

Light:

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SATURDAY, JULY 2, 1881.

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SPIRITUALISM AND SECULARISM.

In the preceding articles under this heading, starting from common ground on which both the Spiritualist and the Secularist can meet, we claim to have established these conclusions:—

That there are intelligent beings in existence other than the human beings inhabiting the earth; that some of these intelligences have lived on this earth as men and women; and that they in their present life have the power to hold intelligent communication with us here.

It remains for us to consider in what way convictions such as these affect a belief in the existence of a Supreme Being. Let us look first at the position of the Secularist. He has convinced himself that when a man dies there is an end of him; that there is no future life or future state; that there is nothing that corresponds to a "spiritual world;" and he has satisfied himself that matter contains within itself the latent possibilities of all we see around us. Believing all this, it is natural, if we may use the word, that any idea of a superintending Divine Being or Creator should decay in his mind. There is neither the room nor the necessity for such a conception. To him, existence is complete without it. He is, in a certain sense, logical and consistent not only in his Agnosticism, but in his Atheism, from which term the lecturer, whose discourse has been our text, in no wise shrank.

When, however, we have reached the position which we now hold, the whole question assumes a very different aspect. Believing in a "spiritual world" (or it may be worlds), and in spiritual beings, there are three distinct means by which our conclusions may be affected. We may be influenced by the direct teachings or opinions of "Spirits," or from our own powers of reasoning and analogy we may come to certain conclusions, or we may be "inspired" from high spiritual sources.

The direct teachings professing to come from individual spirits, may in general terms be said to be as varied as the teachings of mortals, except of course that we cannot imagine a "Spirit" to be a "Secularist." A Supreme Being is ordinarily spoken of in spiritual messages as incomprehensible, and as far above any communicating spirit as He is above ourselves. The same expressions of worship and love are used, and with the exception that we never met with any spirits who professed to hold in their extreme form the doctrines of Evangelical and Calvinistic theology in relation to sin, its atonement, and its punishment, there appears to be almost as great a variety of view in the spiritual world as there is here.

The two other means we have referred to by which our conclusions are affected, may be taken together, and having come to this, which is really the most important part of the whole subject, we feel both how little it is that we can by any possibility be said to know, and also how difficult it is to convey by any words what we desire to express.

As Spiritualists, we are, at circles and séances, sometimes privileged to hold communication with Spirits whose knowledge, intelligence, and wisdom are far greater than our own, and who are animated by feelings of love and benevolence towards other Spirits, both embodied and disembodied. Some of these Spirits have, to us, an individual personal existence; we feel to know them; we recognise them when we meet them at séances; they retain from time to time their individuality just as our own earthly friends do. We are in fact almost as much acquainted with them as a blind man may be said to be with friends whom he has perhaps only heard talk. They inspire us

with confidence in themselves. Without in any way giving up our own private judgment or right to question what they tell us, we look upon some of them as upon "guides, philosophers, and friends."

They tell us of Spirits again far above them in knowledge and power. The Spiritualist's conception of the universe of intelligent life is that of a series of worlds, states or conditions of being, of which this mortal earthly life is one, of which some may be lower than this earth, but of which many are certainly higher, infinitely higher, and whose inhabitants are infinitely our superiors in all those attributes which raise man above the merely animal kingdom. It may be merely a condescension, so to speak, to our limited knowledge, which calls this life a "material" one and other lives "spiritual." It might be more in accordance with the reality to speak of the more or less material, or the more or less spiritual, and that the higher we rise in Love and Wisdom, the more refined will be the sphere in which we are fitted to live.

Do not let our readers forget that all that we have said is based step by step upon objective phenomena of precisely the same nature as other phenomena which are recognised as facts by our opponents, and that though we claim no scientific certainty for these later considerations, we do claim that they are entitled to as much respect and attention as many theories, analogies and conclusions propounded by philosophers and accepted by numbers of their disciples.

One more question remains. What does all this lead up to? What is there beyond and above these high and higher Spirits? To the question, Can man, by searching, find out God? or, Can Spirit, by searching, find out God? the answer can never be in the affirmative. The finite must always be dumb before the infinite. In the beautiful old record, the commandments of God were given out of the *cloud* on Mount Sinai. And we must be content for it to be so. Yet, on the other hand, as it appears to us, quite sufficient is made known. There are Spiritual beings whose love, and power, and knowledge are infinitely greater than our own. Beyond them again is still higher love and wisdom, and whether supreme love and wisdom is rightly personified with attributes such as are usually ascribed to a Divine Being, is a question which, it seems to us, we may well leave to a far distant future.

The "God-idea" may have decayed, so far as it involved anthropomorphic conceptions of a Deity. But the real Spiritual "God-idea" rises more sublimely than ever, as an ineffable brightness behind all the glorious manifestations of Love and Power which Spiritualism reveals to us. Man knows his duty. He knows that by helping his fellow-man he helps him, not only for this life, but for future lives. He knows that he himself is destined to a future existence, and that as he lives here, so will he begin life there. He has everything that the Secularist can give him, and he has the infinite kingdom opened to him by the facts and phenomena of Spiritualism. He has plenty of scope for love and reverence towards beings far above himself, and although the "God-idea" may have been deprived of the definiteness given to it by the humanly invented theologies and systems of religion, yet it remains to man all that he needs, a pillar of fire by night, and a pillar of cloud by day, to guide him to the Promised Land.

In the last year new interest, outside of Spiritualistic believers, has been awakened with regard to the phenomena and their cause. If this interest can be met and seconded by an increasing class of fair-minded and pure-minded and genuinely liberal believers, who are not so much concerned to maintain the *ism* of their faith as to discover truth and promote righteousness, the two parties may be of mutual service in lifting Spiritualism to new vantage-ground for benefiting humanity.—*Free Religious Index, Boston.*

"MATERIALIZING MEDIUMS,"

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In your summary of Mr. FitzGerald's address, in the issue of "LIGHT" for June 18th, you state that he "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." Further, he is reported to have spoken of "physical mediums, who are possessed of real mediumistic power, but do not hesitate to resort sometimes to deception," &c.

The above quotations are very serious and almost alarming statements coming from the gentleman in question, who is well-known as a careful and cautious observer, and, at the same time, an ardent and devoted Spiritualist. If my memory serves me correctly, he has been on the Research Committee of the B. N. A. S. and will, therefore, have had exceptional opportunities for investigating with the best and most widely known London mediums. Are we then to infer that the results of the prolonged investigations he has made lead to this conclusion, "that mediums are often guilty of fraud and resort to deception although possessed of real mediumistic powers"?

I think it would be of great service to the movement if the Research Committee could and would tabulate the phenomena observed by them, and publish the result in your columns or in pamphlet form. If satisfactory manifestations occurred we ought to know; if unsatisfactory it would be equally instructive to be told why.

It is sometimes suggested by mediums, and by other Spiritualists, too, that the Spirits are the real delinquents, and use their mediums in the unconscious state to impersonate the ghost instead of building up an independent form for themselves. I remember reading the evidence of Mr. C. C. Massey upon the point, where he declares that on one occasion he drew the supposed materialised Spirit into the room under the gas, and saw clearly that it was the medium in an unconscious trance. If Spirits are guilty of such imposition, how are they to be prevented?

Some time since diagrams representing the variations of weight in the cabinet and in the alleged Spirit form, were published to the world, but since then considerable doubt has been expressed in some quarters whether these experiments were completely satisfactory, and the precautions taken such as to render deception impossible. It would be interesting to learn Mr. FitzGerald's ideas upon this point. Amongst other remarkable features of this complicated subject is the fact with which sceptics generally face us—that whenever a "form" has been detained it has always proved to be the medium and invariably in a state of undress. It is needless to recapitulate the instances where this has occurred, but when asked by an inquirer if I knew of one instance in which the "form" had not proved to be the medium I have been sorrowfully compelled to answer, No.

