

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

The American Society for Psychical Research, now extinct for lack of funds, appears (according to the *Boston Record*) to have celebrated its death by recounting some remarkable stories. This is a very specially tough one vouched for, as are the others, as "within the actual knowledge of the narrator":—

A few years ago I sailed from Liverpool for America on board the steamship *Imric*. Some days out we encountered a heavy gale, which damaged the ship to a considerable extent, but she proceeded on her voyage. I occupied a double state-room with a friend who has since died. The night after the storm I saw my wife, whom I left in the United States, come into the state room, and after hesitating at the sight of my friend, who occupied the upper berth, approach and kiss me. Then she went out. The next morning my friend said to me, "You are a pretty fellow, to have a lady come into your room and kiss you in that way." I asked for an explanation, and it turned out that he had seen the very thing that I had. On arrival in port I at once sought my wife, and one of the first things she said was, "Did you receive a visit from me a week ago?" "How could I?" I said. "Well," said she, "I thought you were in danger in the storm, and I walked over the dark water until I came to a low, black vessel. I went up the side and entered the cabin and leaned over you and kissed you. There was another man in the top berth." She accurately described the room and the ship, though she had never seen either.

This is, perhaps, a trifle more stringy and indigestible:—

Dr. Z. practised in a New England town and was one night awakened by a man who said that his wife was very ill and desired the doctor to see her. He stated that he lived in Mr. X.'s house. Dr. Z. followed his visitor, entered the house, and was taken into a chamber where on the bed lay a woman in the last stages of consumption. He told her husband, who had summoned him, that she could live but a short time, but prescribed some relieving medicine, leaving the prescription on the mantel. Then he went home promising to return the next day. True to his promise he returned the following morning, but was surprised to find the building fast closed. The man at work in the garden said that the house had not been occupied for years. The doctor, amazed, insisted on entering, and found unmistakable signs of desertion; the place was thick with dust and cobwebs. In the chamber he had visited all was dreary and dust covered. The bed had not been used for a long time, but on the mantel, where he had left it, the doctor found his prescription paper. It turned out that the former tenants of the house had left on account of alleged ghostly occupants.

The President stated that on account of lack of funds to successfully prosecute the work of the Society it would be impossible to maintain the organisation in its present

form any longer. Accordingly the Society voted to disband and immediately reorganised as an American branch of the English S. P. R.

This belongs more to what may be called the common order. It is a mere ordinary apparition:—

One day in February, 1888, I left St. Louis for Chicago on one of the connecting lines of railroad. I travelled with General Manager Hayes in a private car which had been built for and occupied by the deceased manager Colonel Talmage. I and Mr. Hayes talked for a while on a business scheme in which Colonel Talmage had been interested, and then I retired in a state room on the car. Soon after midnight I suddenly awoke, feeling a touch on my arm. There stood Colonel Talmage as he had been in life at the side of the berth. He greeted me pleasantly and asked me how I liked the bed. I replied that it was very comfortable. "It is the one on which I died," observed the ghost nonchalantly. He then informed me that the matter on which Hayes and I had been talking would turn out successfully. He also adverted to several private business transactions which have since been verified. At length he said he must be going, and disappeared toward the door. I am certain that I was wide awake at the time.

One of the points of chief interest in General Drayson's address is the link that it gives us between this and an older generation of Spiritualists. In the year 1856, to which date he takes us back, there was a wealth of facts open to observation. Home, Foster, Squire, the Marshalls and others offered them in profusion. There was very little discussion of recondite theories to account for them; the all-sufficient reason being that in those days Spiritualists had arrived at the conclusion that the theory of spiritual influences explained all the facts, and that no other theory would. I have never wavered from that belief and have repeatedly enunciated it. It is true that in those days there were not so many fine-spun theories to ponder over as are now provided for our bewilderment. I am far from thinking that the discussion should be limited. On the contrary, I have written much in favour of a candid attention to all reasonable propositions advanced to deal with facts. But I break off where facts are ignored or denied, and theories take their place. The golden mean lies between these opposite forms of thought. Mr. D. D. Home never liked to discuss anything that occurred at his séances. Some philosophers now deny that anything occurs at all at séances. Between those extremes wisdom dwells. Perhaps the scarcity of reliable mediums in the present day, to which General Drayson alludes, may have something to do with the tendency, in some quarters, to ignore our facts. These critics have not seen enough of them; and they have not made acquaintance with such as they have seen in a proper spirit. For it is easy for a person of determined will to stop all satisfactory manifestations. Such a man may spend laborious years in proving that in his presence nothing will occur. The true method is that of the Draysons, Halls, Howitts, and many others, who placed the facts of Spiritualism on an impregnable basis. To them the thanks of us all are due.

There is a passage in General Drayson's address which indicates the right method of procedure in so concise a way that I direct special attention to it by quotation :—

During the years 1857 and 1858 it was my good fortune to be one of a party of five or six who about once a week used to dine together for the purpose of investigating phenomena. No outsider was admitted on these special occasions. One of the number was a highly gifted medium. Manifestations of various kinds invariably occurred. A heavy dining-table would rise two or three feet from the ground, and away about as though floating on waves of water. The raps would, as it were, join in the conversation, and messages were given with reference to the subjects about which we were conversing. As we advanced from the condition of desiring powerful physical manifestations, and sought for those of a more intellectual class, we were instructed as regards many of the laws by which spiritual communication could be obtained. Also we were cautioned as to the danger of taking up such a subject merely from motives of curiosity, or from a love of wonder-mongering. More especially we were reminded that to attempt to make use of any knowledge or power we might gain for the purpose known as "worldly" would assuredly bring us trouble. I regret to say that one of those present did not act up to this teaching; and his prospects, which at that time were bright and promising, gradually changed, and he seemed to be influenced by some low agency, which caused him to endure much misery. The results which used to sometimes follow the introduction of even one stranger in this circle were remarkable. Instead of the usual manifestations occurring, little or nothing would take place. This, however, was the case when the stranger was one possessing a considerable amount of knowledge, but very little intelligence, and who wished to dictate the conditions by which results were to occur, and also exhibited a desire to order certain phenomena to take place, apparently quite unaware that he had himself adopted a course of action which prevented anything abnormal from taking place.

The best results I ever witnessed were got in a similar manner; and I shall not easily forget the peremptory manner in which our introduction, without permission, of a new sitter to our circle was resented. It seems to be forgotten that the addition of a fresh element changes the conditions and may vitiate all experiments.

