

# Light:

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## THE APPARITION TO DEAN DONNE.

In "LIGHT" for November 5th I find, under the heading, "Visit of a Departed Wife"—"The *Argosy* narrates the following incident in the life of John Donne, an earnest, &c., clergyman, &c."

The narrative, as you quote it from the *Argosy*, is so shamefully loose and inexact that in almost every point of detail it might be said to be false and invented. The story itself is familiar to everyone who has read Izaak Walton's beautiful "Lives of Donne, Wotton, Hooker, &c.," and in case you may care to have it in the genuine version, I transcribe it for you from the book. If such things are at all to be cited as of any importance, it is as well they should be accurately given.

Donne and his wife were at this time domesticated in the house of Sir Robert Drewry, "a gentleman of a very noble estate and a more liberal mind," who wished Donne to accompany him to Paris in the train of the English Ambassador to the Court of Henry the Fourth. "This desire was suddenly made known to his wife, who was then with child, and otherwise under so dangerous a habit of body, as to her health, that she possessed an unwillingness to allow him any absence from her; saying her divining soul boded her some ill in his absence; and, therefore, she desired him not to leave her." Donne, upon this, "laid aside all thought of the journey and really resolved against it." Sir Robert, however, was urgent in entreaty, and in fine they started together, and "on the twelfth day got all safe to Paris." Without further attempt to epitomise, I go on to quote Walton, who, though at times a slightly prolix old gentleman, is always very quaint and pleasant.

"Two days after their arrival there, Mr. Donne was left alone in that room in which Sir Robert, and he, and some other friends had dined together. To this place Sir Robert returned within half-an-hour; and as he left, so he found, Mr. Donne alone; but in such an ecstasy, and so altered as to his looks, as amazed Sir Robert to behold him; in-so-much that he earnestly desired Mr. Donne to declare what had befallen him in the short time of his absence. To which Mr. Donne was not able to make a present answer; but after a long perplexed pause, did at last say: 'I have seen a dreadful vision since I saw you; I have seen my dear wife pass twice by me through this room, with her hair hanging about her shoulders, and a dead child in her arms; this I have seen since I saw you.' To which Sir Robert replied: 'Sure, Sir, you have slept since I saw you; and this is the result of some melancholy dream, which I desire you to forget, for you are now awake.' To which Mr. Donne's reply was, 'I cannot be surer that I now live, than that I have not slept since I saw you; and am as sure that at her second appearing, she stopped, and looked me in the face and vanished.' Rest and sleep had not altered Mr. Donne's opinion the next day; for he then affirmed this vision with a more deliberate and so confirmed a confidence, that he inclined Sir Robert to a faint belief that the vision was true. It is truly said that desire and doubt have no rest; and it proved so with Sir Robert; for he immediately sent a servant to Drewry House, with a charge to hasten back and bring him word whether Mrs. Donne were alive; and if alive, in what condition she was as to her health. The twelfth day the messenger returned with this account, (as Sir Robert and Donne took twelve days to go, the messenger could scarce go and return under about twenty-four, but the inaccuracy is plainly trivial and unimportant), that he found and left Mrs. Donne very sad, and sick in her bed, and that after a very long and dangerous labour, she had been delivered of a dead child. And upon examination, the abortion proved to be the same day, and about the very hour,

that Mr. Donne affirmed he saw her pass by him, in his chamber." (The italics are of course throughout mine.)

"This is a relation that will beget some wonder, and it will may; for most of our world are at present possessed with an opinion that visions and miracles are ceased. And, though it is most certain that two lutes being both strung and tuned to an equal pitch, and then one played upon, the other that is not touched, being laid upon a table at a far distance, will—like an echo to a trumpet—warble a faint audible harmony in answer to the same tune; yet many will not believe there is any such thing as a sympathy of souls; and I am well pleased that every reader do enjoy his own opinion. But if the unbelieving will not allow the believing readers of this story a liberty to believe that it MAY be true, then I wish him to consider, many wise men have believed"—

Here follows a page or so of the like spirit-marvels out of histories sacred and profane, which Izaak proceeds to detail with the quaint gravity peculiar to him, but which in the interest of brevity I suppress.

"More observations of this nature, and inference from them, might be made to gain the relation a firmer belief; but I forbear, lest I, that intended to be but a relator, may be thought to be an engaged person for the proving what was related to me; and yet I think myself bound to declare, that though it was not told me by Mr. Donne himself, it was told me—now long since—by a person of honour, and of such intimacy with him that he knew more of the secrets of his soul than any person then living; and I think he told me the truth; for it was told with such circumstance, and such asseveration that—to say nothing of my own thoughts—I verily believe he that told me did himself believe it to be true."

On the whole, it will probably be adjudged that though the story, as Walton tells it, is curious, it is not a very strong case. Old Izaak is creditably cautious; and though obviously that way inclined, scarce commits himself to a positive personal belief of it. He is careful to note also, that he had it at second hand, as "not told him by Mr. Donne himself;" and though it was vouched to him by a person of credit, as he considers, he admits it is "now long since" it was given to him. All which is not specially reassuring; for how readily a story may corrupt itself in being filtered through a very few minds by no means necessarily dishonest, is a matter of common experience. As an instance, it is curious to note how the original story as now given has transformed itself into that of the *Argosy*, which is throughout a tissue of falsehoods, and specially absurd at the close, in its "sad tidings that Mrs. Donne had died last night in giving birth to a dead child"—whereas, as we see, the good Mrs. Donne did not die, though the child did. Further, it is plain from the whole tenor of Walton's narrative that Donne must have been throughout in very great anxiety about his wife, and specially at this time anxious, as knowing the child to be about due; and that out of his anxiety the apparition may have bodied itself as a freak of excited imagination is surely a quite plausible conjecture. As to the exact consonance of the time, if it was exact—which may be doubtful—this may well be disposed of as mere fortuity and coincidence; so that to this case, taken by itself (even if Mrs. Donne had died, as she did not), not much importance can be assigned.

That all such cases can on the like rational principles be disposed of, I do not myself think. On grounds to myself sufficient, I am inclined to believe in the reality of such occasional apparitions at the instant of death to relatives or friends at a distance. I believe, that is, in the apparitions, simply as such; and I don't believe that in all cases—though in some they plausibly may—they can rationally be explained away, as in this case of Donne, on the principle of mere hallucination and coincidence. That failing any so-called rational explanation, the particular apparition must needs be the Spirit of the person deceased, anyone may believe who likes. It may not be held rational explanation; but, in the present state of our knowledge, no one will dogmatically denounce it as irrational, save only here and there a scientist, who is also

unhappily an ass, without the wit to be aware of it. But discussion is not my object. "I am well pleased"—with quaint old Izaak—"that every reader do enjoy his own opinion," and to whatever enjoyment or comfort any man may have in his special beliefs or *no*-beliefs I make him entirely welcome, if he will leave me at peace with my own.—I am, &c.,

Edinburgh.

P. P. ALEXANDER.

### "NATURE-SPIRITS" AND "ELEMENTALS."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The visions described by your correspondent "W.H." are those of incipient clairvoyance, which only requires developing to bring him out of the region of transitory earthly phantasmagoria, into a state of permanent clearness of sight upon higher planes. Your correspondent has probably never striven to cultivate his spiritual vision—from ignorance, perhaps, that he possesses such a gift. He has given spontaneous evidence of its possession, however, and if he could spare time from the pursuit of the "exact sciences" to cultivate it, he might discover another science, which possibly only requires the intellectual research of a larger number of studious votaries to render it also sufficiently "exact" to be classed amongst those sciences of earth which are deemed worthy of study.