Sensational and highly coloured reports are often published respecting the doings of this or the other medium, but these are found to be largely imaginative when a cool-headed and observant investigator attends, or else the conditions are favourable to trickery on the part of the medium; these conditions being total darkness or insufficient light to make accurate observation; the medium free or imperfectly secured; the sitters bound to compliance with conditions which make it impossible to satisfy oneself that the medium is not playing ghost wilfully, or unconsciously. If Spiritualistic phenomena are ever to become scientific or valuable, these elements of uncertainty must be eliminated. "Fraud-proof conditions" must be instituted, and sufficient light allowed to make the features of the "form" clearly discernible. Many persons say, "Ah! but you must have confidence, and give your sympathy; if you doubt, or are suspicious, you spoil everything." Such persons sit open-mouthed to receive whatever the "good Spirits" will give them, and then write flaming reports of the "wonderful," "heavenly," and "glorious" séances they have had with "our medium." Admitting that sympathy, confidence, and harmony are requisite for successful manifestations, these conditions can only be granted when the medium cheerfully strives to remove all elements of doubt, by adopting such tests as experience and an earnest desire to satisfy his clients will prompt him to adopt. 'Tis truth we are seeking, accurate information and evidence, not sentimental appeals to our feeling of confidence. If faith in the integrity and honourable intention of the medium and his friends, is the basis of the relationship between promoter and visitor, then such conditions are unsatisfactory, except the phenomena are conclusive; which,

however, they rarely are. With "M.A. (Oxon.);" I would advocate the abolition of cabinets, and am of opinion that the movement of a table in the light; the production of direct writing in closed slates in full light; rapping on walls, doors, or elsewhere away from the mediums; or intelligent messages spelt through the movements of the table, are more convincing and scientifically valuable than any number of the unsatisfactory so-called materialisation séances, where the conditions are favourable to deception, and where it is impossible to decide whether the manifestations are genuine Spirit efforts or the result of the action of the medium.

I trust Mr. FitzGerald and other of your readers will deal with this important subject and give us the benefit of their large experience and careful inquiry. Truth needs no mask. Facts must be the basis of our Spiritual philosophy. We want to know the truth and have the facts, not fancies or frauds.

A COUNTRY SPIRITUALIST.

THE USES OF SPIRITUALISM.

I know a lady who considers the facts of Spiritual manifestations so important that she went and remonstrated with a medium who had refused to sit for such manifestations. "How can you bury your talent in a napkin?" said she. "How can you refuse to give people the demonstration of the fact of a life beyond the grave? Don't you feel the importance of people having not only the belief but the absolute knowledge of another state of existence?"

"No," said the ex-medium; "I don't see why I should trouble myself. They will all find it out very soon."

She was a very good medium, known to many London Spiritualists a few years ago, but she would not bear the persecutions to which mediums are subjected, and we have sorrowfully lost sight of her.

I think the lady who remonstrated with her was right, and that she was wrong. It seems to me that one who is gifted with the power of demonstrating the fact of immortality has a tremendous responsibility. I cannot see how anyone can refuse to give such evidences of Spirit life and power to the world. No doubt we shall all know when we get out of our bodies—but the knowledge of the fact that we have to live without our earthly bodies may make a great difference. If our life is to end with the decay of the body—if there is no hereafter, what we believe and what we do is of small account. But if it can be proved that we live on, and may live for ever, it is a very different matter.

Now, the facts of Spiritualism prove that we do continue to live after the death of the body. Our friends, who have lived with us in this world, come to us, and assure us of that fact. They still exist. They talk with us; they appear to us; we see, hear, and feel them. They give us absolute proofs of their existence, after what we call death. It is probable, therefore, that they will live on, and live for ever. If the Spirit of man survive the death of the body, why should it not continue to exist? If we survive death, may we not count upon immortality in the world of Spirits? Change there may be, as from this life to the life to come—but, passing this death, and being more alive after it, we need not fear annihilation.

The assurance of immortality must make a difference in human motions and actions. "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die," is a maxim of Secularism. We have but these few years of life—let us make the most of them. A short life and a merry one. Let us live while we live. If it gets tiresome, we can get out of it. Meantime "the world is mine oyster." We have but one life to live; let us make the most of it. If there is pleasure, let me enjoy it. Eat, drink, and be merry. What have I to do with others? My business is to take care of myself, and enjoy all I can of this brief term of existence. A series of sensations, and then the end. Why should I not make those sensations as agreeable as I can, and when they are no longer agreeable, why not put an end to them?

This is the philosophy of Secularism. Spiritualism is quite different. If I am to live for ever, let me live so as to ensure permanent peace and satisfaction of conscience. The approbation of those around me is of small account. I must win the love of those who have gone before, and will come after me. My life is open to the world of Spirits—my acts and thoughts are known; my career is unending. "A great cloud of witnesses" surrounds me. A great future is before me, I must be worthy of my immortal destiny.

A Spiritualist has motives and hopes—a certainty indeed,

very different from the condition of one who expects annihilation. Living in the memory of those who are soon to pass into nothingness is not of much account. If my death in this world is to be the end of me, what should I care for the good or bad opinion of those who in a few years will have ceased to think or feel? If the whole human race is to be extinct, why should I trouble myself about anything beyond to-day's sensations?

This matter need not be argued. It may be left to every man's conscience. Each must decide for himself. My feeling is that the certainty of a life to come must have a powerful influence upon the character and conduct; therefore, I think the knowledge of the proofs that there is a life to come of the highest importance; therefore, I think it is the duty of every one who knows the facts of Spirit-life to make them known to others. Spiritualists have a duty to perform. The fact of a future life is of transcendent interest and importance, and I hope you will be able to give "light" to a great many. Secularism is very active without, as far as I can see, much motive beyond individual ambition for such activity. I cannot understand zeal in the cause of annihilation. I do not see that I should be anxious to assure a man that when he dies that will be the end of him.

The highest use of Spiritualism is to give men the assurance of an endless existence.

T. L. N.

THE PROPOSED CONFERENCE.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—As a Spiritualist of some years' standing, it has been to me, in common with many others, a source of much regret that the cause has hitherto been in so scattered and disunited a condition, as to its effective forces. One of our periodicals has for about seven years steadily written down all attempts at organisation, and preached the gospel of "individualism," which is in many cases a euphemism for personal selfishness. Another paper used to advise organisation so long as it comprised "members of the peerage" and other notables. Another journal, content to appropriate other people's ideas, is alive to the need of organisation, but, dog-in-the-manger like, won't do aught towards it itself, and would prevent others.

So far "LIGHT" has only treated the question in a general and suggestive manner, but the time is coming when "Under which king, Bezonian?" order? or discord? will have to be clearly proclaimed all along the line. The topics, sir, suggested by you in your last issue are, in the main, worth careful consideration at the coming Conference; but the question of the actual working of the cause is one that most needs clear and practical consideration. There is scarcely one society in Great Britain solvent. Even the society that claims to be the most active is £80 in debt, and most of the others are too poor to do the work that, it is confessed, needs to be done; and all this is because of the lack of union and purpose, which results in loss of enthusiasm and the disorganisation now apparent.

Our rule has been either mobocracy, plutocracy, or autocracy—all bad. The first has resulted in failure through what was everyone's business being no one's duty; the second has resulted in some one or two who had money having been able to use it as a power to work matters to their own tastes; and this in turn has naturally developed into the third state. To say, as is said, that it is a good thing to be in debt, and to discourage payment by saying, "Oh, two or three of us can easily wipe it off, if needful," is to bid for power, encourage thriftlessness, and set a bad example, while to preach the gospel of "individualism" and ignore association—thus merging general good in special interests—is to proclaim self and local needs, at the expense of the good of all. Spiritualism must not be looked at from a parochial point of view; its interests are universal, and must be dealt with in a spirit as broad and catholic as the question is in its importance. It is not one town, or one paper, or one society; it is what will promote the cause, unite its adherents, and bring a vital union to a consummation. If the proposed Conference, when assembled, directs its attention to the above end, and those who are in earnest about a friendly alliance being needful will either attend in person or by deputy, or forward their views for discussion, benefit will result, and good will be done as an outcome of the deliberations.