The *Century* Midwinter number has a delightful paper on "Emerson's Talks with a College Boy," in which is admirably brought out the shrewd, genial wisdom of the great philosopher. "The most interesting writing is that which does not quite satisfy the reader; try to leave a little thinking for him." "Expression is the main fight. Search unweariedly for that which is exact. Know words etymologically. Pull them apart, see how they are made, and use them only where they fit. . . . Most fallacies are fallacies of language. Definition saves a deal of debate." To that end, most desirable in dealing with an obscure subject, this journal has strongly advocated the use of clear and exact definition and of words that express accurately the meaning of the writer. For instance, how many writers confuse *spiritual* with *spiritualistic*; or use Animal Magnetism, Mesmerism, and Hypnotism interchangeably. We are saddled now, I fear, with a number of words that are radically bad, but we need not add to them.

IDENTIFICATION.

A recent *New York Herald* contains an article on Adelaide Moore, who was a *protégée* of Adelaide Neilson. "Blue Eyes" was the pet name the latter used to her friend. An extract from the article is appended :—

Some time ago I met Dr. Slade, the Spiritualist, and had a strange experience. "There is someone standing behind you," said the medium, and he described Miss Neilson. "She has the same name as you"—my name is Adelaide, you know—"and she calls you her 'Blue Eyes.'" It was very strange but it did not convert me to Spiritualism.

A monthly journal of mystical interpretation entitled *Psyche* is to be issued on March 1st. It is to be on the lines of the *Perfect Way*, and the subscription is 7s. per annum.

REVIEWS.

A Buddhist Catechism. By SUBHADRA BHIKSHU. (George Redway, 1890.)

This is an exquisite little volume both in form and in substance. It is "compiled from the sacred writings of the Southern Buddhists," by a "Bhikshu" or vowed mendicant, or "elect," whose sincerity, learning, and accuracy may—to our personal knowledge—be accepted as a guarantee for the correct exposition of the doctrine and precepts of Buddhism according to the educated orthodoxy; and it claims to be the "first simple exposition, suited to the general intelligence, setting forth the sublime doctrine of the Buddha Gautama, not as though a system no longer active, but as a yet living source of pure truth, accessible still to all men athirst for spiritual knowledge, and abundant to satisfy that thirst." By this claim is meant nothing in derogation of the Catechism previously put forth by Colonel Olcott, the merits and success of which are fully acknowledged. But as that was originally intended only for the instruction of Singalese children, so this is intended for the highly-educated European reader, and contains, therefore, "in a compendious form, the essential doctrine of the teacher, stripped of the trappings with which the superstition and childish intelligence of Eastern peoples had, in the long course of ages, sought to adorn it." The author, however, admonishes "those who aspire to a fuller and completer knowledge, and who not only wish to become acquainted with the doctrine, but to carry it out in the life, to seek to make progress by their own meditations and by personal communion with those already in advance of them upon the way here pointed out." The appendix comprises a number of beautiful verses from the "Dhammapada," and some valuable notes, historical and expository. And both author and reader are to be congratulated on the admirable manner in which the translator has done his part. The English is a model for purity of style, clearness, simplicity, and dignity. E. M.

The Status of American Spiritualism. By J. J. MORSE. (Liverpool: The Progressive Literature Agency, 16, Stanley-street, Fairfield.)

Mr. J. J. Morse has given us a bird's-eye view of Spiritualism in America as it has revealed itself to him in the course of a four years' inspection. The pamphlet is an amplification of an address delivered to the members of the London Spiritualist Alliance on January 21st ult. Mr. Morse opens with a very true remark: "To understand American Spiritualism we must understand the American character." That is true of all men. Spiritualism finds a man out: it tells what stuff he is made of: it soon shows to what use he puts his knowledge. It may be to him a toy or a puzzle, a ground of disputation or a deep and abiding satisfaction: a solution of the great problem of life and an earnest of that life which is to come.

Now America is a big place, and the Americans are a big people; broad in their view, discursive somewhat, and not disposed to pin themselves down to details. Edison patents a hundred "notions" in a week; Englishmen turn them to working account. The type of the American intellect differentiates American Spiritualism. It is, as Mr. Morse puts it, "a comprehensive gospel, that embraces every current interest affecting human life." It is characterised by what we may call, without offence, a certain "spread eagleism" which gives it a flavour peculiar to itself. We do not here consult a medium as to the purchase of stocks and shares. We have no camp-meetings: perhaps climate is responsible for that.

Mr. Morse makes honourable mention of many of his fellow-workers on the platform—Mrs. Richmond, Mrs. Watson, Mrs. Brynes, Mrs. Hyzer, Mrs. Lillie, Mrs. Brigham. How the women come to the front in the new

country! He names Hudson Tuttle, Charles Dawbarn, and Clegg Wright among the less decorative division of humanity.

Journalism is estimated fairly. We always read our exchanges, and Mr. Morse's estimate is substantially just and true. In literature he notes what we remark here. Spiritualism has flooded the novel. Plots are based on its teachings and phenomena, and the first knowledge of it to a mass of people is derived from reading a work of fiction that deals with some phase of it. In the pulpit it has also taken its place. "The sermons of to-day are altogether Spiritualistic in tone and tendency." It is to be noted that, side by side with this permeation, popular Spiritualism in the States is, in Mr. Morse's opinion, disintegrating. Fads are rampant, and the quality of the old discourses is not maintained. He warmly endorses Mr. Bundy's plea for unity.

An Appendix gives some serviceable hints to inquirers.

A RECORD OF PRIVATE INVESTIGATIONS AND EXPERIENCES.

By ELIZA BOUCHER.

As the readers of "LIGHT" are in the habit of asking from time to time for authentic records of phenomena in private circles (of course, without the presence of any known medium), I have for some time been thinking that it might encourage others to try for themselves, and perhaps get *more* remarkable manifestations, if those who have been only *partially* successful would give expression to their experiences. Mine are *only* valuable from the fact of their having been evoked in spite of the absence of what would generally be considered "proper conditions" (the mingling of the sexes, &c.), that no known medium was present, and, lastly, that as far as possible the theory of imposture or delusion (at least at some of the sésances) was, practically speaking, as far as I could judge at the time, *logically impossible*.

My notes, which are *very* *ball*, were taken during the time the sésances were being held, and in the more remarkable and test cases written down the next day. Your readers must take them for what they are worth, and if one of them is encouraged to form a circle in consequence I shall neither have experimented nor written in vain.

In the beginning of the year 1886 I was with my little girl in lodgings in London. The mistress of the house was a well-educated and intelligent woman, to whom, after a while, I introduced the subject of Spiritualism, only to find that practically she knew nothing about the matter. I asked her if she and her daughter (a very young girl) would come to my room twice a week and sit with us at a little gipsy table for the purpose of evoking the phenomena. They accordingly came. The first sésance produced nothing, but at the second faint raps were heard, but not sufficiently decided to speak of with absolute certainty.