A good mesmeriser,—not an ignorant man, but one occupying as high an intellectual and spiritual plane as his own,—would aid the growth of "W.H.'s" latent faculty. Or, if he will select certain hours for complete isolation, sitting in a very subdued light, or total darkness, as may seem to him best, judging by his own sensations—keeping his mind in a calm, abstracted state, not desiring anything—he may eventually succeed in clearing the visual powers of his spirit, which are at present only in a struggling condition.

"W.H." does not see "Nature-Spirits," which is the character of the Spiritual vision I described in my first letter. His sight does not yet transcend the earth plane, and he gets a sort of panorama of the shadows of dreamland, latent in his astral light, mixed up with the forms of Spirits inhabiting the earth region.

The object of my first letter was to elicit, if possible, by the aid of clairvoyance, more information concerning those beings, powers, or forces, termed by Theosophists, "Elementals." Are "Nature-Spirits" Elementals? Are Elementals, properly speaking, "forces"?—and if so, as Mr. Gerald Massey pertinently asks, "*what forms do they take?*" Are there not some Theosophists, adepts, or clairvoyants of high cultivation amongst us, who can answer these questions, and throw more light upon the subject? I appeal to those clairvoyants whose sight has been opened to see "Nature-Spirits." Cannot the Baroness Adelpa von Vay, or Mrs. Hardinge Britten, give some information upon these interesting points? Will not Madame Blavatsky, who enjoys the supreme happiness of basking in the rays of light proceeding from a centre of supernal wisdom,—i.e. the Himalayan Brotherhood,—take pity upon our Western ignorance and vouchsafe further teachings concerning these "*blind elementals or forces of nature*"? (I quote from a recent article in "LIGHT.")

I would like much to be informed, for instance, whether the extraordinary living entities I spiritually see, are "Nature-Spirits," or "Elementals;" or the still existent Spirit forms of disembodied animals, which, I presume, are merely transitory, whilst progressing to take on higher embodiments; or whether I see a mixture of all these different forms, and, owing to the incipient stage I am passing through, am unable to rightly distinguish them.—Yours respectfully,

STUDENT.

November 7th, 1881.

MR. H. BASTIAN, the well-known medium, is in London, where he will remain a short time before starting for Vienna. Letters may be addressed to him at 32, Fopstone-road, Earls Court, S.W.

REALISATION OF A DREAM.—General Fox went to Flanders with the Duke of York. His wife was confined soon after his departure. He was away more than two years, and never saw the child; yet he suddenly dreamed, not only that it was dead, but that it was visible to him and he knew its features. He mentioned the day and hour of its death, taking its appearance to him as the test, and he was exact. Some months afterwards he returned to England. Mrs. Fox had changed her home. He entered a room he had never seen before, yet instantly recognised it and all the furniture, as being what he had seen in the dream. It was the room in which the child had died, and he fixed on its picture there, saying: "That is the child I saw in my dream."—*Life of Sir Charles Napier.*

### PASSAGE OF MATTER THROUGH MATTER.

#### Remarkable Instances.

The wonderful phenomenon of the passage of Matter through Matter is exhibited in many forms in the presence of strong physical mediums. It occurred at every séance of the Davenport's, when their coats were taken off and other coats put on while their hands were securely tied behind them and fastened to the rung of a chair. Sometimes their waistcoats would be taken off, still buttoned, from underneath the coat, while their hands were tied. In Dale Owen's "Foot-falls" is mentioned a case of haunting in Scotland, when articles put in a cupboard would the next moment come tumbling down the chimney, although there was no communication between them. The threading of a chair round the arm when the hands are united, or placing a solid iron ring round the wrist, is of common occurrence. I once saw this phenomenon take place in the light, the medium being Mr. Herne. Abundant as is the testimony to the fact, there are sceptical Spiritualists who say that it has never been satisfactorily demonstrated. Mr. Hudson Tuttle is, I believe, one of these.

Whilst residing in Boston, U.S.A., I had an experience of the kind, which I consider as remarkable as any I ever heard of. An account was published at the time in the *Boston Herald* and *New York Sun* and other papers, but I think it will not be amiss briefly to state the particulars again.

Soon after Mr. Morse and myself arrived in Boston we were invited to attend a séance of Mrs. Thayer's, who is known as "the flower medium." We did so, and after a great number of beautiful flowers were produced, Mr. Morse found a pigeon in front of him. We attended a second séance, on which occasion both Mr. Morse and myself were the recipients of a beautiful white fantail pigeon. Soon after this, I attended a test séance at the *Banner of Light* premises, when Mrs. Thayer was placed in a muslin bag, and in a few minutes I had another fine bird placed in my hand, which Mr. Morse brought with him to England, and which he exhibited at a meeting of the B.N.A.S.

After these events I frequently attended Mrs. Thayer's séances, and had every opportunity of satisfying myself of the genuineness of the phenomena. At length it occurred to me that, if Spirits could bring flowers, &c., into a closed room, in which there was no opening whatever, they might go a step further and introduce them into a locked box. Accordingly, I asked Mrs. Thayer if she thought this could be done. She said she did not know, but if I liked to get a box she had no objection to try. Hereupon I procured a box at a grocery store. It was an ordinary packing box, a little over a foot in dimensions on all sides, and made of three-quarter deal, tightly nailed together. To obviate the necessity of opening the box, I had a small square of glass let in from the underside of the lid, and securely fixed, so that when the box was locked it was impossible to remove it. About a dozen persons were invited to witness the experiment, which was the first of the kind, so far as I knew, ever attempted. After a due inspection of the box was made by the company, I locked it with a padlock, which I bought for the purpose, the key of which had never been out of my possession. In addition to this I stuck a piece of gummed paper from the top to the side, affixing a seal at either end. As the light was about to be put out, Mrs. Thayer said she had left the handkerchief at home which she places on her head during the manifestations, to protect her, as she avers, from the electrical influences that prevail. Hereupon a gentleman took from his wallet a packet of Chinese paper handkerchiefs, and offered her one. Mrs. Thayer said it was of no use, as it was not silk, and it was left lying on the table. The light was then turned out, and we commenced singing. After continuing for some little time, it was suggested that we should look at the box, and see whether anything had taken place. On looking through the glass, something was seen which was supposed to be flowers, but on opening the box it proved to be the handkerchief that had been left lying on the table, the pink pattern having been mistaken for flowers.

This encouraged us to make another trial, and a party of eight met, about a week after, for the purpose, General Roberts, editor of *Mind and Matter*, being of the number. The box was "fixed" in the same way as before, and all present were satisfied that it had nothing in it except the handkerchief that had been introduced at the previous séance. The light having been extinguished we commenced singing, and continued doing so for about ten minutes, when a succession of loud, quick raps

were heard on the box, and I said, "Shall we sing again?" Three distinct raps were given. We sang again, and soon afterwards felt a very decided cool wind pervading the room, which was very noticeable, as it was an extremely hot afternoon. A loud crash was then heard, as if the box was broken to pieces. A light was produced, and on examination the box was found in a perfect condition and the seal intact, and inside were observed several flowers and other objects, a list of which was afterwards made, and is as follows:—Four tiger lilies; three roses, white, pink and yellow; a gladiolus; a piece of fern, and several small flowers; also a copy of the *Banner of Light*, and *Voice of Angels*, and a photograph of Mr. Colby. The flowers were all quite perfect, and appeared to be fresh gathered, and the papers were folded as if for sale. After the box manifestation a large number of fine scarlet roses came on to the table, and the largest was stuck in the hair of the medium. Flowers came in the same way at the previous séance. On each occasion a paper was drawn up certifying the fact, which was signed unhesitatingly by all present. In fact, nothing could have been more satisfactory or conclusive. Colonel Olcott, coming to Boston about the time, expressed a wish to witness a séance with the box. He did so, and affixed a seal, uniting the lid with the side, and impressing it with his signet ring. In a few minutes the box was found half full of flowers, amongst which was a piece of bine about a yard long. The Colonel was perfectly satisfied.