FIDELITY.

Mr. Home, we hear, is at present in Switzerland, and is once again in enjoyment of good health. There is some probability of his visiting England in the spring of next year.

MR. IRVING BISHOP AT ST. JAMES'S HALL.

The *Cuckoo* has the following amusing description of Mr. Irving Bishop's entertainment in St. James's Hall, on Saturday evening last. Mr. Irving Bishop is doing Spiritualism good service in making it patent that Spiritualistic phenomena cannot even be imitated without elaborate mechanical appliances, and without confederacy:—

"Thanks to the Duke of Beaufort and a selected assortment of gentlemen who acted as a Vigilance Committee, the visitors to the St. James's Hall on Saturday, to see Mr. Bishop's 'exposure of Spiritualism,' spent an entertaining evening.

"It was very soothing to the audience to find a Duke among the performers. A general sense of balm settled upon the Hall at the discovery. Everybody seemed to feel as if they knew Dukes personally, and at once assumed airs of well-bred ease. Mr. Bishop took care to let the audience know of his Grace's presence as soon as possible, and never let them forget it for a moment afterwards. The Duke was, indeed, in his best vein. He ascended and descended the platform with an adroitness that delighted and astonished the company, and his feat of writing a note to the Prince of Wales was greeted with well deserved applause. Though the sitting posture does not admit of much variety, his Grace took a seat on a chair, quite an ordinary one, in a manner that gained universal approval, and there was a finished ease about his style of saying 'Yes' and 'No,' that evoked repeated plaudits. Indeed, whether we consider the rank of the performer or the critical capacity of the audience, we must admit that his Grace's performance was admirable from first to last.

"The first important trick which his Grace performed was to go down off the platform unassisted and to write, still without help, a note to the Prince of Wales asking the price of Consols. The contents of this note he allowed to be communicated in confidence to Mr. Bishop, who then communicated the Prince's reply: 'I don't know—Albert Edward,' to the audience. It was an excellent trick, and the obviousness of a Duke never colluding with Mr. Bishop served to emphasise its success. Then the Duke got inside the cabinet with Mr. Bishop, and, as far as the audience could tell, employed himself in assisting Mr. Bishop in hammering tin tacks into a post, kicking the furniture about, and jangling musical instruments. When he came out, his Grace was received with loud applause.

"The beauty of these and other tricks was much enhanced by the behaviour of the 'Committee' on the platform. Mr. Bishop on his first appearance had invited members of the audience to come and watch him, and about a dozen gentlemen went up. They were all baldheaded, and all in collusion with Mr. Bishop, for whenever anything critical was being done, they got up and stood between the audience and the performer, so as to hide Mr. Bishop's doings from critical eyes, and, in spite of angry remonstrances, of 'Sit down, sir,' 'Do get off the stage altogether,' continued to annoy the audience by obstructing their view throughout the evening.

"Probably so many stupid persons could not have been selected at random from any other audience in London that night. As for Mr. Bishop himself, he was a grievous disappointment. His manner of speaking is irritating from its conceit, and the matter of it impertinent, while his feats cannot compare with those of Maskelyne and Cook for originality, nor with those of the Spiritualists for mystery. As an exposure of Spiritualism the evening was absurd, for Mr. Bishop takes an uneducated man's view of the new science, and seems to think that, because he can imitate raps and slate-writing and the rest of the lower-class medium's rubbish, therefore he has demolished 'Spiritualism.'

"Quite apart from this, however, we would point out to Mr. Bishop that it is no refutation of Spiritualist performers to imitate them by legerdemain, or else we must consider the ripening of fruit by sun-light an imposture because the electric light ripens fruit just as well, or we must consider Aaron's feats before Pharaoh impostures because the Egyptian magicians successfully imitated them."

A correspondent asks whether there was, and is still, a sum of money lodged in a bank, or otherwise guaranteed, as a challenge to Spiritualists or Anti-Spiritualists, and if so, by whom it has been offered, and for what specific purpose? Will some of our readers supply the information which our correspondent seeks?

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 séances.

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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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

The Harbinger of Light notices, in its most recent issue, our remarks on the lull in phenomenal Spiritualism, and commends our advice that a more truly scientific method should be pursued in investigation. The writer maintains a strong opinion that "material manifestations of Spiritual power are performed by Spirits not far removed from the earth-plane." He believes, however, that "all organised movements in this direction originate in the higher spheres of intelligence." Consequently it is "essential that those who co-operate with them on this side should offer such conditions as would give the directing minds a reasonable ground to expect some substantial result in the development of a knowledge of those hidden forces which are at the back of all phenomena, but more particularly of those transcendental ones exhibited in the phenomena of Modern Spiritualism." Two things are essential: that man should know of Spirit existence; and that he realise the communion between the world of Spirit and that of matter. A medium is required, and then it should be seen that he be properly utilised.

Mediumship, our contemporary points out, is a faculty that does not depend on the moral character. It is directed and developed by the surroundings amid which it is exercised. The medium is at the mercy of those who use him as the conduit-pipe between the two worlds. Investigations not animated by a pure spirit of love of truth deprave him. He becomes the sport and tool of undeveloped intelligences and he then sinks of necessity. Mediums are rarely strong-minded: they are plastic, easily influenced, very easily spoiled. Hence due care should be exercised over their physical and mental condition, and none but a truly scientific and discriminating method of investigation in our physical circles should be permitted.

We draw attention to these utterances, not because they contain anything new, but because they embody in the main sound truth which we are too apt to forget. Those frisky Spirits who sported in public circles in the earlier days of the movement, to their own content and to the bewilderment of all who thought on the subject of their pranks, have been less vigorous of late. The days of wonder-hunting are not past; like the poor, the gaper always is with us, but sane and thoughtful Spiritualists are increasingly disinclined to allow him to have it all his own way. Men see that nothing comes of mere gaping, and that a set of Spirits are attracted who are, to say the least of it, undesirable. They are less and less willing to put a medium, bound hand and foot, into their power, under conditions that enable them to wreck his reputation and bewilder all honest and thoughtful investigators. They see the benefit of method, of orderly procedure, of carefully guarded conditions; and they see, as they have been slow to see before, that a man receives from the world of Spirit that which he is fitted to receive. They cultivate, consequently, purity of heart and intent, and discourage levity and buffoonery.

It is quite true that physical manifestations do not flourish as they did under the old methods. There are other reasons than those just indicated why this should be so: but, if there were none, it would be a sufficient reason that men have set to work to purify their circles and prescribe careful conditions of

investigation. That mischievous and most foolish cry, that man should not venture to interfere in any way with what the "Angel world" please to do, is not so rife as it was. The claim that any chance visitant from the under world should be treated as an Angel of Light is, we trust, relegated to obscurity. As if *all* Spirits were pure, good, true, and wise! As if any that *were* could possibly desire such conditions! As if the atmosphere of a physical and promiscuous circle could by any means be utilised for the wholesale communion between the "blessed dead" and those whom they are reputed to revisit! It has been hard to explode such fallacies, and to rescue Spiritualism from the ridicule and contempt that such claims have cast upon its very name. It is not strange that during its transition state from this unworthy platform to one higher and nobler, as well as saner and more sensible, it should seem to pass through a lull. It will emerge safe enough; the safer in proportion as we leave it to the wise guidance of those who see with clearer eyes than ours, and are less hampered by our thoughts and fears.