FEBRUARY 14TH.—I read in my records—We had a sésance. There can now, I think, be scarcely any doubt about the raps, especially as we tested the table afterwards in the light (we used to darken the room and shade the fire, so as much as possible to exclude all light), but we want to make perfectly sure.

MARCH 25TH.—I read—We now get the raps and though we have been very sceptical, and fearful of deceiving ourselves, there can be hardly any logical doubt as to their genuineness and reality, and we are trying to increase our circle and thus develop the power which is evidently in our midst. On this evening we were fortunate enough to get two members of a very highly developed mediumistic family to join us. This was the first time they had sat with us, yet raps came in various parts of the room, questions were answered by raps, and I was told my husband was present; raps also came under my daughter's feet on the claw of the table, and she felt the vibration distinctly, she being slightly deaf at the time.

APRIL 11TH.—Sésance as usual; no result. (It must be understood that except when mention is made to the contrary only the four belonging to the home circle were present.)

APRIL 23RD.—Most decided tips of table and raps also. I may remark that after a time (I cannot say date) we changed the small gipsy table for a large Queen Anne's, but the raps continued just the same.

MAY 12TH.—A remarkable test sésance; the power was not strong, but showed a desire that my daughter should ask questions, which she did; and afterwards, when the sésance had closed and we were sitting in an informal manner round the table, on her putting her hands on it the rapping commenced again, as if delighted at communicating with the child specially.

JUNE 10TH.—Last night we had our home circle as usual. We sat long with only raps and movements apparently about the room; at last raps came under the stool on which my daughter had placed her feet, then on the table, and an effort was made to rap in response to the alphabet.

JUNE 19TH.—We had a most remarkable sésance. This happened a day or two before we left our lodgings, and Mrs. G., the landlady, had felt a particular desire for some days for a sitting.

Instead of sitting as we sometimes do for nearly an hour, the manifestations commenced much earlier than usual. They consisted not merely of raps on the table, but of what sounded like *blows on the wall* from a muffled hammer, clear, distinct, and deliberate; changing then to the table. Beside this lights were seen close to myself, but these, as there was some slight light coming in through the window, we relegated to the region of doubtful, as we had at first done with the raps. We had a luminous cross on the table, and my daughter felt something touch her hand lightly, and on looking up saw a beautiful luminous hand which faded into the darkness before she could call attention to it.

In October we entered a house I had taken in Bedford Park, and here I determined to carry on my investigations. My household consisted only of my daughter, self, and one servant. We commenced late in the year 1886, and held our sésances in my bedroom, with a fire, and the lamp lowered. I do not know the date of our first sésance, but by January 11th we had got the raps. It must be understood that when these sésances were held *no human being was in the house except ourselves*.

We held these sittings pretty often, and on January 31st, 1887, had one as usual in my room, the house locked up for the night. After sitting and singing for about twenty minutes or so, raps came louder and far more definite than before, much like those we had had at the lodgings, *not on the table*, but out in the *floor of the room*, as if from the ceiling of the *drawing-room underneath*: soft but *clear* and *distinct*, and evidently guided by intelligence. After asking various questions, I put a test, and said to my husband, who purported to be communicating: "If it is really *you* give *five raps*." Clear and soft came the response, and five raps were immediately and distinctly given! I copy from notes taken the next day. Now comes the strange part of my experience, on which I should *very much* like opinions of yourself and readers.

From that time, though we sat over and over again under the same conditions, we have had no result worth recording.

I see by a note on MARCH 7TH:—

"Our usual sésance entirely blank. This makes the fifth out of eight sittings without result, and the raps at the other three were so faint and doubtful as to be hardly worth naming."

Of course it was impossible to go on time after time sitting for three-quarters of an hour for nothing, so the attempt was given up, and I see no record after March 25th, 1887.

Any light on this strange circumstance of the manifestations ceasing just as they had become most interesting and absorbing will be valued by me. I should also like to know whether the *electric* temperament is peculiar to *all* mediums, or whether it has been specially noticed in them.

5, Rue Belterre, Boulogne-sur-Mer.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

How to Mesmerise. By JAMES COATES, Editor of *Phrenological Annual*. (Glasgow: Hay, Nisbet and Co.)
White Cross Library. No. 47. "Faith: or, Being Led of the Spirit." (Price 15 cents.)

DR. ANNA KINGSFORD.—A service will be held on Saturday, February 22nd, at 3.30 p.m., in Steinway Hall, in commemoration of the Life and Labours of Anna Kingsford, on the second anniversary of her withdrawal from the earth-life. Mr. C. C. Massey will preside. The exercises will consist of instrumental music by Mr. Leslie Smith; singing by Madame Antoinette Sterling; and a lecture with illustrative readings from the Illuminations of Mrs. Kingsford, by George Chainey. Invitation cards can be had on application at the office of "LIGHT."

ON "EXPLORATION OF LIVES," OR JUDGMENTS
IN THE SPIRIT WORLD.

Amongst the many interesting and instructive experiences of spirit-life which I and some of my friends have been privileged to enjoy through the pure and beautifully expressive mediumship of the late Miss Godfrey, is the following very inadequate description of a proceeding which we were assured is of periodical occurrence in the spirit-world.

On Sunday, October 21st, 1888, the medium was entranced by a spirit and made to see and describe what was said to be passing before her, which she did with distinctness and great intensity of feeling and emphasis. It was too rapid for us to take it down *verbatim*; many sentences are, therefore, curtailed, and others lost altogether, and we were far from being able to do justice to the fervid and animated descriptions, with the reality of which we were very deeply impressed.

My chief object in offering this to you for publication in "LIGHT" is to inquire if any of your readers have had similar, or any experience of these periodical judgments, or "explorations of lives," as they were called by the communicating intelligences, and if they have, to ask them to favour your readers with some particulars.

I may mention that on the previous Sunday, to satisfy an investigation I had entered into respecting the early history of humanity upon the earth, my kind spirit friends and instructors had procured the attendance of a large concourse of ancient people from the earliest periods, including Chinese and other progenitors of the Egyptian race, down to the time when the Israelites migrated into Egypt, and their exit under Moses. Several of these interesting people controlled the medium, and with more or less facility, gave their own accounts of the times in which they lived. Many of this ancient group remained about us all the week in order to witness these judgments now to be described, and I had several conversations with them.