ROBERT COOPER.

Eastbourne, November 14th, 1881.

### SPIRITUALISM IN AMERICA.

By E. W. Wallis.

Since my last I have visited several places of interest, and although not privileged to sit with any well-known mediums, have met with many private workers, and find that mediumship is quite common here; in fact there is a far greater number of mediums, both public and private, in this country, in proportion to the number of Spiritualists, than in England, and hence the rapidity with which the Cause is growing here. Before leaving Greenfield, I was called upon to attend a funeral at Deerfield, a village close by. One Monday morning, a lady, Mrs. George Sheldon, called to see me to express the pleasure she had experienced in listening to the discourses given through me the previous day. "I feel as if I had only just begun to live," she said, "and if I were younger I would do anything to teach this beautiful truth to the world." Less than a fortnight afterwards she had "begun to live"—in the disembodied state. Her passing away was easily accomplished; she had been subject to attacks of heart disease, one of which released her from the mortal state. In company with Dr. Beals and friends, I visited the home of this sister, where 80 or 90 relatives and friends had assembled. After some beautiful singing by four of the friends, and a prayer from the Unitarian minister, my guides, taking Mrs. Sheldon's words that she "had just begun to live" for their text, gave a very feeling and tenderly sympathetic address, which touched and pleased everyone present. Again at the grave side, a few words were said by them appropriate to the occasion. I learned that the Congregationalist pastor was among the friends assembled, and I was pleased to meet a Unitarian minister who was broad enough to take part with me in the service. He seemed pleased, and said he thought we could conduct services very nicely together, at the same time expressing a hope that we might meet again. It was the first time a medium had ever spoken in Deerfield.

From Greenfield I went to Poquonock, Connecticut, for two evenings. Here the friends have been able to build a nice hall capable of seating about 500 persons. The lower portion of the building is devoted to dining-room, kitchen, cloak-rooms, &c., for social gatherings. Being a farming district friends came from considerable distances in "buggies." Good audiences were obtained at each lecture, the efforts of my guides being heartily appreciated. Next evening I went to East Hartford, where I spoke to about 120 persons in a memorial hall, built by a gentleman in memory of his wife and daughter, both of whom passed on suddenly. He lets the hall free to any person or society who he thinks is worthy and trying to do good, but he will not allow any collections or charge for admission. Again the Spirits spoke to the hearts of the people and won their sympathy.

From East Hartford to Boston, thence to Newburyport, Mass., was my next journey through a beautiful country, made still more so by the wonderful colours of the autumn leaves. At this place I found a few friends struggling to open the ground and rouse an interest. My guides were honoured in being

chosen to deliver the inaugural lectures, and so well did they acquit themselves that I was at once re-engaged for Christmas Day, that being the only date I had at liberty this year.

It had long been my wish to visit New York. Hence I was quite glad to leave Boston on the 20th for that city. I journeyed by the Fall River route and saw for the first time the immense and comfortable steamers which ply between Fall River and New York. They have been called "floating palaces," and I know no other words by which to describe them. Last Sunday I officiated for the Second Society, both morning and evening. The audiences were large and sympathetic. After the services, friends I had met at Lake Pleasant, English friends known in the old country, and new friends, crowded round me with happy smiling faces to bid me welcome and God-speed. On Tuesday, the 25th, about 70 friends assembled at a reception séance, held in the parlours of Mr. and Mrs. Henderson, kindly placed at our disposal for the purpose, and a happy evening was spent. My guides answered questions and gave psychometric readings.

I visited the offices of the *Two Worlds*, and was pleased to learn it was prospering beyond expectation. Dr. Crowell, the proprietor, is an ardent worker, who regards Spiritualism as a religious Spiritual movement. Mr. A. E. Newton, quiet, thoughtful and earnest, is fully alive to his duties and well equipped, having had large experience and leaning to the philosophical aspects of the subject. In Captain Brown, these gentlemen have a valuable assistant, a painstaking and conscientious worker, somewhat critical, but earnest. Mrs. Newton I did not see, but with four such active and earnest helpers, the *Two Worlds* ought to succeed, and become of great value as a literary journal, an authority in matters of fact, and a reliable exponent of our glorious philosophy.

Dr. Monck is having, I am glad to learn, good success in Brooklyn and New York, as a magnetic healer, some remarkable cases having been treated by him with astonishing results. He has my best and hearty good wishes in his work. I was pleased to meet Professor Kiddle, whom I found to be, as I anticipated, quiet, thoughtful, genial and philosophical; an ardent student of mediumship, and well posted in the philosophy of control.

October 28th.

### A SOLITARY VISIT BY A GHOST.

In the year 1865 I was engaged to go and reside for three months at Shelswell Park, Bicester, Oxfordshire. Fatigued with the journey, on going to bed I fell at once into a sound sleep. Out of this I was roused by a sensation of falling from a height, the bedstead jerking under me. Thinking it was a kind of a nervous start I settled myself for sleep again. I then saw a man in the room; he seemed advanced in years, and had on an old cap and dressing gown. He was stooping over the table, and seemed busy tying up small bags. When I awoke in the morning I found my door was in the same state as when I locked it the previous night, and I supposed I had had a singular dream. Some days after my arrival the people of the house, in the course of conversation, inquired of me if I had seen anything unusual in my sleeping room. I asked them why. Because the room, they said, was sometimes visited by an appearance. I replied that I had seen the appearance of an aged man the first night of my sleeping there. They said that that was what they meant, and as I did not seem scared by it they did not mind telling me that it was looked upon as the ghost of an old miser, who appeared now and then, who lived in the house many years before, and who used to sleep in the room I slept in. Being naturally of an unexcitable mind the idea did not disturb me. I continued to sleep in the same room during my stay, but did not witness the appearance again. I should always have thought of it as a dream had it not been for the spontaneous remarks of the established inmates of the house.

6, Derby-street, W.C.

ELIZ. WILLIS.

The life of a reformer is full of disappointments; but the most aggravating is to have his motives misunderstood by those he would help out of the bogs of superstition; his offered assistance repelled, and the benefits he longs to confer on mankind rejected without examination.—*The Agnostic, Dallas, Tex.*

Proscribe the thinker, he will cast, wherever he wanders, the seed of his thoughts. Imprison him, his voice will penetrate the walls and reach the conscience of gaolers and judges. Commit him to the flames, like John Huss and Jerome of Prague, reduce him to a handful of ashes, that will not hinder his spirit from illumining the everlasting altar of human thought.—CASTELAR.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"  
4, NEW BRIDGE STREET,  
LUDGATE CIRCUS, E.C.

## 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.

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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

Our Correspondents will greatly oblige us if they will take care, in every case, to write on ONLY ONE SIDE of the paper.

## SPECIAL NOTICE.

Having removed to new and commodious premises at No. 4, New Bridge-street, Ludgate Circus, E.C., we are now prepared to undertake the publishing of books connected with Spiritualism and kindred subjects. We shall keep a selection of such books on sale, and any orders with which our friends may favour us shall have our best attention.