Mr. Bishop's pretensions as a "thought-reader" receive their death-blow in a report published in the current number of *Nature*, by Professors Croom Robertson and Lankester, and Messrs. F. Galton and Romanes. These gentlemen had formed themselves into a committee for the purpose of exhaustively testing the phenomena produced by Mr. Bishop. Their conclusion is that "if Mr. Bishop has any powers of thought-reading, he has failed to shew us evidence of the fact." "In their main features," they add, "the experiments are frequently performed as an ordinary drawing-room amusement, and we are, therefore, inclined to think that he does not enjoy any peculiar advantages over other persons in regard to sensitiveness of touch or power of appreciating, but that his superior success in performing the experiments is to be ascribed merely to his having paid greater attention to the subject." No! we should *not* seek for "sensitiveness" in Mr. Bishop. He shines in another way. And he has, no doubt, paid attention, in fact *much attention*, to the pecuniary aspects of the question.

Incidentally the Committee administer a wholesome rebuke to Dr. W. B. Carpenter. "Mr. Bishop," they say, "owes his wide and sudden celebrity [might we suggest *notoriety* as the word probably intended?] to the patronage which was extended to him by the great opponent of all humbug [this, the context shews, is intended as a reference to Dr. Carpenter], and although Dr. Carpenter doubtless intended his letter to exert a salutary influence by recommending Mr. Bishop to the attention of the credulous [we are not told how this result, so very desirable for Mr. Bishop, was to be attained], it is to be regretted that it served to recommend him also to the attention of the scientific. This is to be regretted, because the result was to endow the powers which were afterwards exhibited with a fictitious degree of importance in the eyes of the public, and also to bring a large number of distinguished men into the somewhat undignified position of acting stalking-horse to Mr. Bishop's notoriety." Yes! it is sad; but do the "large number of distinguished men" ever read the newspapers? If so, do they not know Mr. Bishop's methods of old? At any rate, they would seem now to be in a position to condole with their more Northern brethren, and may perhaps have bought some useful experience not too dear.

We see, without surprise, that Mr. Bishop has betaken himself to the familiar rôle of exposing Spiritualism, and his own ignorance of it, at ten shillings per head for those who will pay it, and three shillings, and even one, for those who want their exposure done cheap. It was inevitable!

We learn also that Mr. Stuart Cumberland (*né* Garner) is about to resume a rôle from which he temporarily retired, under the pressure of adverse circumstances. We may look, therefore, for a considerable advertisement of Spiritualism. Since Mr. Maskelyne has devoted his attention to other matters, there has been a good opening for a young man who is inclined to this work.

A lady who has had the opportunity of seeing Mrs. Fletcher in prison, informs us that she deeply regretted to find her very ill. Beyond this we have heard no particulars, except that the attention of the Secretary of State had been directed to the fact.

SPIRIT TEACHINGS.

SECOND SERIES.

This series of Spirit-Teachings, like the former, is made up of selections from a great mass which have been automatically written during a series of years. They are selected on no other principle than that of pointing what has been valuable to the person for whom they were originally given, in so far as this can be done without trenching on what is merely of personal and private application. The latter consideration excludes a great mass of what would otherwise be interesting and valuable matter. The phraseology has been preserved, as far as possible, intact, names only being omitted. The series follows directly on the first, from which, indeed, it is separated only by the accident of its publication in another journal, and after some considerable interval of time. The publication is resumed in deference to many repeated requests.

M. A. (OXON.)

No. VI.

Hail, friends! we salute you with pleasure. It is now long since we have been enabled to approach, and we have forbidden any to communicate at length, lest the power on which great demands had been rashly made, and which had since been wasted by bodily illness, should be further drained away. We have before told you that the sudden draining of power is prejudicial. I was absent during the last time at which our circle met, and the management was entrusted to another. He has before erred in not using with care the power entrusted to him; and we have provided that he shall not again have it in his power to do harm. Of the other Spirits most were new or unaccustomed. K— has not sufficient experience, and, although a very powerful physical Spirit, he is not used to manage the elements that require much knowledge and experience. P— has never meddled with the material save to shew his presence by his light. He is not able to do more. It has never been his post to take any share in the physical. C— we did not consider powerful enough, but it would seem probable that she would have arranged better than G— did. He erred in allowing too much power to be used. He, himself, we are told, used much, while K— and P— were drawing together on the slender stock. Your physical force was at a low ebb, and it ought to have been used, if at all, with very great care. Had I or R— been present we should have allowed but little to be drawn away. As it was, so much was used that the stock is even now not replaced, and your mental and bodily system has suffered ever since. The mental lassitude which has oppressed you is in large measure owing to this, and the physical ailment has its source entirely in it. You know little yet of the causes which go to make up what you call illness. But this you do know, that when the vital force is weakest, predisposition to disease is greatest. Your vital power was so drained away by the foolish mismanagement that you were ready to fall into any sickness that might visit you; and your mental and physical ailments are deducible from the over-use of your vital power on that occasion. We have many times warned our friend that he is too physical and earthly in his desires; and that he would injure the circle by his excessive zeal. He has not yet, though after a long time as ye count it, spiritualised himself sufficiently to rise as he might have done had his earthly longing been less. He is still of the earth and will not progress till much of the earthly is purged away. It is bad alike for him and for you that he should manifest so violently; and we cannot permit it. He must not be encouraged so to do. We shall endeavour to repress his ardour, and shall not again allow him to be in a position of control. He must work in subordination. Those violent and sudden manifestations are very dangerous. The very vitality is withdrawn as though the heart-blood had been sapped and taken from the body. It is terribly wrong and must not be allowed. If, after the serious warnings we have given, our friend continues to offend, we shall withdraw him altogether. We beg you then not to invite him to displays which are injurious to a degree ye know not of. We regret deeply when aught of this kind occurs; for it is we that are blamed, and rightly too. But it is frequently through desire, ill-judged and foolish though it be, to please, that harm is done. You do not know the character of the force with which we deal. You do not know how careful should be the use of it, and how rash and foolish it is to invoke violent displays that can only do mischief, which is serious and may be permanent. The same care should be exercised in dealing with the magnetic emanation of a circle as

you would exercise in bringing electricity into play in your world. You have no means of knowing the state in which the force is—the supply, the power, or the nature of the controlling Spirit. Hence you would be well advised to avoid encouraging violent manifestations; or, indeed, asking for the performance of any special manifestation, except where the request is only a slight modification of what is already being done. This we advise for many reasons. First of all, because ye know not what the gratification of the request may involve. It may be very unwise to grant it, and the controlling intelligence should not be spurred on by your request to do what is unwise, or to attempt what is impossible. Next—because, if the request be not granted, disappointment ensues on both sides. Furthermore—because repeated requests for certain phenomena throw difficulties in the way of the Spirit who may be leading up to some completely different phenomena, which attempt to gratify a request may spoil. But principally because when our plans are made, and our batteries prepared, we know how much power we use, and we do not always know when sudden and violent demands are made. By all this we do not mean that apathetic stillness should be preserved. On the contrary, a lively interest in what is being done is a great help, even in the physical phenomena; more so when intelligent questions assist the giving of information. We mean only that we must insist on placing a very strict control on the use of the power, and we urge all our circle to aid in that endeavour. We cannot permit such a foolish waste of it as occurred at the last sitting. The effects of that will remain with you for long. We cannot write more now. Read carefully what has been said. Do not attempt to question for some time. We will return to you in the evening, and impress you then. You are now for the first time again in a position to communicate. With care you will now regain your strength, which is still very low.

+ IMPERATOR.

SECRET DISCIPLESHIP—IS IT WISE? IS IT RIGHT?