When the controlling spirits had fully entranced the medium, she exclaimed, "Oh, I am going a long way; there is a man on a horse to take me; I must go with him; we are trotting so fast down a long road. (This travelling on horseback we were told signified that she was to use her understanding.) I see a vast plain spread out; the centre of it is like a high hill, tier upon tier of seats; the judges are seated there, majestic, celestial angels, some in long white robes, some with crimson, some blue, some green, and various other colours, each denoting some quality or office. Down on the plain I see a place barred off from the rest, with a passage up to where the judges sit. There is a vast concourse of people around in the midst of the trees. Hark! a trumpet sounds, someone is coming! I see a crowd of people coming; a woman is in the midst rushing through, trying to get away from those who hold her; she is throwing away, piece by piece, most of her clothing. They say she murdered her husband; she cries out, 'It is not true, I never did it!' One of the judges commands, 'Peace, be still, let us see the evidence.' Look! a curious thing happens, a moving scene, something like a panorama, but more real and life-like, showing the incidents of the woman's life. As a little child she is seen with other children, cross and spiteful, kicking, striking and biting (the woman protests and says 'I didn't'); she is shown how the evil in her nature first took root when she might have checked or prevented it. The scene passes on to the time when she became a young woman; she is seen with a young man who is her lover; she marries him, they quarrel and she runs away; he follows and persuades her to return; she throws a bottle at him and he strikes her; she beats her child. The judge asks her why she did it? She replied, 'It was to spite him and I would do it again.' Then her husband is seen ill in bed; she has some medicine to give him; she pours it away and puts something like water in the glass; he becomes very ill; the doctor comes and gives him medicine; he shakes his head. She sees the man dead, and his spirit looking angry at her. The woman says she did not kill him, he died of his ailments; she stamps angrily. A number of others are brought forward and are accused of inciting her to evil courses. Oh, such a lovely beautiful angel comes and pleads for her; she says to the judges, 'Give her to me, I have been striving for her ever since she was a child.' She embraces the woman and tries to persuade her, but she refuses to go with her and pushes her away, saying 'You are always worrying me.' The judge admonishes her, and at length she consents to go with the angel. The judge says, 'Another opportunity is given you, take it while you may, another time you will not be able.' He com-

mands to take the evil spirits who tempted her, and bind them to keep them away from her. This woman is said to have been explored before.

"There is another crowd coming, with a man struggling and trying to escape; they hold him very fast. I see an old woman weeping bitterly, saying, 'Oh, my son! my son!' They put him on the stand, and call for the scenes to pass. I see him a boy with a bag of books playing truant. He fights with other boys in a large town. He and others are stealing from a shop. He is in a house where the woman is on her bed, who said, 'My son! my son!' He robs her of her money. I see him go and take the money from her room; she sits down and cries. A man comes in and is angry with her; he takes his hat and stick and goes after the boy; she prays him not to go. I see the boy with gipsies snaring game and poaching, a man with a gun running after them; the boy is shot in the leg. I see him in prison chained, chipping stones, with a lot of other ill-looking men. He gets harder, more and more wicked, with evil ones all around. I see him getting over a wall, running away. Now on board a ship, still evil spirits around. They have killed two officers, and they get away in a boat. Oh, the ship is sinking! They get to a beautiful island and live there; everything seems to flourish and grow well, but the men are so evil-looking and bad—seven of them. Oh, such a storm! Five or six trees struck with lightning; that lad and another only left. Their boat is gone. Evil spirits comfort them and show them how to get their living by snaring birds. Two or three years pass there. They look very fierce. At length a ship takes them away. He is a man now; so sullen-looking and evil. (The man recognises the pictures and laughs.) He returns to the old home where his mother lives; she is so pleased to see him again. He works in her garden. Other men come with evil spirits; they talk and laugh and drink. They come again with a dead pheasant. The mother does not like to eat the game, but they make her. They bring in several things and a big silk purse with money. They say they found it, but she knows better. Her son has blood stains on his hands and on the purse. He is terrified with dreams. The exploring angel asks, 'What have you to say to this? Are you not sorry?' He says, 'No; I would do it again.' The angel blames the mother for bad training. The man is urged to repent. He replies, 'I was told there is no repentance beyond the grave.' The angel tells him, 'There is repentance if you pray.' He is ordered to be taken away to be taught. His mother pleads to be allowed to go with him. They tell her she cannot live where he is going. She says she must go, even if it is to hell fire. They will not let her go until he repents. They take him away, restrained by chains; they say, being a murderer, he must be chained."

The next case being unsuitable for us, we were invited to ask questions while it was passing. It was said they are often given many chances of repentance and reformation before they are quite given up as hopeless.

"See! the next case is now ready, there is a movement. There are two girls coming now, quite girls, they don't look twenty. They look around so startled at the people. One says, 'What does all this mean?' There are beautiful angels with them. The judges say, 'We have come to see what you have done with the life God has given you. You had a good mother. She taught you to pray. You joined bad girls willingly, and went with them; now you must see the folly. Still there is hope if you repent.' One of the girls laughs and says, 'Hope! hope! how can there be hope when I am dead, dead, dead? The parson said there is no repentance beyond the grave.' The angels plead with them and urge them to repent. A judge asks, 'Must we explore your lives, or will you try to do better?' One says, 'I will try if you will show me how, but it was the other's fault.' This one is willing to leave her companions, but the other is sullen, and says she does not see it is of any use to try. Two bad spirits come to claim them as their own; bright spirits come also to oppose. The girls are called upon to decide which they will go with. One consents to go with the good angels, but the other hesitates, and is sullen; she allows herself to be taken away with some reluctance by the evil ones.

"A man in the crowd speaks, and gives his own experience.

"Another man pushes forward and claims to be judged.

"Another comes cursing and swearing, but a bright young man appears and embraces him; he relents and cries, and is led away by the youth, assisted by other bright spirits, without being explored.

"An old woman is brought in; she seems half amused, and looks curiously around. The scene of her life commences like a long road. She begins by stealing and deceiving. She opens the door of a house invitingly; people go in clean and come out soiled; twenty or thirty young men and women come out of the house to the platform, and as they pass the woman they spit at her, all crying, cursing, and swearing. The woman has a horrible look. A judge exclaims, 'Woman, look at your work; are you not ready to be given to the tormentors?' She shrinks from the scenes, and cries, 'Cover me up, let me go.' The woman has many bundles about her, which represent the evils of her life; they are opened, and the judges lecture her upon her many evil deeds. She screams and is frantic. The judge says, 'Take her away; let her be kept safe forty years, perchance she may repent; if any will pray for her let them pray. Let her pray for herself.' She laughs wildly, bites and shrieks as they take her away. What a horrid creature!