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon)."

*The Truthseeker* for November reproduces an excellent paper on Spiritualism which appeared lately in *The Christian Register*, the Unitarian newspaper of America. The writer, Mr. G. S. Merriam, takes the view, on which I have so often insisted, that "the crumbling of old faiths is creating an immense vacuum in the hearts of men," and that Spiritualism "offers assurance at the very point where need is most keenly felt, and its proofs are of that palpable kind which the mass of men are readiest to accept." "The swiftness with which the old foundations of faith are perishing is veiled by the fact that most of those who experience it are silent about it. . . . There are multitudes who cling to a religion that is little more than a hollow shell, until some other faith seems to offer them a better home." The writer reviews the various candidates for acceptance, and shews that the ethical religion, of which George Eliot was a distinguished votary, whose watchwords are brotherhood and human progress, offers, "at the confines of human life, only a blank where the old religion offered the most sublime incitement, the most solemn and tender hope." Liberal Christianity and Unitarianism have no organisation, and no hold on men "who are not prepared to ignore the eternal and the infinite."

Here Spiritualism steps in and "meets men at the very point where their doubts and fears are most strongly focussed, where Positivism has only a denial, where Liberalism hardly knows its own mind as to the question, If a man die, shall he live again? . . . It appeals not to metaphysical or historical evidence, not to mystic authority: it says, See, hear, touch!" This is an accurate statement of our claims, and the writer predicts for Spiritualism "a swift and large growth." He thinks its "freedom from elaborate organisation," and the flexibility of its creed, are in its favour. He will not give it the name of religion in the sense which the word bears to his mind, but he vindicates for it precisely those vivifying powers which seem to me so necessary to infuse new life into decaying faiths. And it may be permitted me to point out that Spiritualism asserts far more than the two facts of continued existence and communion of the departed, which the writer thinks have no moral bearing. To my mind they have: and to them I would add the consentient teaching that man is the arbiter of his own destiny, forms his own character, and makes his future home. That is the most tremendous moral incentive, and I cannot conceive any religious system possessing one stronger. If Spiritualism proves to a man that he will live after death, just the man his life has made him; that his friends, all whom he holds dear, can still watch and love him; that his sins and errors must be atoned

for by himself, and that no bribe can purchase immunity:—if it does this only, and it does more, it has in it the germs of deep religious influence on the age.

Mr. A. R. Wallace publishes with Trübner\*—a firm that is rapidly acquiring almost a monopoly of works on Occult, Mystic, and Theosophic Subjects—a second edition of his well-known essays. His answer to Hume, Lecky, and others who denied the possibility of miracles, was read before the Dialectical Society as far back as 1871. Its arguments have lost none of their cogency by lapse of time, and some of the fallacies which he then attacked are still to be found lurking about in the recesses of the self-styled scientific mind—a mind which has usually been trained in one groove, and has devoted all its energies to one minute point of research, to the great detriment of its even balance and general utility. Mr. Wallace rightly points out that such a mind is by no means the best fitted to investigate the claims of such a subject as Spiritualism, which it approaches with prejudice, and would settle on *à priori* grounds. "I assert," says he, "without fear of contradiction, that whenever the scientific men of any age have denied the facts of investigators on *à priori* grounds, they have always been wrong."

"The Scientific Aspect of the Supernatural" (Mr. Wallace's Second Essay) deals more directly with the phenomena of Modern Spiritualism, including Clairvoyance and Mesmerism. The evidence for apparitions, the testimony of some well-known men, including Professor de Morgan, Nassau Senior, Thackeray, Lord Lyndhurst, and Archbishop Whately, are given, together with some valuable notes of personal evidence. The sections on the Theory and Moral Teachings of Spiritualism may be studied with advantage (without any disrespect to some later utterances on the subject) by any who wish to know what can be said in behalf of the hypothesis of Spiritualism pure and simple. This hypothesis, Mr. Wallace says, "not only accounts for the facts (and is the only one that does so) but it is further remarkable as being associated with a theory of a future state of existence which is the only one yet given to the world that can at all commend itself to the modern philosophical mind." This theory Mr. Wallace incidentally describes as "a new religion," and its main doctrines he carefully enumerates.

But that I am writing with a view to the information of those inquirers who are looking out for guidance in the selection of books, it would be unnecessary for me to refer to "The Defence of Modern Spiritualism," which Mr. Wallace contributed to the *Fortnightly Review* at the request of its editor. It is known to most, if not all, in the present generation who care for these subjects, and to a vast number who do not, except as a thing to be detested and feared. These find it a hard nut to crack, and such men as Dr. W. B. Carpenter (with whom Mr. Wallace has had many an amusing tilt) gnash their teeth at it in vain. It remains, and will remain for many a long year, the clearest, most logical, practical and complete summary of the arguments in defence of our faith that our literature contains. The eminence of the author in other departments of research sheds on it a reflected light that serves only to bring out its own inherent value. When he has gone to wider spheres of usefulness he will be remembered as a man of the first scientific rank, whose courage and love of truth were strong enough to induce him to imperil his worldly prospects, and risk his great reputation, by testifying to that which his generation holds in scorn, and by defending a cause which, though it be the cause of truth, is too sadly allied in the popular opinion with methods of chicanery and fraud.

The *Journal of Science* reviews Mr. Wallace in a spirit of appreciation of his work which I would fain hope is becoming less uncommon than it used to be. The reviewer declares that the book is one "which may demand the serious and respectful attention of the scientific world. Its author is no weak-minded, ignorant fanatic," but on the contrary, "has earned a world-wide reputation." "Coming from such a man, Spiritualism demands a more heedful examination than has been accorded to it by unscrupulous egotists, and obscure 'exposers' craving for notoriety, even if under an *alias*." The phenomena witnessed and recorded by the author are described as "exceedingly remarkable, and the explanation proposed by physiologists utterly fails." It is pleasant to find that a

\* "On Miracles and Modern Spiritualism." A. R. Wallace. Trübner, 1881.

scientific magazine can afford to mete out the same praise to the author of a work on Spiritualism, as it would bestow on his "Geographical Distribution of Animals." The same acute mind is at work in both; but not so long ago it would have been held *sane on animals, but insane on Spirits.*

The reviewer suggests that Spiritualists should seek to obtain materialisation of pre-human anthropoids, missing links, and other extinct animals, and quotes with approval Mr. Gerald Massey's words in "LIGHT" of October 15th: "It would be of equal interest to the evolutionist to know that the spirit of a monkey persisted (habits and all) as if it had been the spirit of a man." Certainly such manifestation, if obtained, would have the merit of conclusiveness: for no medium, however tricky, even if he had the lithe, contortion-loving limbs of a Washington Irving Bishop, could successfully personate a Pterodactylus or a Pythonomorpha.

Colonel Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society, has published with Trübner and Co. a *Buddhist Catechism*, which gives within a brief compass the chief facts about the Buddha, and an outline of the tenets of Buddhism. To English readers its view will be apparent from the fact that Mr. Rhys Davids is quoted with approval, and that obligations are acknowledged to Bigandet, Beal, and Spence Hardy. The Catechism bears the *imprimatur* of the High Priest Sumangala, who certifies that its doctrines are in accordance with the Canon of the Southern Buddhist Church. The little manual should be useful to English readers who desire to know what is the view of Buddhism favoured by the Theosophists. They are never weary of telling us how grand and noble are the philosophical and ethical teachings of the Buddha—and here they are right, though students differ as to some interpretations of them—and of decrying by contrast the Christian code of moral teaching—a cause in which, it seems to me, they are quite wrong. The Christ taught a pure and wholly noble system of religion; but Christians have defaced it, and most of them know nothing whatever of Buddhism, which they ignorantly decry. A better acquaintance with it, to which Colonel Olcott may help them, will be a decided gain. M.A. (OXON.)