We knew last week, while we were penning our remarks on this subject, that we were touching on a question which deeply affected the hearts and consciences of some of the warmest and truest friends of the cause of Spiritualism; and feeling that the matter is one of vital interest and importance we make no scruple in giving the following extracts from a letter which we have received from a highly esteemed clerical correspondent. The writer has our fullest sympathy in the difficult circumstances in which he finds himself placed—and greatly as we should value the public association of such men with the work in which we are engaged, we cordially concur in the wisdom of the resolution at which he seems to have arrived, to “bide his time” before he makes an open declaration of his principles. We fail to see that he would be justified in separating himself from a sphere of certain usefulness till he finds in Spiritualism a sure field for equal good. Our friend says:—

“This week’s ‘LIGHT’ I consider the best that has appeared. It is full of intellectual power, and, what is to me infinitely better, of the right spirit.

“But there is one thing I am especially pleased at noticing—the leaders on organisation; and particularly your kindly reference to men like myself who are placed in peculiar circumstances of difficulty regarding the open avowal of Spiritualism. Since I have become completely convinced of its transcendent truth and meaning, secret discipleship has been a growing burden on me. I teach it weekly as the people can take it; but long, and anxiously, and prayerfully have I weighed this Nicodemus attitude of mine and of other men like myself. An open avowal means *stark ruin*; and the sequel question arises, *Cui bono?* Here am I engaged in a large, growing, and important work of usefulness; shall I throw all that away to be crushed out in a cause unorganised, and without any distinct point of public contact? Shall I retire from a work where I am doing large good, by the public verdict as well as my own sympathies, to get into a calling where my human sympathies meet no outlet of labour? Under angel guidance, as well as my own thoughts, I have determined to go on as I am till more light breaks out. The same guides who made me a Spiritualist of intense conviction, who have conferred on me incalculable blessing, are equally emphatic that I avow not openly my faith in Spiritualism till it is riper.

“The question of organisation is a deeply important one—the crux of our present position as Spiritualists. Without it there is no hope of permanent and healthy advance.

“It is all-important to make Spiritualism *visible* in every town

of the kingdom; and equally important to make it a movement of utility in works of philosophy, and of social and political life.

"Spiritualism is lacking because it stands apart from the world's life. It ought to have its centres to petition Parliament as other bodies do; and mass meetings for the discussion of national and social questions; for it is not, cannot be, simply a movement to commune with Spirits, but to work out *our* ideas into visible, rational, and social life. If it be anything it is this—a movement to incorporate the life of Heaven—the ideal of human life—into earth humanity.

"We must not fall into the chronic mistake of the Christian church, that going to church, and hearing sermons, and participating in public worship is religion. We must not, like them, imagine that sitting with Spirits is Spiritualism. The Church worship should be what a meal-time is to our bodily life—the time to recruit energy for work in the world. So a séance is a Spiritual meal-time to energise us for work in the world. For Spiritualism includes the *whole* of human life, not a part. Its main end is to teach humanity how to live.

"Such a movement would bring with itself the solution of all our difficulties. Our Spirit-life would be filled with that unity of purpose, which would inevitably link us on to the higher spheres of human being. Dr. Watts's immortal lines are true of Spiritualism:—

'Satan finds some mischief still,
For idle hands to do.'

"Hundreds who now are compelled to stand aloof from Spiritualism, would then willingly court shame and criticism; for the *Cui bono?* would be apparent. The spirit of self-sacrifice is not wanting in us secret disciples; the difficulty is the higher moral one, 'Shall I be doing right to give up a clear work of good, for a cause wherein I am doomed from the beginning to dark defeat?' Very heavy is this question on my heart!"

OCCULTISM.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

I have been reading the book entitled "The Occult World," by A. P. Sinnett, just published by Trübner and Co., and reviewed in last week's "LIGHT," and I trust you will grant me a small space for the purpose of saying candidly what I think of this production.

The commencement starts with great promise, and my curiosity was much excited, as the author tells us that he has "come into contact with persons who are heirs of a greater knowledge concerning the mysteries of nature and humanity than modern culture has yet evolved." Moreover, he says that he has made "the astounding discovery that secluded Orientals may understand more about electricity than Faraday, more about physics than Tyndall."

He also informs us that "occult phenomena must not be confused with the phenomena of Spiritualism. The latter, whatever they may be, are manifestations which mediums can neither control nor understand. The former are achievements of a conscious, living operator comprehending the laws with which he works." "Broadly speaking there is scarcely one of the phenomena of Spiritualism that adepts in Occultism cannot reproduce by the force of their own will, supplemented by a comprehension of the resources of nature, as will be seen when I come to a direct narrative of my own experiences. I have seen some of the most familiar phenomena of Spiritualism produced by purely human agency."

"Occultism," he says, too, "has nothing whatever to do with Spiritualism—that the 'Spirit' counts for nothing at all in any of the abnormal experiences I shall have to relate."

I could go to any extent with a great deal more of these wonderful intimations and promises, but I forbear. Conceive my surprise and disappointment, as I read on in search of the facts with which the author supported his assertions, that the only real evidence he could adduce was his experience of the mediumship of Madame Blavatsky with which we are already so familiar! He offers no tangible or intelligible solution whatever of the cause of the phenomena he witnessed; and after this immense flourish of trumpets announcing his discoveries, we find that he has really nothing to disclose.

Even concerning those very humble and elementary phenomena, "the raps," he confesses his entire ignorance of their origin and causation; and after leading us to expect all sorts of wonderful revelations, he is obliged, frankly, to admit that "it was out of Madame Blavatsky's power to give an exact explanation as to how these raps were produced." He continues:—"It was tantalising to feel that she could, and yet could not, give us the final proofs we so much desired to have, that her occult training really had invested her with powers over material things." Unfortunate Madame Blavatsky! Innocent Mr. Sinnett!

Of another wonderful "Occult Adept" our author utters this crowning confession:—"I am not pretending to give an explanation of how he produces this or that result, nor for a moment hinting that I know!"

A large part of Mr. Sinnett's book is padded with copious extracts from the letters of an "extraordinary" Brother-Occult named Koot Hoomi. These communications are simply, in my

opinion, rhetorical froth; they give us nothing of any practical value.

Finally Mr. Sinnett ought to be plainly told that his book is quite behind the age. It is evident that he has not sufficiently studied the literature of Spiritualism. If he had made himself better acquainted with the valuable works which have been produced on this subject during the last quarter of a century, he would have found therein, not only the accounts of phenomena quite as wonderful as any he has recorded, but also satisfactory explanations which he acknowledges himself—and well he might be—unable to give.

Mr. Sinnett may be assured that India can teach little that is new and valuable to the most cultivated European Spiritualists. As a handbook on occult subjects, we must consider his work useless, jejune, and provincial. His "Occult Philosophy," as far as he has enlightened us, appears to me to be a very hollow, shadowy, clod-hopping combination of rhapsody and presumption.

TRIDENT.

THE VALUE OF PRAYER.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Try and spare me a little space very briefly to reply to "G. W., M.D." He, I think, misapprehends my mode of expression. As I understand, it is not an error to say that the photophone conveys a thought by means of light any more than to say "it conveys speech or sound along a ray of light." As a physical fact, it does not do either.

The telegraph, telephone, and photophone, are all modes of conveying thought; but in each case, the action depends on the conversion of occult forces, the one into the other. In the telegraph the running waves of electricity are converted into magnetic waves. In the telephone the lazy pulses of sound become electric. In the photophone sound makes an impact upon a mechanically constructed ear, and moves at the speed of light, to be again converted into sound waves, having their impact upon the natural ear, then being taken up and digested into thought.

Mind goes forth discrete as thought, and possibly the whole universe is "thought precipitate."

I know what "G. W., M.D." means when he tells us a "ray of magnetism was sent, along which thought was conveyed." This is an error. Magnetism could not be so sent. All action of that kind depends on the conversion of forces.

I perfectly agree with "G. W., M.D.," that will-power and prayer exhibit two completely different states of mind—true prayer being the highest occupation of the mind.