"A curious looking man is now brought forward. He stands perfectly silent, staring around. A white angel asks what is against him. A man comes forward and says, 'I accuse him of doing that which brought me to the gallows.' A judge asks him why he went with him. The man declares he could not help it. The angel shows him that he could have resisted, but was fond of pleasure and yielded, knowing it was wrong; therefore why accuse him. In the scenes of his life which are passing I see gambling, betting, race-courses, public-houses, swearing, and drinking. That man is always in the midst. The man says, 'What of that? It was my own money I spent.' The angel replies, 'No, it was not; you did not get it honestly, but by cheating; see that horse, you lamed it to prevent it winning a race.' He says, 'How do you know? No one saw it.' The angel points out the act in the scene of his life. It made the owner of the horse blow his brains out. He protests, 'I did not do it.' He is held responsible, however, and lectured soundly, showing the dangerous nature of gambling both to winner and loser; he is shown the sad consequences to his wife and children. The attendants ask what shall be done with him. The judge says, 'Take him away into safe keeping forty years; let him not go back to earth to obsess others until all with whom he is in sympathy are gone over.' They take him away and make room for the next case.

"Oh! there is a horrid looking man now coming, a murderer; a lot of horrid spirits with him. The early part of his life-scenes pass quickly. He fights with other boys. He is passionate and revengeful. I see him as a man fighting and drinking. He and another man follow a girl on a road; they speak to her, she goes with the other man. I see them going to a church to be married. This man is watching them from behind a hedge; he springs out and stabs the other man in the back. He pitches the body down a lime-pit where smoke is rising up. The woman cries; he tries to pacify her, and wants to marry her; she turns away, but he finally forces her to marry him. He gets old, and cannot help frequently walking round that pit, where he sees the spirit of the murdered man. The murderer is ill and in bed; he sees the spirit of the man and cries to be taken away; he shrieks and dies a terrible death. He has a great pack with him, which an angel opens, and exposes an effigy of the murdered man with the knife. He cries, 'It is true, take it away!' The angel replies, 'No, it cannot be taken away from you. You had the audacity to force the woman whose lover you murdered to marry you, by telling her lies; she is now at peace, living with her murdered lover and his counterpart, who all pray for you.' He is furious with hate and jealousy. He is ordered to be taken away to give him time to repent. There is hope that the prayers may be effective to that end; but no one on earth prays for him.

"Another man is now brought forward, and is standing up as his life-scenes pass. It seems as if he was always doing mischief. I see houses falling down, ships sinking. If he looks at a ship it sinks. If he puts his hand on a house it falls. I see people under the ruins; they curse the hour they saw him. He is a speculator, putting forward false and ruinous schemes, which brought thousands to ruin. The scenes of ruin are symbolical. He still holds his head up. The exploring angel says, 'Seest thou the harm thou hast done?' He denies it; says he meant well, and gained very little himself; the people were cowards, stopping short before success was achieved. His excuses are shown to be false. I see five or six demons leading him on to speculations. Several people come to him well clothed and rich, but they go away in rags. He only says, 'I did my best.'

The attendants ask what shall be done with him. His clothing presents a number of black bars. They are commanded to take him back to earth, that he may see the effects of the evil he has wrought. He is told, 'Pray to God for help to enable you to work to remove those black bars from your breast, then come back to us.' Those bars represent the misery he has brought upon others, which he must try to counteract."

The time at our disposal, about two hours, having now expired, the medium was brought out of the trance. We were told that these trials had been going on for several days, and would continue for about a fortnight of our time. They occur regularly at certain periods. A large number of spirits of all sorts are present, either as witnesses, from curiosity or for instruction, or taking part in the proceedings. They say everyone is explored from time to time, but only the most wicked and incorrigible are exposed in this public way. Most persons are dealt with privately, in the most considerate and affectionate manner, but are sooner or later made to see and confess the errors of their lives, and have work appointed them to do corresponding to the nature of their sins. Those who are yielding and repentant are graciously and lovingly helped by angels always ready and anxious to undertake such work. It was explained that these public explorations were not to be regarded as the *final judgment*. We were to understand that there is to be a final judgment, but no information was given us upon that subject. The prisoners at these trials have many of them been explored before, and they are often brought up many times, according to the particular circumstances. One object appears to be that they may be bound or restrained from doing injury to others, whether in the heavens or the earth, by obsession or infestation. But these explorations often prove to be the beginning of repentance and reformation to many poor wretches who before had no hope or desire for such a thing. The false teaching in the Churches respecting the future life, and repentance after death, has a great influence in retarding the reformation of those who have led sinful lives.

Shirley House, Maidstone.

THOMAS GRANT.

REV. H. R. HAWEIS ON JOHN STUART MILL'S THREE
ESSAYS ON RELIGION.

We shall publish a sermon delivered at the Church of St. James, Marylebone, to crowded congregations on the above subject, as soon as the shorthand writer's transcript comes into our hands. It is of extreme interest. A large extra number of copies will be published, but it is well to order early, as, on the last occasion when we printed a sermon of Mr. Haweis', the whole edition was sold out at once. In ordering it should be specified that the number containing Mr. Haweis' sermon is wanted.

AN APOLOGUE.

It was a goodly Apple,
The topmost on the Tree,
That golden grew, and sweet all through,
As Fruit that few could see.

Soft in God's smile it glistened,
A Crown that might be given
To man, if he would soar and win
The Woman nighest Heaven.

Ah! many sighed with longing,
To see the fruitage drop,
But no one climbed to gather it
From off the tall tree-top!

And many ran for Apples
That were rolled along the sod;
But this, which did but tempt toward Heaven,
Was left alone for God.

GERALD MASSEY, in *My Lyric Life*.

MISS LOTTIE FOWLER is changing her place of residence. Her new address will be given in our next issue.

Psychic Studies (January, 1890) is concerned with advice to mediums and investigators. The advice is sound and good. An appendix contains the "Advice to Inquirers" published in "LIGHT." The pamphlet lies on the table at 2, Duke-street, and may be profitably consulted.

COPE'S dainty booklets are so pretty and so well got up, that they must be serviceable to his purpose. James Thomson's contributions are collected in a form that gives some idea of the versatile contribution to Cope's serial of the author of *The City of Dreadful Night*. As a trade advertisement, which it was, James Thomson made the *Tobacco Plant* unique

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
2, DUKE STREET,
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Light :

EDITED BY 'M. A. (OXON.)'

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15th, 1890.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to the Editor.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE
ASSEMBLY.