#### LORD LYTTON'S "STRANGE STORY."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—On Tuesday of last week, I took out the above book to read from the Plymouth Free Library, and was so fascinated with the story that I scarcely laid it down until I had reached the end.

The work being thus vividly fresh upon my mind, I was prepared to read with much interest the remarks of your highly respected and appreciated contributor, "M.A. (Oxon.)," in Saturday's "LIGHT."

No Spiritualist can fail to read the story with deep interest. As indeed is often said, and truly, of the Bible, that it can only be rightly read and understood in the light of Spiritualism, so likewise "A Strange Story" can only be rightly read and appreciated from the Spiritualist standpoint. From that standpoint how many problems are solved, how many things otherwise "hard to be understood" are made clear.

"A Strange Story" vividly illustrates the prevailing conflict between Materialism and the claims of Spiritual philosophy; the former being combated by the only true and effectual method, viz., by a demonstration of the actual and independent powers of the human spirit, in clairvoyance, &c. Lillian Ashleigh would be regarded by Spiritualists as a *bonâ fide* clairvoyant.

Margrave's rod, which, in its magical and mysterious power, swallows up all other rods including even Aaron's, is of course a purely mythical object, having no foundation in reality. The latter part of the story fails to produce an abiding impression, and will be hurried over, being manifestly improbable and far-fetched; the immediate conclusion is, however, good.—I am, Sir, yours truly, C. WARE.

Plymouth, November 14th.

B.N.A.S. DISCUSSION MEETINGS.—The first of these meetings for the coming season will be held at 38, Great Russell-street, on Monday evening next, when Miss Emily Ford will read a paper on "The Religious Bearings of Spiritualism." The subject is one which should lead to an animated discussion. We hope that the committee by whom these meetings are arranged, will be encouraged by the presence of a large number of members and friends. The meetings this season will commence at seven o'clock, instead of at eight as heretofore.

#### HAUNTING OF AN OLD CHATEAU AT BADEN-BADEN.

Having been much interested last summer in the accounts I heard from every member of the household respecting the haunting of a house in my neighbourhood, which was and is still going on, I spoke of it among my friends, and it was the means of making known to me many similar cases. Among these one of the most interesting was the following, on account of the numerous corroborations it received from different quarters.

A lady with whom I was talking on the subject had been intimate a good many years ago with Miss G., who told her that when they were children her father took an old house in Germany, which my informant believed to have been once a convent, and to have been let at a low rate on account of the reputation of being haunted, though none of the children knew anything about that. One rainy day they were all playing with their hoops in the old refectory,\* when they saw an old man in a monk's brown dress walk through the room and pass into a little turret chamber† at the end, which had no outlet. They pursued him into this chamber, where they found no one. Miss G. said it never occurred to them to be frightened, but they directly imagined a secret door, and drummed with their hoopsticks on the wall in order to find it. The next time Miss G. saw the figure she was alone, having been sent, as my informant thought, into the same little chamber to do over again lessons that had been badly done. She saw the same old man on the other side of the table, but this time she was frightened and went away.

I knew nothing about Miss G. or her family, beyond her being an old acquaintance of my informant, but a week or two afterwards, finding myself sitting down at dinner next to a lady of that name, I pricked up my ears, and learnt that she was a younger sister of the same family, born a good while after the occupation of the house in question, but she had always been familiar with the story, and she kindly agreed to send me fuller details, and as she lives with her mother and wrote to me from her house, the following narration must be practically taken as that of an eyewitness to the occurrences related:—

"In the year 1841 or 1842 my father engaged apartments in an old chateau at Baden-Baden that had once been a monastery. The apartment was large and handsome, and the rent unusually moderate, and my father having, as he thought, comfortably settled his family, went off to England for an absence of some weeks. They had not been there long before Mrs. G., returning one day from a long walk, was told by the nurse that while she was walking up and down the long corridor with the baby, a man in brown had suddenly appeared she knew not from whence, and had come close to her and looked at the baby, and then disappeared through the wall at the end of the passage. The nurse was an ignorant English girl and knew nothing about monks, but the dress she described as having been worn by the man was exactly that of a Franciscan friar. Mrs. G. was very much annoyed by the occurrence, which she was far from believing to be in any way supernatural, and found fault with the concierge below, for having allowed a beggar to go upstairs, contrary to agreement. The concierge stoutly denied that anyone had passed her lodge. A few days after, the man in brown appeared again in the nursery, while the children were being put to bed; another day in the schoolroom, when he chased one of the little girls round the table. Mrs. G. never saw the apparition herself, but the children and servants became much frightened, and one nervous child of about 10 was put to sleep in a room opening out of her mother's, the door into the passage being locked and bolted; but still the child persisted that when she woke at night, the man in brown was making faces at the bottom of her bed. At last one day there was no dinner forthcoming for the children. Mrs. G., who had just come in from her walk, inquired the reason, and was told that the man in her absence had appeared in the kitchen, and so frightened the cook that she had thrown her rolling-pin at him, and run away. (The poor woman afterwards went mad and died.) After this Mrs. G. said she would remain no longer, and left the apartment at once, and no attempt was made by the owner to make her pay any compensation for breaking the agreement, which without good reason to the contrary, would certainly have been done."

\* This is a mistake; the refectory was on the upper floor, which did not belong to the G.'s. It was doubtless the apartment called by her sister the long corridor.

† This is a misrecollection. There was no such turret chamber.

About 20 years after these occurrences some friends of the family came to pay a visit on their return from a foreign tour. In the course of conversation it transpired that these ladies had taken rooms at the château at Baden, had been charmed with them at first, but had to leave very soon on account of the apartments being haunted by a Franciscan monk. Again, a few years passed, and Mrs. G. met at Paris the widow of a doctor at Baden-Baden. She asked if the lady had heard any ghost stories connected with the old château. "Oh dear, yes," she said at once, "they are well-known; no one can ever keep those rooms." She herself had lived in the same house, but had never seen the ghost, as her apartment was on the upper floor, which was not haunted.

Again, two or three years ago, one of Mrs. G.'s sons, a clergyman in Scotland, was telling this story at a dinner-party, when a gentleman present called out, "Oh! Mr. G., I can confirm that," and proceeded to tell how he and his brother, while travelling in Germany, had heard of the haunted rooms, and had gone there on purpose to see the ghost. They sat up at night with lights and book, and the monk came and turned over the pages.

HENSLEIGH WEDGWOOD.

31, Queen Anne-street.

### DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIUMSHIP.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Although my friend, Mrs. Woodforde, is at present absent from England, I feel it a duty I owe to her, and also to Spiritualism, for which she has so quietly and unostentatiously worked for many years, to publicly state the benefit I have derived during a series of sittings from her powers of developing mediumship.

By Mrs. Woodforde's methods the medium's latent abilities grow in a spontaneous and independent manner. He seems to be doing it all himself, whilst in reality the Spirits are obtaining, through her instrumentality, a power and strength for working which they would not have without her. By degrees this power becomes sufficiently intensified about the developing subject to be conveyed away from her and used in her absence by the Spirits assisting in the work of development.