JOHN BEATTIE.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In your issue of June 4th, was a notice of a pamphlet purporting to give a "scientific and practical view of the subject," wherein "the author is of opinion that answers to prayer may be accounted for upon the supposition that we are surrounded by an extremely subtle element, which is the medium of inter-communication between mind and mind, and that the prayer, as an effort of the will, traverses this medium and affects some person or persons, causing them to act upon the impulse conveyed to them," and "several illustrations of the power of mesmerists to affect persons at a distance are introduced in support of the writer's contention."

This view is supported by a correspondent in your number of June 18th, with references to the revelations of physical science, and, who, to my mind appears to confuse will-power with prayer, and gives some remarkable explanations of the failures of the latter; notably that prayer "may fail from the message being stopped, and neutralised by interference."

May I ask "LIGHT," or any other authority, whether this is "Spiritualism" or "illuminated Materialism"? I presume no Spiritualist would for a moment question the value of prayer, or deny that Spiritualism has its dangers as well as its advantages. Its religious objectors denounce it as "Spiritual adultery," as tending to idolatry; and they could scarcely find better argument in support of the accusation than the opinions expressed by your correspondent and the author of the pamphlet in question.

I submit this with all due deference to the respective writers. We may be, probably are, of one mind about the matter, but the grand central point, that *prayer must be direct to God*, does not stand out clearly as it should do, and is overshadowed by the speculations as to how it operates. The exercise of will-power by a mesmerist is one thing, but, unless all the dictionaries are wrong, prayer is a supplication, implies abnegation of will, and succeeds where the other fails, as observed by another correspondent in yours of the 25th.

The suggestion that prayer to God can be "stopped" or "neutralised by interference," cannot be seriously entertained, but the cause of its failure, may, perhaps, be ascertained by an inquiry as to its quality.

If we are to reduce prayer to a "scientific and practical" basis, the next thing will probably be to propitiate the shades of the departed, seek their influence with mortals for accomplishing our desires, and remove the first commandment from the Tablets as being obsolete. —Yours obediently,

R. M.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

"The Spiritualist."

In a leading article upon "Theosophical Utterances" the editor writes:—

"In various Theosophical utterances which have been circulated among Spiritualists, are assertions that the phenomena of Spiritualism can be produced by the will-power of embodied individuals, and there have been delicate hints that Spiritualists are mere phenomena-swallowers, who have not yet risen to the heights of philosophy. The public interests of Spiritualism demand that close critical attention should be given to the first of these assertions, which fortunately is one capable of being clearly and absolutely dealt with, because its final court of appeal is that of experimental demonstration. * * * Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott have done much in India to disseminate knowledge about Spiritualism, and have been issuing an excellent psychological journal, *The Theosophist*, in Bombay. There is no desire on our part to indulge in captious detraction of their utterances or their labours, but the assertion that men exist in the Himalayas who can produce psychological manifestations in any part of the world, is too large to gain acceptance without its foundations being examined. Do those men live in the land where the Boojum and the Snark roam at will, and where the Jubjub sings its lonely song to the Lady Moon?"

"The Medium."

The editor writes:—"There is no grander teaching than human experience. It would be well for the Cause, if trance orating and professional talking were to a great extent given up, that the platform might be occupied by those who have an experience to recount. And has not every Spiritualist an experience? He can state—(1) His frame of mind before hearing of Spiritualism; (2) How the matter first came before his notice; (3) The steps that led to his acceptance of it; (4) The facts that firmly established his conviction; and (5) The effect which Spiritualism has had on his mind. Every Spiritualist has passed through these degrees or stages, and in clearly stating them he would give the most powerful of all reasons why others should 'go and do likewise.' Could we not this winter get up Spirit Bands all over the country, which under an experienced chairman, or captain, could give a succession of short speeches in public meetings? Such a step would do more good than all the hired lecturers in the world. The Temperance Movement has shown the value of this kind of work."

Referring to his financial embarrassments, Mr. J. Burns says:—"Whatever my friends intend doing, it is absolutely necessary that they do without delay. Only a very few, comparatively, have responded, and yet as a testimony on behalf of the object, it is all that is required to warrant the assistance of every Spiritualist. Surely these spontaneous opinions of the character of this work will not require another word from me to induce all to do a share in such a matter."

"The Herald of Progress."

Commenting upon the religion which Spiritualists require, a leading article thus states the matter:—

"Spiritualists do not want a sensational religion, but one that is founded on fact and experience; hence it is that in the Spirit circle we meet with both tears and laughter, evolved for kind and good purposes, for as laughter enables mirth and sorrow to breathe freely, so tears enable sorrow to vent itself patiently. Tears hinder sorrow from becoming despair and madness; and laughter is one of the very privileges of reason, being confined to the human species. Let us seek to consecrate everything in the using."

The following curious paragraph is published:—

"Just before going to press, the following telegram came to hand—From Dr. Hitchman, Liverpool. To Mr. John Hare, 29, Blackett-street, Newcastle:—'Have received message from Zoroaster, who says the creed of Orthodox Spiritualism is—Live a life of pure thought, pure words, and pure deeds.' Kindly announce it in *Herald*."

Is there not some sensationalism in this?

In the course of a trance address through Mr. S. De Main—who is one of the best among provincial trance speakers—the controlling Spirits, in dealing with future rewards and punishments, close by stating that "According to the ideal of the soul, so shall the remuneration be. Therefore, endeavour to acquire all the knowledge possible of that condition while here, then you will pass to a place familiar to you, where you can enter at once into the participation of a spiritual blessedness, which is not a condition where, like a child, you will be supplied with a toy or a palm to amuse yourself with, but where every Spiritual faculty will be unfolded, and progression, the everlasting purpose of God, will make your heaven a state of perpetual enjoyment."

"The Religio-Philosophical Journal."

Judge E. S. Holbrook, of Chicago, comments, in a lengthy article, upon an address delivered by Mrs. Richmond in Chicago, in which she contended that "Spiritualism is a philosophy, but not a science." The writer remarks: "We have here the fact that Mrs. Richmond has thrown away, in the presence of our

most sturdy opposers, that which is the chief beauty and power of our more enlightened religion, its scientific quality; and now what is the philosophy of that fact, what the reason of that act? The chief reason, as I guess, is in the failure to start with accurate definitions and so proceeding accordingly. Indeed, there is such a laxity in expression and such a changeableness in the tenor of her discourse, that I am not sure what she means. Perhaps she really means that Spiritualism cannot become so truly a science as the other material sciences, in that it is not all so objective, in that it is more remote and has to deal with spirit and elements and modes that cannot be so well weighed, or measured, or tested by any powers, or means that we have. It may seem that there is a truth in this, and if this simply had been said it would have been well."

"The Cornubian."

A letter appears from "T. C. E." ("The Cornish Exile"), who, having attended the anti-Spiritualistic lecture of a Rev. T. Ashcroft, shows that the reverend gentleman makes sundry admissions as to the truth of Spiritualism, which considerably weaken the force of his criticisms. "T. C. E." says:—

"The Rev. T. Ashcroft ridiculed healing by laying on of hands, as if the New Testament did not abound with similar cases of healing. If then, why not now? If not now, can Mr. Ashcroft satisfy an Atheist of the truth of the Biblical statements? It is extremely dangerous work for a professing Christian to ridicule or deny the possession of spiritual gifts. It is the loss of these which renders all the talk void and of none effect."

The writer charitably concludes:—

"On the whole, I don't think one can blame the Rev. T. Ashcroft for his opinions and actions. He errs through ignorance, but if Redruthians are not intolerably stupid they will after having heard the several admissions of the rev. gentleman to the truth of some of the phenomena of modern Spiritualism—such as table turning, &c.—investigate the matter for themselves, and arrive at conclusions consistent with honesty, piety, courage, and common sense."