On Tuesday evening last, General Drayson delivered an address on some of his "Early Experiences," which we reproduce in full as matter alike valuable and interesting.

Among members and their friends who were present we noticed :—

Mr. A. Alexander, Mr. D. Archer, Mr. T. Blyton, Mr. Bulwer, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Carden, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Collingwood, Mr. and Mrs. Davis (Rio Janeiro), Mrs. T. Everitt, Mrs. and Miss T. H. Edmonds, the Hon. Mrs. Forbes, Mr. S. Grove, Miss Marie Gifford, Major Jebb, Mrs. E. M. James, Mr. W. Stainton Moses, Mr. J. H. Mitchiner, Mr. C. C. Massey, Mrs. Maltby, Mrs. F. A. Moulton, Mr. Edward Maitland, Dr. T. C. Marsh, Sir Chas. Nicholson, Bart., Mr. W. Paice, Mr. R. Parga, Mr. A. Pritchard, the Countess de Panama, Mr. Paul Preys, Mr. C. Pearson, Mr., Mrs., and Miss Dawson Rogers, Mrs. and Miss Rogers (Blackheath), Miss Spencer, Madame von Slaphen, Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Stack, Mrs. Morell Theobald, Miss Rowan Vincent, Mr. H. Withall, Dr. G. Wyld, Mrs. Barton Wright, &c., &c.

The following is the text of the General's address :—

SOME EARLY EXPERIENCES.

Going back thirty-four years, to the date 1856, or more than one-third of a century, many of the experiences I then had are as fresh in my memory as though they had occurred during last week. Owing to the numerous changes to which one is subjected in a military career, it is difficult to keep all one's memoranda and diaries, some are lost and others destroyed; consequently such details as the exact dates, and the exact persons who were present on a given occasion, may be slightly in error. Such defects would, according to the theory and system of investigation adopted by some societies, entirely vitiate the value of the general outline of that which was stated to have occurred. According to this system of inquiry, if an event, such for example as a total eclipse of the sun, was said to have been observed on the 10th of a month, and various details of that which occurred were related, and it turned out that the eclipse did not take place on the 10th but on the 11th, then a learned society, more anxious to detect flaws than to arrive at truth, would reject the account of the details as quite unreliable, in consequence of the date being incorrectly given. This system of so-called "Research" has been very extensively practised within the past few years, and seems to be considered by its advocates to be a proof of a very high order of scientific intelligence; whereas it is an exhibition of feeble mental power which can grasp only minute details, but is incapable of dealing with their facts and inferences.

In too many instances, I regret to say, I cannot give the exact dates when the various facts to which I refer did take place, but I trust that this defect will not be considered of vital importance.

It is difficult in the present day for those who hear, read of, or see certain mysterious phenomena termed spiritual to understand the startling effect which similar and, as far as I can gather, more powerful effects produced in those whom I may term the early pioneers in the investigation of these matters. Now, there are few persons who have not heard of such occurrences, and we hear and read of certain things occurring which many persons refer to as well known which, had an eye-witness stated thirty years ago that he had seen, would have been sufficient evidence for several learned doctors to give a certificate of his insanity.

To those who had been trained in the cast-iron theories of dogmatic science, and who were assured that all the laws of nature were thoroughly known, it was an actual shock to suddenly find these so-called laws apparently set at defiance.

I was present at the first séance at which Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, William and Mary Howitt, Robert Chambers, Robert Stephenson, and several others first witnessed some of the phenomena with which they afterwards became familiar; and I remember Robert Chambers saying, when he saw a table, some six feet long and four feet broad, rise in the air and respond to signals, "I have to give up the teaching of forty years in forty minutes, and it is a terrible wrench."

The first impression produced by seeing objects move without contact, and to apparently become intelligent, moving as requested, and by signals giving messages, was that there was no limit to the wonders that might occur. Further investigation, however, proved that these phenomena were amenable to certain laws, and the slightest disturbing cause might break the conditions necessary to produce the effects.

It was very early in my experiences that this fact was established, and there is no doubt that many of the failures to obtain satisfactory tests and results have been entirely due to some of the persons present either wilfully, or in consequence of ignorance, breaking the laws which must be obeyed in order to obtain phenomena.

The following examples may tend to show the delicacy (as it may be termed) of the conditions, and also how easily these may be damaged. It is not out of place in the present day to refer to these, because sometimes when people have advanced very far in any subject, and are arguing and disputing about very trifling differences, they are apt to forget or overlook first principles.

One evening I was the guest of the late Field Marshal Sir W. Gomm; about twelve formed the party; among these was Mr. D. Home. Immediately after dinner, when the servants had left the room, the table and the chairs, in which we had been sitting, began to vibrate as though an earthquake were taking place. Several raps were given on various parts of the table and a message was being given by the alphabet. Suddenly a chair that was at the far end of the room moved rapidly towards the table at which we were seated. A lady observing this pointed at the chair and exclaimed, "Look!" The chair, which had moved about 10ft., remained stationary, the vibrations and raps ceased, and nothing further occurred during the evening.

Persons who are unacquainted with the subtlety of the laws which regulate these phenomena too often prevent or stop their occurrence. One of the most detrimental and, at the same time, most common proceedings is for two or three persons to request one after the other that some different proofs or tests should be given. Séances that commenced with every prospect of most satisfactory results I have seen turn out failures from these causes. "Wait patiently and ask for nothing" is the better plan, and the chances are that a proof will be given far more convincing and satisfactory than any that were likely to be asked for. One or two examples of this fact may be given.

The late William Howitt, when residing at West Hill, Highgate, wrote asking me to come to him and stop the night, as Mr. Foster, an American, was coming, and was said to be a medium, and he wanted me to test him.

I asked William Howitt not to mention my name or profession to Foster, and to give him no hint about me. Soon after Foster had entered the house we assembled round a table, I taking a seat next to him. I had thought of one or two tests that I would put to him, but at length decided to remain passive and to watch what occurred and then to reason on the facts.

After a short time Foster turned to me and said : " A friend of yours is here and wishes to communicate with you."

I merely nodded.

Foster then bared his arm and said, " His initials will appear in red on my arm." Almost immediately two letters more than an inch in length and of a bright red colour appeared on his arm. On seeing these letters I had not the slightest idea to whom they referred, and I told Foster so. Foster then took up a pencil and wrote the Christian and surname in full, and I recognised these as belonging to a brother officer and old friend (to whom I shall again refer). I then asked what this individual had to communicate. Foster told me that the individual had died not long previously, and named a station in Northern India where he had died. I now thought I had a clear case against Foster, as I remembered that the last I had heard of this friend was that he was about to embark at Calcutta on his voyage home to England. It was some weeks after my meeting with Foster (the telegraph to India not then being in existence) that I learned that my friend had been too ill to stand the journey to Calcutta, and had died at the station named by Foster some forty-eight hours or so before the meeting at Mr. Howitt's.