Always under the direction of her own Spirit teachers, with whom she clairaudiently converses without the slightest difficulty, Mrs. Woodforde mesmerises—up to a certain point; that is to say, she withdraws her own mesmeric influence when directed to do so, leaving the medium, who is developing, in the hands of his own guides, who are in due course introduced to her, and with whom she makes the subject acquainted, thus establishing a very necessary *rapport*.

When the tyros in Spiritual development display a sufficient growth of independent power, Mrs. Woodforde withdraws entirely, leaving them in open communion with, and under the care of, their own Spirit friends and teachers. She is ever careful to inculcate the necessary freedom and independence of each mind; and the Spirit guides who are introduced through her are, she insists, to be regarded only as counsellors and helpers.

Through her are given, during development, the highest Spiritual teachings, as well as warnings of the dangers attending upon intercourse with Spirits, and the necessary precautions to be observed. In short, nothing is overlooked which can contribute to the happiness, peace, and mental elevation of those who place themselves under her training.

Her mesmeric powers, of a refined and highly soothing character, have always yielded favourable results, and from the earliest stages of my development, have never once failed in their action, but have invariably produced the desired effect. My clairvoyance has steadily grown and improved; my hearing has also been opened; and my Spiritual instincts have become so quickened that I can distinguish the personal identities of Spirits, intuitively, without seeing or hearing them. To one who does not understand this, my statement will appear strange, but what I say is the truth, as those know who have attained a like stature.

Whatever may be the reason, I can safely say that I have never been troubled by false or deceiving Spirits; but then I sought Mrs. Woodforde's kind aid in the earliest stages of my development; since which time I have never attended a séance of any kind except in her presence, or unless she permitted it, and have, therefore, kept the influences about me unmixed with perhaps lower, or deleterious ones—a precaution most essential to be observed during development.

I fear it will be long before Mrs. Woodforde, who is abroad in attendance upon an invalid friend, may return to her useful labours amongst us, but right sure am I that she would gladly advise by letter any who may be endeavouring to cultivate the higher powers of the Spirit within.

I will only add, in conclusion, that if I had not made the acquaintance of this lady, my life would have missed some of its greatest happiness, and I might have lived, and died, totally ignorant of the mine of Spiritual wealth and beauty which has been opened to me, through her teaching and training. Gratitude impels me to offer this small tribute to her, and our mutual Spirit friends, for the work they have done so well.

I enclose my card, Mr. Editor, for your private satisfaction, and have the honour to be, yours very truly,

BONNE FOI.

12th November, 1881.

### SEANCES WITH MISS WOOD.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I give you some account of two séances lately held in Leicester, thinking the information may benefit some of your readers and encourage them to persevere. Some few months ago we had a private séance with Miss Wood, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, for one night, and as the medium was without a visible protector we did not expect much, but all being members of one circle and harmonious, we had one of the best and most satisfactory séances that could be wished. Miss Wood at that time promised to come again under the same management, that of a well-known medium here, who is very dear to the hearts of numbers in this town. Being a silent but energetic worker, and being desirous for some who have not seen materialisation to realise something of that wonder, she arranged with Miss Wood to come, and well-knowing that "everybody's work is nobody's work," carried out all the necessary details herself. A suitable room being provided by kind friends in the cause, and punctuality being the order of our sittings, by the time arranged all were present.

The medium was put under satisfactory test conditions, being tied, sewn, and sealed with a seal of peculiar character, so that there was no danger of a counterfeit, no one knowing until it was used what kind of seal it would be. The usual conditions necessary for success were stated and directions given, to which all agreed. We had not long to wait, for we soon had forms wholly unknown to the medium, and not known to more than one sitter in each case; three different forms for three different sitters, in each instance a dear relation. We had also an Egyptian of very large stature, known to some circles in London as "Dauntless," a guide of one of the sitters, and Miss Wood's little "Pocha." "Blue Bell" also made her appearance. On the following evening we had much the same results. The mother of one of the sitters, known only to that sitter, with unmistakable proof shewed herself, and caressed her relative once again; as did also the mother of another sitter very aged. "Pocha" had great power for some time, her small hands being very busy. Many other matters occurred which would defy all conjurers to imitate, if placed under the same conditions as those under which we placed Miss Wood. One gentleman from London says he was well repaid for his journey by seeing those he had previously only heard, "Dauntless" and "Blue Bell" often being present at his circle. I may also state that the medium at each sitting was secured in such a way as left no room for doubt in the minds of those present, and was found in the same condition at the close.

I may here say that we all regard Miss Wood as an honest, unassuming, kind and gentle person, whom sincere Spiritualists will do well to encourage. I enclose my name and address, and wishing Miss Wood and all honest workers every success,—I am, yours truly,

A TRUTH-SEEKER.

Leicester, October 22nd, 1881.

The *Revue Spirite* says that Mr. Henry Lacroix from America, having done good work in Belgium, went to Bordeaux. The Spiritualists there thought his theosophical views erroneous. His stay at Bordeaux was very short, and he has now gone to Barcelona. The *Revue* thinks he ought to confine himself to shewing how American Spiritualists form developing circles, and speaks of him as devoted and disinterested, but mistaken in advancing any theories not in harmony with Allan Kardec's, and anticipates that he will also find the Spanish Spiritualists of the same opinion.

## OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

## "The Spiritualist."

Writing upon Spiritualism in Simla, the editor refers to Madame Blavatsky, and says:—"It is assumed by some that because direct Spirit writing of good intellectual capacity, appears, and sometimes in broad daylight, in the presence of Madame Blavatsky, therefore it was written many hundreds of miles away by a 'Himalayan Brother.' But when the same phenomena have taken place in England in the presence of mediums, no such conclusion as to their origin was formed."

The editor also reports a conversation upon the subject of "Elementaries" with the "Spirits," at the sésances of Mr. C. E. Williams, the tenour of which, on the part of the "Spirits," was distinctly opposed to Theosophic teachings.

## "The Medium."

The *Medium* publishes a trance discourse, through the mediumship of Mr. Walter Howell, upon "Man and his Relationship to God." Commenting upon the opinions of certain persons in our ranks, whose Spiritualism is, in their opinion, the acme of exaltedness, "J.K." uses the following vigorous criticism:—"The furious competition for 'high spheres' that is going on among us, is as thoroughly unreal as it is ridiculous. For people do not think of bettering their ways, and becoming good men and true, but content themselves with talking inflatedly of their super-advanced state, but when we ask of them to be what they pretend, they become abusive and would turn upon and rend us. It is, however, not only for them that we have written."

## "The Banner of Light."

An excellent report is given of a lecture by W. J. Colville, upon "The Spiritual Temple, and How to Build it," followed by interesting items of general news concerning the progress of Spiritualism in various portions of the United States.

## "The Two Worlds."

Commenting upon Dr. Thornton's paper—read at the Church Congress—the editor remarks that the "Rev. Dr. Thornton's statement that 'the so-called Spirit-revelations seem to be limited by the intelligence and imagination of the medium,' affords a further proof of his meagre acquaintance with the facts and even the literature of Spiritualism. If he has never met with either personal observations or trustworthy testimonies which are wholly inconsistent with such a statement, his knowledge of the subject scarcely qualifies him to discuss it before the public. Suffice it to say that Spiritualist publications, in England as in this country, abound with proofs that Spirit-revelations often go beyond the knowledge, and are independent of, the imagination of the medium."