"The Harbinger of Light"

Our antipodean contemporary has, in its last issue, an article inspired by the articles upon the "Lull in Phenomenal Spiritualism," which appeared in "LIGHT" some time since. The writer suggests that "The scientific Spiritualist should remember that they are delicate instruments and require keeping in the best possible order for experimental purposes; the religious and emotional Spiritualist, remembering that they are the links which connect him with the dear ones gone before, should love and cherish them accordingly." "With due care of the physical and mental condition of our mediums, and a truly scientific method of procedure in our physical circles, we may rely upon the co-operation of able, scientific minds on the other side, and a proportionate increase in both the quantity and quality of phenomenal Spiritualism."

The friends of Mr. Spriggs, the Cardiff medium, will be pleased to learn that at a séance, on April 27th, "The conditions were pronounced very good, and as a result, excellent manifestations followed. Ten forms were materialised, one of them being a girl, apparently about ten years old. Geordie and John Wright distributed flowers, and they both spoke a few words. Ski and Peter talked freely. The power is evidently increasing and the manifestations bid fair to eclipse any that have preceded them."

"The Australian Spiritualist."

The first four numbers of a paper bearing the above title have reached us, and no doubt the venture will be marked by considerable improvements as it proceeds.

DISTINGUISH between idleness, ignorance, want of attention, and malice; words sometimes slip from the tongue which the heart neither hatched nor harboured.

"BOB AND I; or, Forget-me-Nots from God's Garden." By F. J. Theobald. 1880. London: James Clarke and Co.—This little book has been lying on our table for some time, but we have not been able to notice it until now. Miss Theobald, the writer, is known to many who will read with pleasure anything from her pen. The hero and heroine of the story are two children who grow up together in warm affection; and although the tale is what is called a "religious" one, it is free from what many consider the objectionable features usually found in that class of literature. Some of the incidents are, as might be expected, "spiritualistic;" but the "faith" of the mother, who could go quietly to sleep when her child and his little friend had been lost on the seashore, on the strength of a "spiritual voice," would hardly be met with in actual life. Opportunity is also made for animadverting on the religious bigotry and intolerance found among some Dissenting sects. The little heroine's father is "read out" from the community of holy men assembling at "Little Bethel," as one who was "unworthy of sitting at the Lord's table;" the reason given being that he "had fallen away from the right path, and had given himself up to the doctrine of devils." There is a simplicity and earnestness about the book which will render it attractive to many.

GOSWELL HALL.

Miss Keeves occupied the platform of this hall on Sunday evening last. The subject selected by her guides was the "Good Samaritan," which was treated in their usual practical and homely style, and won the attention and appreciation of the audience. At the close of the lecture, A. T. T. P. (Recorder of Historical Controls), was called on for a few remarks, along with which he read a most interesting communication purporting to be from a Cambridge bricklayer. This was both amusing and instructive, and highly appreciated.—J. N. G.

LADBROKE HALL.

On Sunday evening last, Mr. J. J. Morse delivered an inspirational address, the subject of which was, "The Kingdom of Heaven—What and where is it?" The question was reviewed from various points, and the insufficiency of the idea, which, to meet the requirements of human happiness here, relegates all that pertains to the kingdom of Heaven to a future state, was duly emphasised. As Heaven was a place of happiness, its happiness was the essential element in the nature of the kingdom. That happiness must be personal, fraternal, and universal; first, the outcome of a wise, and properly regulated life; secondly, created by mutual honour and justice between man and his neighbours; and lastly, as a consequence of the prevalence of peace on earth and goodwill to man being universally fulfilled. The lecture elicited hearty tokens of satisfaction from the audience, as did also the musical and vocal exercises of Mr. Knight-Smith, especially his rendering of Mendelssohn's "The Sorrows of Death." Mr. F. O. Matthews, at the close of the lecture, gave some clairvoyant delineations, several of which were acknowledged as correct. Mr. Morse, as usual, contributed his services gratuitously towards the support of the meetings.

Anniversary.

On Sunday next Mr. F. O. Matthews intends to hold a series of three special services, which will comprise a mediums' meeting in the morning at 11, to which all mediums are cordially invited. In the afternoon at three o'clock a conference will be held, during which the question of the law in relation to mediums will be considered. In the evening at seven a public general meeting will take place, which will commemorate our friend's release from imprisonment, for practising as a medium a year ago. Dr. T. T. Nichols has promised to attend in the afternoon and evening, and Miss S. E. Gay and several other well-known friends are expected. Mr. Morse will preside, and deliver an address during the proceedings. A cordial invitation is extended to all Spiritualists so that, as an expression of opinion and a manifestation of sympathy towards Mr. Matthews, the meetings may be a complete success. Mr. Knight-Smith will superintend the musical department.

QUEBEC HALL.

On Sunday evening Mr. Iver MacDonnell delivered an address on the Revised Version of the New Testament, which he announced was the last of the course he had undertaken; and as the hall was in future to be conducted under new management, he thought it a suitable occasion to terminate his labours. The address gave an excellent epitome of the history of the Authorised Version and the ancient manuscripts from which it was made, as well as an account of manuscripts more recently discovered. While according all praise to King James's company of translators for their scholarly and elegant production, the causes of their discrepancies, imperfections, and errors were explained and apologised for. Many of the leading alterations, emendations, omissions, and doubtful passages were read. An eloquent vindication of the Book of God, written by Himself in His works, concluded the lecture, which was listened to throughout most attentively. A gentleman present, Mr. Whitley, spoke in very warm terms of admiration of the address, and expressed his regret at the announcement made, and moved a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. MacDonnell, which was seconded in unmeasured terms of compliment by Mr. Wilson, in which all present heartily joined.

CARDIFF.

The weekly meeting was held as usual on Sunday evening last at the rooms of the Cardiff Spiritualist Society, the chair being occupied by Mr. Haines. The hon. sec. read Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll's lecture, "What must I do to be saved?" to an appreciative audience. During the subsequent séance two trance mediums successively passed under control, and several communications were received from Spirit visitors. On Sunday next the position of the society, financial and otherwise, will be placed before the meeting as a preliminary to the second quarterly general meeting since the re-organisation.

DARLINGTON.

It is with much pleasure that I report the harmony with which our little band, after a series of conflicting elements, has again assembled. On Wednesday last, our friend E. W. Wallis paid us his farewell visit, in commemoration of which a vegetarian banquet was provided. This was followed by an able address from the friends on the other side, which was responded to by

several of the veterans in our movement, including Messrs. D. Richmond, D. M. Brown, W. Lobley, and W. Scott, concluding with a social entertainment of recitations, &c.

On Sunday last, I had the pleasure of witnessing, through the mediumship of Mr. R. Brunskill, of West Auckland (and a promiscuous circle of friends in this town), the most advanced and tangible phenomena in the form of materialisation I ever beheld. Four forms of different sizes made their appearance respectively in a good light, so that all might see and distinguish every sitter quite accurately. The first, a tall, dark, masculine form, walked firmly about the room, touched several of the sitters, kissed a child lying in the cradle, then rocked the cradle and retired. The next was a very small female form, a relative of several of the sitters. She made a series of fond and loving gesticulations to her parents, fondled the child in the cradle, answered questions by raps and retired. The third was a female form and sister of the medium. She was very handsome. The last was that of a man named Archibald, a Scotchman, who gave a very amusing and entertaining address while standing in our midst. His voice was quite audible; he spoke in a broad Scotch dialect, but was somewhat hoarse. During the time he was in our midst the medium was heard to sigh several times, and from time to time we had repeated evidence of the fact that we were in no way being deceived or that the medium was being brought out of the cabinet.—ALFRED C. CLARK.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

I am sorry to state that things in the Newcastle district are as yet far from what we would desire them to be; and the letter of "Candour," in your contemporary, a paragraph from which you quoted in last week's "LIGHT," amply verifies my statements, which from time to time have appeared in your columns. Unquestionably my candid friend has a show of truth in his opposition to the expression of *too much* individuality, and I agree with him most heartily, for I believe there is no propagandism so hampered and stultified in its growth as that of Spiritualism, from the very reason that it gives too much latitude to arrogant and assumptive persons who creep into power and make our good cause the indecorous vehicle of their intoxicated ambition. I would shake hands with my worthy "Candour" upon this point and say with him—"To anyone that *really* wishes to see our cause prosper, such a course of unseemly conduct is suicidal in the extreme." There are two rocks upon which the bark of Spiritualism may split—*Popery* and *Credulity*. I sincerely hope the well-intentioned criticism of "Candour" will find due prominence and recognition. It may be consoling to many of our friends to know that the Spiritualists of the country have resolved to assist the few proprietors of the *Herald* to preserve it from going down, or passing into the hands of any one proprietor. Heaven speed them in their good intent.

