen copies of ‘In Memoriam,’ and 20 copies of the prospectus of my little book. But I shall send copies by post to each of the members of your Council, as I find the names and addresses in ‘LIGHT,’ the only Spiritualist periodical I now take.”

The Secretary reported the reception of copies of “In Memoriam” for distribution, and also a framed photograph of the late Mrs. Hall. A photograph of Dr. Davies had also been received for the Association’s album.—These were gratefully accepted, and votes of thanks were passed to the donors.

One resignation was accepted, and five new members were elected.

The names of the members elected to seats on the Council at the recent annual general meeting were reported. They will be found included in the list on our advertising pages.

Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Mrs. FitzGerald, Mr. Desmond G. FitzGerald, and Dr. S. T. Speer were re-elected Vice-Presidents, the office of President being left open till Mr. Calder’s return to England.

Mr. Morell Theobald was re-elected auditor.

On the motion of Mr. E. T. Bennett, it was resolved that it be referred to a special committee to consider and recommend to the next Council meetings what committees should be appointed for the work of the ensuing year, and of whom such committees should be constituted. The special committee to consist of Mr. Desmond G. FitzGerald, Dr. S. T. Speer, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Mrs. FitzGerald, Mr. E. T. Bennett, Mr. C. Pearson, and Mr. W. H. Coffin.

The Secretary reported that the Leicester Spiritualists’ Society and the South Durham District Association had elected representatives to seats on the Council of the B.N.A.S., Leicester having chosen Mr. Larrad, and South Durham Mr. James Dunn.

The Secretary stated that having had several complaints, from members who attended the reading room, of the recent absence of the *Banner of Light* and the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, he had written three times on the subject to Mr. Harrison, by whom they had hitherto been supplied; but not having had the omission rectified, or even received an answer to any one of his letters, he had transferred the orders for these papers to Mr. Morse.

The Council approved this action on the part of the Secretary.

The Secretary was directed, in conjunction with the Séance Committee, to organise the arrangements for a series of members’ séances.

The Research Committee were requested to arrange for a conference of Spiritualists to be held in London in the autumn.

## DALSTON.

On Thursday evening, the 9th inst., the Dalston Association of Enquirers into Spiritualism held its ordinary monthly council meeting, there being in attendance Messrs. T. Wilks, S. Williams, J. Taft, hon. sec., and Mesdames Rice, Erwood, Nichols and Macaulay. Mr. J. J. Morse, the president, occupied the chair. The following ladies and gentlemen were admitted to membership: Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Morse (the latter lady being also elected to serve on the council), and Mr. Sandys Britton and Mr. Archer. The report of the late soirée shewed a profit balance after all charges were paid, the council passing a special vote of thanks to Mrs. Morse for her indefatigable exertions, which resulted in the complete success of the soirée. After the transaction of the usual routine business, the council adjourned until the 8th prox.

On the same evening a physical séance was held, Mr. W. Haxby being the medium. A large company assembled, and the phenomena were of the usual description witnessed in Mr. Haxby’s presence.

## GOSWELL HALL.

On Sunday last the platform was occupied by Mr. J. J. Morse, who delivered an inspirational lecture on the subject of “Man—Victim or Victor?” the object of the lecture being to shew that man was, with a better knowledge of nature, learning to utilise her powers and forces to his advantage, and to prove

himself victorious over the disadvantages to which he at one time used to succumb. It was claimed that in the matter of death man in both worlds was victor, since the facts of Spirit-communion clearly shewed that death was not the dreary horror it has been described. The address was listened to with the closest attention by a large audience, and at its close was warmly eulogised. The speaker again gave his services for the benefit of the funds, and on the Chairman announcing that Mr. Morse had promised to come to help them once in each month the audience manifested enthusiastic approval. The committee of the hall would be glad to receive a few donations towards an organ repair fund, as the instrument requires certain repairs. The secretary’s address will be found in the Goswell Hall advertisement upon our last page.

## LADBROKE HALL.

Last Sunday Miss Susan Gay gave a very interesting lecture on “Man and Woman as Spiritual Beings,” which was well received. Mr. F. O. Matthews followed with clairvoyance, when some very correct tests were given.

## CARDIFF.

The usual weekly public meeting of the Cardiff Spiritualist Society was held on Sunday evening last, the chair being occupied by the Hon. Sec. Mr. Adams read an extract from “The Gospel of Spiritualism,” after which the Chairman congratulated the meeting on the slow but sure progress of Spiritual truth in this neighbourhood. In the course of his remarks he recommended the Society, while retaining its distinctive features, to join hands, in some respects, with the Unitarians, especially in the matter of teaching the children on Sundays. This idea was favourably viewed by the meeting. A séance was held at the close of the proceedings with very interesting results.

## NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

I feel glad that the proprietors of our Newcastle journal recognise the necessities of the sifting process. It is without doubt as highly beneficial to Spiritualistic societies as it is to those individuals who dare to look in upon themselves, and recognise the “black and grained spots” which need cleansing from the soul. It is likewise reassuring to recognise a statement to the effect that the N.S.E.S. is stronger than ever. I fear few of us were aware of the fact, but our imaginations may lack vigour, and, being of a serious turn, may take a somewhat desponding view of the matter. However, let us hope for the best. Mr. Brown, the well-known test medium, has been doing some good work in his usual unostentatious way, among the friends in the outlying districts north and west of Newcastle. I find his labours as much appreciated as ever. He is moving south this week, and I trust that the same spirit of appreciation will attend him. I have thought it somewhat strange that our Newcastle Society has so often overlooked the efforts of this veteran Spiritualist. His abilities as a platform speaker may not be of the highest order, but they are decidedly superior to those of many we have listened to. On Sunday, June 5th, the platform of Weir’s Court presented a somewhat novel appearance. Mr. Wm. Armstrong, a gentleman well-known from his connection with the Esperance affair, and for some time a pronounced seceder from the N.S.E.S., delivered himself most eloquently upon the benefits and necessities of physical and form manifestations as a sure and safe groundwork whereon to build the superstructure of Spiritualism. I agree with him most heartily, so far as such manifestations are protected from imposition and an over supply of the “too, too solid flesh.” The other gentleman, Mr. Ogle, has been a well-known opponent of the cause in the North for some time, and whenever opportunity afforded criticised Spiritualism in anything but measured terms. Mr. Ogle is a travelling mesmeric entertainer, and he enlarged upon his previous opposition, and went on to describe how he had been amply convinced of the truth of Spiritualism from the many wonderful tests he had received through the clairvoyant visions of one of his subjects.

On Sunday evening last Mrs. Jno. Mould occupied the platform and read a lecture upon “Plant Life.” The lady introduced her subject to the notice of the audience with great modesty and discretion, saying that as she was not accustomed to platform speaking she hoped her hearers would overlook all defects, and would so far interest themselves in the discourse as to forget the presence of the person speaking. The lecture was admirably delivered, and evinced a most careful study of the subject, and a most deft culling and arrangement of facts and illustrations. Her sentiment at times was very fine, and her illustrative drawings on the black-board, descriptive of the discourse, were cleverly and admirably executed. The fair speaker was well received, most warmly thanked, and pressed to resume her subject at an early opportunity.—NORTHUMBRIA.

MR. J. J. MORSE will deliver two inspirational lectures in the Temperance Hall, Keighley, on Sunday next, June 19; afternoon at 2.30; subject, “Prayer: its Philosophy and Use;” evening at 6, “Sinners, and how to save them; Saints, and how to make them.”

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