## "The Religio-Philosophical Journal."

The editor recently being in Colorado attended the Mediums Meeting held in that city, concerning which, and Mrs. M. L. King, the authoress, he writes as follows:—"In the afternoon we accompanied our guests to the Mediums' Meeting at the West End Opera House, where they were agreeably entertained by eloquent remarks from an ex-Methodist minister, Mr. Field, Judge Holbrook, Mrs. Maud Lord, also with descriptions and tests by Mrs. Porter and Mrs. Lord. The announcement of Mrs. King's presence was greeted with enthusiastic applause, and she was invited to address the large audience which overflowed the seating capacity of the theatre. In compliance with the invitation, Mrs. King spoke briefly upon mediumship, its trials and joys, and the necessity of thorough mental and spiritual discipline on the part of mediums. Her remarks were replete with sound logic and seemed to carry conviction to every hearer. Mr. and Mrs. King expressed themselves greatly pleased to find such a successful enterprise as the Mediums' Meeting, and greatly gratified at the deep earnestness and evident desire for higher culture and deeper insight into spiritual philosophy."

The editor writes pertinently upon "Give our Mediums Time to Rest," and the following extracts are well worth attentive perusal:—

"In order that one may become a medium, or the organism be so attuned or adjusted that its forces and impulses respond to the will of the controlling influence, great care, patience, and perseverance are required by those higher intelligences who have the matter in charge. It is not the work of a day, but requires, for its ultimate growth and perfection, years of unwearying attention. As the damp, pestilential and malarious atmosphere of night is exceedingly dangerous and poisonous to the consumptive person—of like destructive nature, many times, are the immediate surroundings and associates of mediums. They often find themselves the recipients of forces that befog their vision, deaden their clairvoyant powers, and render their perceptions obtuse and health poor, and they wonder at their loss or partial failure of mediumship, as much as the one does the loss of health who is constantly the unconscious recipient of poisonous sewer gas. . . . The medium who feels exhausted, and still continues to labor in behalf of Spirits and mortals, may soon reach a

point where recuperation is impossible, and the result is a premature death. The only potent remedy for the restoration of exhausted medial powers is complete rest; the work of depletion must be immediately stopped, and the body remain quiet until the waste that has taken place is again restored."

## SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON AND THE PROVINCES.

## DALSTON.

On Thursday evening, November 10th, Mr. Walter Howell delivered a trance address before a large company of the members and friends of the Dalston Association. The subjects treated upon were "The Law of Retribution," "Our Spiritual Homes," and "Methods of Spirit Communication," on which the controls discoursed to the evident satisfaction of the listeners. The usual monthly session of the council was held the same evening, the president in the chair. The report of the late soirée was handed in, shewing a balance and profit to the funds after the expenses had been paid. Two new members were elected, and the usual routine business was disposed of, after which the council adjourned. On Thursday next, the 24th inst., Mr. J. J. Morse will deliver an inspirational address; to commence at 7.30 p.m. prompt.

## GOSWELL HALL.

Miss Keeves occupied the platform of this hall on Sunday evening last, and delivered an interesting address on "Truth," at the close of which one of her guides made a few complimentary remarks on the fact of our having attained to the age of two years in the conducting of these meetings, concluding with a sweet and encouraging little poem. By way of lesson, Mr. Lishman read an article on "Science and Religion" from Mr. R. A. Proctor's new journal, *Knowledge*, which bore strong evidence of being the editor's own production, notably from the liberal and straightforward manner in which the subject was dealt with. The audience frequently shewed their appreciation of it by hearty applause which was well merited by the article in question, and the efficient rendering it received from the reader.—VERITAS.

## LADBROKE HALL.

"The End of the World, 1881," was the subject of an inspirational discourse by Mr. Walter Howell, of Manchester, at this hall on Sunday evening last, and which was listened to with evident marks of appreciation by an audience which comfortably filled the hall. The apparent purpose was to shew that a hidden meaning was to be put upon the Biblical references to "the end of the world," and indicating that a new dispensation was dawning, in which all that was good and true would be preserved, and a further advance made in the world's progress and development. At the close of the service, Mr. Howell urged upon the congregation the fact that an inspirational address should not be considered as an infallible utterance, and that only such as appealed to their reason and judgment should be entertained. After thanking those present for their attention, and inviting their future attendance at these services, the closing benediction was given.

## CARDIFF.

An instructive evening was spent at our rooms on Sunday last. The meeting was opened in the usual way, with a voluntary on the organ, singing, and an invocation. Mr. Rees Lewis and Captain R. Mark afterwards read extracts from current Spiritual literature. There are indications of the existence of an undercurrent of earnest manly endeavour to solve the religious problems of the day. We have met several lately whose attitude of mind seems to be an earnest breathing of the time honoured query, "What must I do to be saved?" with a strong sense of the inadequateness of merely time honoured creeds, to satisfy the craving for more reasonable bases of belief.—E. A.

## NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, the 7th, 8th, and 9th inst., the hall of the N.S.E.S. was occupied by Mr. Crisp, of the London and Edinburgh Phrenological Societies, with entertainments in connection with this most interesting subject. The lectures were well illustrated, and admirably delivered. Mr. Crisp shewed how phrenology was thoroughly scientific as a principle, and essentially an art, when applied to the delineation of character. Mr. Crisp is the most scientific of our phrenological lecturers, and has passed successfully through examinations of the most difficult character, before the above societies, which some more popular professors of the subject have failed to do. We cordially recommend his services to our societies.

On Sunday morning last, Mr. Pigford disappointed the friends at Newcastle, and Mr. Gibson and Mr. Hall occupied the time of the meeting. In the evening, through the inability of Mr. Pigford to attend, Mrs. Mould again occupied the platform with another of her interesting lectures upon "Plant Life."

On Monday evening the adjourned quarterly meeting of the N.S.E.S. was held in the hall of the Society—Mr. Jno. Mould in the chair—for the purpose of considering Mrs. Britten's paper on "Organisation," which that meeting handed to the editor of

the *Herald* to be printed, with certain parts omitted, that the members might have time to think it over. Mrs. Britten, on being communicated with, refused to allow her paper to be so mutilated, and requested its return. Consequently, on the suggestion of the chairman, the subject was dropped. Mr. Kersey proposed that in future one of the auditors should be chosen from the body of members not on the committee. The chairman thought it was casting a suspicion upon the executive not to trust them to audit their own books. The members did not think with the chairman, but passed Mr. Kersey's motion. A discussion arose upon the subject of payment or non-payment for admittance at Mrs. Britten's next course of lectures, and finally Mr. Burton carried his motion that the committee should deal with the matter according to their judgment, with this proviso, that the charges be less than on the previous occasion. This was followed by a discussion upon methods for clearing off the debt of the Society. Mr. Smith and others thought it was high time we were out of it, but the chairman thought that it was a healthy thing to be in debt, and pointed to the National Debt as an evidence of the stability it gave to the country! Another discussion arose through Mr. Kersey's asking by what or whose authority certain portraits (Mr. Morse's and others), which had adorned the hall, had been removed, while that of Mrs. Richmond and one of Robert Burns were allowed to remain. No one seemed to know anything about the matter, and Mr. Burton attempted to make a proposition that they be returned to their places when the chairman dissolved the meeting by leaving the chair.