On Sunday morning last the usual meeting was held at Weir's Court, the platform being occupied by local speakers. In the evening Mr. T. P. Barkas delivered a lecture upon "He who formed the eye shall He not see?" In introducing himself to the audience, he contended that all things and forms in nature went to shew design, behind which was a great and intelligent designer, and gave some instructive illustrations, with the assistance of the blackboard, of the mechanism of the eye. From this he proceeded to human contrivances as a further illustration of design, and reasoned therefrom to a great Artificer behind. In conclusion, he proceeded to deal with the wonders, mysteries, and facts of the phenomena of materialisation, and though we do not understand them yet, he contended that "we are not so much concerned with how a thing is done as with the fact that it is done." The lecture was highly appreciated by a large and attentive audience. A vote of thanks was proposed to Mr. Barkas for his able lecture by Mr. Hare, and seconded by Mr. Robson, and put to the meeting in a most pleasant and pithy manner by Mr. Urwin, the chairman. The vote was carried with acclamation, and the meeting concluded.—NORTHUMBRIA.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. K.—Received. Many thanks.

PSEUDO-MEDIUM.—Received too late. Shall be given next week.

F. A. B.—We have not yet had time to glance through your communication; but it shall have early attention.

J. McG. M.—Your letter came too late for this week's issue, but it shall appear in our next. We certainly should not think of withholding it because you differ from us. Our motto is ever "Fair play!"

W. S.—We have given one communication this week on the subject to which you refer, "Secret Discipleship," and therefore your letter is withheld—at any rate for the present. We have no other desire, however, than that the subject should be fully and freely discussed, for which ample opportunity shall be given.

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—Sunday, July 3rd, Ladbrooke Hall; (see Societies' advertisements on front page); Quebec Hall, July 10; Leicester, July 17; Nottingham, July 18; Stamford, July 24; Goswell Hall, July 31; Glasgow, (to follow); Keighley, September 18.

WHO ARE THESE SPIRITUALISTS ?

The following is a list of eminent persons, who, after careful investigation, have fully satisfied themselves of the reality of some of the phenomena of modern Spiritualism :—

Archbishop Whately; the late Lord Brougham; the Earl of Dunraven; the late Lord Lytton; the late Mr. Serjeant Cox, President of the Psychological Society of Great Britain; the late William Howitt; the late George Thompson; the late Harriett Martineau; Gerald Massey; T. Adolphus Trollope; S. C. Hall, F.S.A.

The late Abraham Lincoln, President U.S.A.; the late W. Lloyd Garrison; the late Hon. R. Dale Owen, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Naples; the late Hon. J. W. Edmunds, sometime Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New York; the late Professor Mapes, the eminent chemist, U.S.A.; the late Dr. Robert Hare, Professor of Chemistry at Harvard University, U.S.A.; Bishop Clarke, of Shooe Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, of Washington.

William Crookes, editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, Fellow, Gold Medallist, and Member of the Council of the Royal Society; Cromwell Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; A. R. Wallace, F.R.G.S., the eminent naturalist, sometime President of the Biological Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science; W. F. Barrett, Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin; Lord Rayleigh, F.R.S., Professor of Physics in the University of Cambridge; the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President of the Royal Astronomical Society; Dr. Lockhart Robertson, F.R.S., long one of the editors of the *Journal of Science*; the late Dr. J. Elliottson, F.R.S., sometime President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; the late Professor de Morgan, President of the Mathematical Society of London; the late Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; the late Dr. Ashburner; the late Dr. Robert Chambers, F.R.S.E.; Professor, Ch. Cassal, LL.D.; Captain R. F. Burton, the celebrated traveller.

The late Emperor of Russia; the late Emperor Napoleon; President Thiers; the Hon. Alexandre Aksakof, Russian Imperial Councillor; the late Prince Emile de Sayn Wittgenstein; His Imperial Highness Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; the late Baron L. de Guldenstábbe; Count A. de Gasparin; the Baron and Baroness von Vay; the Baron du Potet; Mons. Léon Favre, Consul-General of France; Victor Hugo.

Professor Friedrich Zöllner, of Leipzig, the eminent physicist, author of "Scientific Treatises," "Transcendental Physics," &c., whose recent researches in this subject have attained a world-wide fame; Gustave T. Fechner, Professor of Physics in the University of Leipzig, also the author of many volumes bearing on the general subject of Psychology; Professor Scheibner, the renowned teacher of mathematics in the University of Leipzig; W. E. Weber, Professor of Physics in the University of Göttingen, and known as one of the main workers in connection with the doctrine of the Conservation of Energy; Immanuel H. Fichte, Professor of Philosophy at Leipzig; Professors Wagner and Butleroff, of the University of St. Petersburg; Dr. Maximilian Perty, Professor of Natural Science in the University of Berne; Dr. Franz Hoffman, Professor of Philosophy, Würzburg; Dr. Robert Friesé, of Breslau; Mons. Camille Flammarion, the well-known astronomer; and many other members of learned societies in this and other countries, and a vast number of persons eminent in literature, science, and art, and in the ranks of social life, whose names we are not at liberty to mention.

Is it Conjuring ?

It is sometimes confidently alleged that mediums are only clever conjurers, who easily deceive the simple-minded and unwary. But how, then, about the conjurers themselves, some of the most accomplished of whom have declared that the "manifestations" are utterly beyond the resources of their art?—

ROBERT HOUDIN, the great French conjurer, investigated the subject of clairvoyance with the sensitive, Alexis Didier. In the result he unreservedly admitted that what he had observed was wholly beyond the resources of his art to explain. See "Psychische Studien" for January, 1878, p. 43.

PROFESSOR JACOBS.—*Licht*, mehr *Licht*, in its number of May 16th, 1880, gave a letter from the well-known professional conjurer, Jacobs, to the Psychological Society in Paris, avowing himself a Spiritualist, and offering suggestions for the discrimination of genuine from spurious manifestations.

SAMUEL BELLACHINI, COURT CONJURER AT BERLIN.—I hereby declare it to be a rash action to give decisive judgment upon the objective medial performance of the American medium, Mr. Henry Slade, after only one sitting and the observations so made. After I had, at the wish of several highly esteemed gentlemen of rank and position, and also for my own interest, tested the physical mediumship of Mr. Slade, in a series of sittings by full daylight, as well as in the evening in his bed-room, I must, for the sake of truth, hereby certify that the phenomenal occurrences with Mr. Slade have been thoroughly examined by me with the minutest observation and investigation of his surroundings, including the table, and that I have not in the smallest degree found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations, or by mechanical apparatus; and that any explanation of the experiments which took place under the circumstances and conditions then obtaining by any reference to prestidigitation, is absolutely impossible. It must rest with such men of science as Crookes and Wallace, in London; Perty, in Berne; Butlerof, in St. Petersburg; to search for the explanation of this phenomenal power, and to prove its reality. I declare, moreover, the published opinions of laymen as to the "How" of this subject to be premature, and, according to my view and experience, false and one-sided. This, my declaration, is signed and executed before a Notary and witnesses.—(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI, Berlin, Dec. 6, 1877.

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