On another occasion I was present at the house of a friend in Cavendish-square, Mrs. Marshall, jun., being the medium. My friend had never seen any manifestations, and disbelieved that any could occur. He told me that the test that would alone convince him was the raising of a heavy iron table with our fingers just resting on it. I suggested to him not to demand a test but to wait and observe what came. Mrs. Marshall, however, suggested sitting at this iron table, and raps (very loud) shortly took place. A message was then spelt out, and this proved to be one from a child of my friend, who had been dead many years and of whom I had never before heard. The pet name of this child was spelt out. This convinced my friend there was " something in it," and when afterwards the table did rise with only our fingers on it, he stated that the message, not the table rising, had convinced him.

In an address given before the London Spiritualist Alliance, on October 23rd, 1884, I gave an account of a communication given me by a brother officer whom at the time I believed to be alive; the singular details of his death (afterwards proved to be correct) I consider as remarkable as any in my early experiences. The following I also consider a somewhat interesting experience :—

A gentleman well known in the literary world was desirous of investigating whether there really was anything in Spiritualism, and adopted the following original proceedings. He arranged that I was to secure the services of Mrs. Marshall, jun., on a particular evening. I was not to mention his name, but at a particular hour I, with Mrs. Marshall, was to meet him on the south side of Temple Bar. We met at the hour and place named, and the gentleman led the way into the Temple, entered one of the houses, and ascended to one of the top rooms, in which were three or four chairs and a table. We immediately seated ourselves at this table, and in a few minutes the table and room began to tremble in a manner that I knew to be the usual beginning of good phenomena. By means of raps and the alphabet " Ask questions " was spelt out.

The gentleman whom I will term E. said :—

E. : *What have I in my pocket ?*

Answer by raps.—A sermon.

E. : *What is the text of this sermon ?*

The whole text was then spelt out.

E. : *What is your name ?*

The name was given in full.

E. : *Can you give me the test ?*

" Put pencil and paper under the table."

We very soon heard the pencil scratching on the paper, then three loud raps were given on the table. I then asked that if anything had been written on the paper the words might be spelt out by raps before we took the paper up. A name was spelt by raps, and my friend then took up the paper, on which was written in Hindustani characters the name which had been spelt out. This name was the test that my friend had asked for, the intelligence communicating being that of a friend, dead many years, who during his life had agreed to give this if communication were possible.

In referring to some of these early experiences, I wish to call attention to the fact that after various tests of the truth of spirit communication had by hundreds of other examples been established, it was desired to obtain some knowledge of the laws by

which these communications were governed. That the power to so communicate is the exception, not the rule, is the fault or misfortune not of the next state of existence, but of our present condition and mode of life. It is apparently impossible to make a blind person see or a deaf person hear; and the majority of the human race are, as regards spiritual matters, both blind and deaf. The whole of our education and training is such as to subdue that which is purely spiritual and to cultivate that which is material. The main object of the majority of the human race is to gain material wealth or rank. The desire and perpetual scramble for these tend to deaden those powers by the cultivation of which spiritual things might be made known to us.

There appears to be great danger in obtaining a knowledge of certain elementary means of spiritual communication, unless we at the same time develop the whole of our triune nature. I could give examples by the score which prove this to be true. I have known men and women who have had opportunities of seeing things which for the time being have convinced them of the fact of spirit-communication. They have apparently not realised the importance of this discovery. They have failed to perceive that no science which the world has ever had made known is equal in importance to that of establishing on a firm, experimental basis the existence of an individual in his identity after the change termed death. They do not seem to comprehend that whilst here we build up our own future; that we start in our next condition where we left off here; that in the future we have to undo the evil and injustice we may have committed whilst embodied on earth. Having found it to be a truth that spirit-communication exists, they sometimes either forget this or endeavour to make use of it for selfish and worldly purposes. The results have been almost without an exception the same. Such persons have suffered; they have opened the door to an unknown power; they have not been true to their higher selves; and ruined prospects and ill-health, due more to a spiritual than to a bodily sickness, have been their fate. It is better to always lead the life of the lower animals than to take up for a time the higher spiritual life, and then to return to that of the low material selfish existence. It is an absolute duty for those who take up these spiritual matters to use their best endeavours to also cultivate their reason. This can be accomplished more easily than is usually supposed. Many savages are more capable of reasoning than are the dogmatic so-called scientists. There is nothing which in late years has exhibited so completely the utter incapacity to reason of certain classes of minds as the facts connected with the phenomena of Spiritualism. When, in years to come, the fact of the possibility of spirit communion becomes recognised, and as certain as the powers of the electric telegraph, the men of reason at that date will find it difficult to believe that some of those men who have during the past thirty years been spoken of as scientific authorities could have exhibited a stupidity in connection with these subjects which would have been discreditable in a clodhopper. A table without even material contact rises in the air. A chair and other objects are carried by unknown means from one end of the room to the other end. A lamp which is flaring, and at a distance from any human being, is by request turned down without the aid of any apparent human agency. Unconscious pressure, says the so-called scientific authority, fully explains all this. A message is rapped out conveying the intelligence of the death of a friend in India or in China, or the text of a sermon concealed in the pocket of a sceptical inquirer. Cracking of the toe joints, says the authority, fully explains all these phenomena. When we read in a leading London journal a statement that Mr. D. Home was a clever young conjurer whose tricks are now well known and shown by professional conjurers, we, who have seen the grotesque imitations put forward as identical, ought to realise that we are still living in the dark ages. To a barbarian there would be apparently no difference between the banging of a piano with a pillow and a symphony played by a musician; and to the common mind there is, apparently, no difference between the tricks of a conjurer and the phenomena which took place in the presence of D. D. Home, Mrs. Marshall, Foster, Squire, and many others.

When we find persons asserting that the two are the same it is as useless to discuss such subjects with them as it would be to argue on harmony with those who cannot distinguish between noise and music. There are persons more reasonable than those authorities whose assertions have been quoted who inquire why, if it be a fact that spiritual communication is possible, is not

some grand manifestation given? Why should such trifling things be done as moving about tables and chairs, &c.? It is doubtful whether there is such a thing as a trifle when this trifle sets at defiance the supposed immutable laws of Nature, which certain persons claim to know all about. Surely it is no trifle to have proved, even by a table moving, or by noises on the table, that man has an existence after death, and retains his individuality and does not at once become a being with a head and a pair of feathery wings. Even looking at the question from what may be termed a business point of view, it is no trifling knowledge to have gained to be assured of the fact that it is not our belief or non-belief in certain dogmas and forms of so-called religion which causes us to attain a high position in our next state of existence, but the devotion of our thoughts and works to acquiring a knowledge of and practising that which is true and just. It really seems that, given the conditions, grand manifestations can and have been presented to us, but how rarely these conditions are complied with.