#### Gateshead.

On Sunday evening last the friends of the G.S.I.S. held another Sunday evening meeting, which was well attended. Mr. H. Burton, the chairman, had to fall back upon the assistance of the members on account of the non-attendance of Mr. Robson, who should have officiated, but who was prevented from doing so on account of the sudden illness of his wife. The chairman read and commented upon the challenge to conjurers from the pen of Mr. S. C. Hall, which appeared in "LIGHT" of last week. Mr. Bruce followed him by detailing some remarkable experiences in Spiritualism, and the hon. sec. of the Society, Mr. Routledge, a young man but an old Spiritualist, astonished the audience with an excellent and well digested discourse upon the spread and purpose of our cause. Messrs. Pickering and Taaff followed with a few interesting remarks, after which the meeting concluded. Several new members joined the Society. The committee have resolved to secure a room near the Temperance Hall for the purpose of holding seances and other private meetings which they are unable to do at present, as their public meeting place is only available for their use on the Sunday evenings. The committee desire to express their gratitude to M. A. (Oxon.), W. W. Clark, Esq., and Alex. Calder, Esq., for their generous gifts to the library of the Society which Mr. Dawson is working hard to establish.

#### Felling.

Last Sunday evening the Spiritual Temple, where our Felling friends hold their meetings, was crowded with Spiritualists and others to hear a lecture from the guides of Mr. Lambelle, who is well-known as one of our ablest speakers and most willing workers in the North. The subject chosen for the address was "Hell," and was handled by the lecturer with an amount of clearness and ability which won favour with the audience and elicited the appreciation of all present. I feel sorry that the services of this gentleman are so much overlooked in the North, and neglected for the milk and water nonsense which we have had for some time to school ourselves to bear.

#### Washington.

In the afternoon of last Sunday Mr. J. G. Grey, under the auspices of the North Durham Society, delivered a lecture upon "Spiritualism the World's Redeemer." In the evening, at the same place, he again discoursed upon a subject, chosen by the audience, "Wealth, Poverty, and Ignorance; which is most productive of Crime?" At the conclusion of each lecture poems were extemporised by the controls of the speaker. The meetings were of a highly satisfactory nature and evidently left a thoughtful and salutary impression on the minds of those present.

#### West Felton.

On Sunday last, the 13th inst., Mr. Barker, trance and test medium, favoured us with a visit, and delivered an address at the afternoon and evening meetings. At the conclusion he gave a variety of clairvoyant "tests" which were in nearly all cases acknowledged as correct. During the fortnight Mr. Barker has been in this vicinity he has done much good, and his mediumship has been much sought after.—NORTHUMBRIA.

#### NOTTINGHAM.

The members of the Nottingham Association of Spiritualists had the privilege last Sunday of listening to the "controls" of our old friend J. J. Morse, of London. In the morning the subject was "Spirit Intercourse," which was dealt with in so plain, yet so masterly a manner that the audience were highly gratified as well as edified. In the evening, the subject was "A New Heaven," and for nearly an hour a crowded audience were spellbound. A more earnest and telling address has not yet been delivered to the Spiritualists of Nottingham. Our only regret is that Mr. Morse is not much nearer us, that we might

the more often have the gratification of listening to him. We are now anticipating the pleasure of visits from Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten on November 27th and December 14th.—W. YATES, Secretary.

#### PLYMOUTH.

Spiritualism is making good progress in this town. We have now an excellent congregation each Sunday evening, at Richmond Hall, and the wave of Spiritual light and life flows upon us with perceptibly increasing momentum from week to week.

At the private developing circle held at the Hall, on Monday evening last, there were 23 present. Addresses and communications were given through three trance mediums, there being perfect harmony among the controlling intelligences. On Thursday at the public meeting, there was a large and unexpected influx of new inquirers, some of them saying that it is the one topic of discussion in their workshops, business establishments, &c. Normal and trance addresses were given on this occasion, but the audience seemed specially interested in some healing work by Mr. Cudlip.

An excellent circle was held on Saturday evening at my own home, when, in addition to substantial developing work, instructive and encouraging addresses were given through Mr. Paynter and Mr. Williams. The work goes on regularly from the beginning of the week to the end of it, and in numerous circles.

The subject for discourse on Sunday morning was, "Peter's Trance and its Lessons"; in the evening, "The Spiritual World; our Relation to it, and the Employments thereof." Mr. Williams was controlled to take part in the latter service.—OMMA.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M.A.—The step which you and other correspondents have suggested is under consideration. If adopted it will involve considerable expense, which can only be met by a greatly extended circulation. You will know our decision very soon.

MR. MORSE AT FALMOUTH.—I attended the services in the Town Hall, Falmouth, on Sunday and Monday, 6th and 7th inst., and was greatly edified and delighted. Mr. Morse, who is one of the literary staff of "LIGHT," is very gentlemanly in exterior and manner, has a clear, commanding voice, and in the art of speaking is quite *au fait*. The services on Sunday were conducted in the usual way, the discourses or orations being preceded by singing, invocation, scripture reading, &c. Indeed so regular were the proceedings, that the large assembly seemed as much at home as when worshipping in their respective chapels. Nor did their orthodox notions receive the slightest shock, the Control wisely treating mainly of those great essentials on which all religious bodies, including Spiritualists, are thoroughly agreed.—"Drus," *Cornubian*.

A GHOST STORY.—A controversy concerning the possibility of the appearance of ghosts has, during the past month, been waged in one or two daily journals at a loss for materials during "the silly season." Though making no pretension to scientific knowledge, I accept with complete respect the assertion of science that ghostly visitations are impossible, and I receive as becomes a man of my epoch any wildest theory that does away with the necessity of believing in anything outside the range of scientific observation. While the subject of ghosts, however, is attracting attention, I will offer a nut for our scientists to crack. For obvious reasons, I am compelled to omit names. The wife of one of our most distinguished scientific men—I use the term "most distinguished" advisedly, since the reputation of the man in question is cosmopolitan—saw nightly an old man seated in an armchair, near the fireplace in her bedroom. Being thoroughly imbued with her husband's views upon scientific subjects, she held her peace, and tried with partial success to convince herself that it was a delusion. Somewhat later, this room was converted into a night nursery, and ultimately into a spare bedroom, with the result that each successive occupant, juvenile or of mature years, described the curious old gentleman who came and sat by the fire. My scientific friend has "pished" and "pahawed" at these statements, and has treated the whole matter as ridiculous. He has, however, been compelled to concede something to the vision or the delusion, and to quit the house. I simply advance this as a fact, and leave to others the task of explanation.—*The Gentleman's Magazine for November*.

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—LONDON (Goswell Hall), Sunday, November 20; CARDIFF, Sunday, November 27; GLASGOW, Sunday, December 4; LONDON, Sunday, December 11; KEIGHLEY, Sunday, December 18.—[*Adv.*]

MRS. HARDINGE-BRITTEN'S WORK.—By the desire of the friends of Spiritualism in the North of England, Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten announces that she is engaged to speak as follows:—Nov. 20, Liverpool; 27 and Dec. 4, Nottingham; 11 Oldham; 18 and 19, Halifax; 24, 25, and 26, Batley Carr.—Mrs. Britten can still form some week evening engagements, but her Sundays up to the third Sunday in January next are all promised.—[*Adv.*]

## 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; 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 Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of the U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; 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 the Medical University of Pennsylvania, U.S.A.; Bishop Clarke (Episcopalian), of Rhode Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, of the Treasury Department, 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 Guldenstamme; Count A. de Gasparin; the Baron and Baroness von Vay; the Baron du Potet; Mons. Léon Favre, Consul-General of France; Victor Hugo.

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## 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 prestidigitative, is absolutely impossible. It must rest with such men of science as Crookes and Wallace, in London; Perty, in Berne; Butleroff, 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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