During the years 1857 and 1858 it was my good fortune to be one of a party of five or six who about once a week used to dine together for the purpose of investigating phenomena. No outsider was admitted on these special occasions. One of the number was a highly gifted medium. Manifestations of various kinds invariably occurred. A heavy dining-table would rise two or three feet from the ground, and sway about as though floating on waves of water. The raps would, as it were, join in the conversation, and messages were given with reference to the subjects about which we were conversing. As we advanced from the condition of desiring powerful physical manifestations, and sought for those of a more intellectual class, we were instructed as regards many of the laws by which spiritual communication could be obtained. Also we were cautioned as to the danger of taking up such a subject merely from motives of curiosity, or from a love of wonder-mongering. More especially we were reminded that to attempt to make use of any knowledge or power we might gain for the purpose known as "worldly" would assuredly bring us trouble. I regret to say that one of those present did not act up to this teaching, and his prospects, which at that time were bright and promising, gradually changed, and he seemed to be influenced by some low agency, which caused him to endure much misery.

The results which used to sometimes follow the introduction of even one stranger to this circle were remarkable. Instead of the usual manifestations occurring, little or nothing would take place. This, however, was the case when the stranger was one possessing a considerable amount of knowledge, but very little intelligence, and who wished to dictate the conditions by which results were to occur, and also exhibited a desire to order certain phenomena to take place, apparently quite unaware that he had himself adopted a course of action which prevented anything abnormal from taking place. On one occasion, at a very large house at Kensington, I was sitting with Mr. Home and two gentlemen, when Home asked me to lend him a pencil. I had in my pocket a common lead pencil, about six inches in length. Home took this pencil between the finger and thumb of his left hand, rested his elbow on the table, and asked me to grasp his wrist. I did so, and soon felt a sharp shock, as though given by an electric battery. The pencil had disappeared, and I heard something fall in a third room, there being an intermediate room between that in which we were sitting and the room in which the something had fallen. I went into the third room and found my pencil, the point having been broken by the force with which it had struck the wall of the distant room. It was thirty paces from where we were sitting to the wall against which the pencil had struck. I then tried to throw the pencil to the same distance, but could not fling it more than half way, as two arches separated the first from the third room. The velocity with which the pencil travelled must have been very great, as the trajectory must have been low, in order that the pencil should pass through the two arches and strike the distant wall. And I was holding Home's wrist when the pencil left his fingers. To me this was a singularly interesting phenomenon, as I am tolerably well acquainted with the curve which a projectile traces in its course through the air.

It was during the early part of 1857 that the Indian Mutiny broke out. On June 20th I was at the house of a friend at Woolwich, a Lieut.-Colonel in the Royal Artillery, from whom came the communication the first night I met Foster. At my friend's house the lady was staying who was the medium at our sésances at Blackheath. On that day this lady stated that she

had received a communication to the effect that the Colonel would very soon proceed to India. Both he and I assured her there must be a mistake, as the Royal Artillery never went to India, the East India Company's Artillery then occupying India. The lady, however, persisted that she was certain of it. On June 30th orders came for the Colonel to hold himself in readiness to proceed to India; and a few days afterwards he embarked. On his leaving, the lady told me he would not return, that he would distinguish himself, would be of great service, but would die in India. Each event occurred as she stated. At the dates to which I refer we could count on the fingers of our two hands those persons who knew as a fact that spirit communication was possible. Now such persons in England alone number hundreds of thousands. It is, however, very doubtful whether with the quantity we have gained in the quality. In the circle to which I refer the whole of the messages and teaching were of a pure and elevating character. It was impressed upon us that the facts given were mainly for the purpose of opposing the material tendency of the age, and to prove that there was another life beyond this on earth. In the present day many sésances are held for the sole purpose of producing wonder and astonishment; the most silly questions are asked, and, consequently, silly answers are too often given; like attracts like, and as it appears to be a law that the more material spirits can communicate more easily than those of a higher order, the public medium and the public sésance is a phase of the subject usually to be condemned.

Another form of the subject at present which is not satisfactory is the readiness with which certain persons, whose experience is limited, set themselves up as Popes, dictating as to what is and what is not true, arguing illogically, and sometimes squabbling about theories which it seems impossible to prove one way or the other, the desire too often being not to approximate to truth but to prove their views are correct. The fact of spiritual communication is a boon to those who can realise it, but in modern times it has been used as a money-making business, and has consequently induced impostors to imitate the reality. The outside public, with that incapacity to reason so commonly found with the masses, does not trouble itself to inquire or discriminate between the real and the imitation, and consequently assumes that the whole subject is something dreadful, if there be any truth in it at all. Thus, the present condition is not as satisfactory as it might be, not from any fault in the law itself, but owing to the proceedings of many of those persons who have taken up the matter from other motives than those which should have influenced them. In more than one instance, public mediums seem to have come under the lowest influences, and to have lost control over themselves, a result to be expected, when we find that these persons have used their gifts merely for money-making purposes, and have been subjected to the influences of persons who have attended their sésances merely out of curiosity, or to endeavour to themselves play tricks. A person possessing mediumistic powers is not necessarily highly intellectual nor conscientious, any more than is a person gifted with a fine tenor voice, or any other rare attribute. It becomes, therefore, a duty on the part of those who have to do with those possessing mediumistic gifts to aid the development of their powers, instead of placing every conceivable obstruction in their way.

From long experience I am usually disposed to conclude, when I hear that mediums whose powers I have tested have been discovered in fraud, that the fraud has been committed by those who claim to have exposed the medium. I remember on one occasion, when Mrs. Marshall was sitting at a certain house in London, some young ladies kept kicking the table to attempt to imitate the raps. Suddenly one of these accused Mrs. Marshall of kicking her, and the sésance was broken up. I asked Mrs. Marshall if it were true that she had kicked the lady, and she at once admitted it, saying she had seen this kicking of the table, and an irresistible influence came upon her which she could not control to kick the young lady. In the early days to which I refer it was a very serious question to consider whether to admit a belief in or to even mention the subject of what was termed "spirit-rapping." The manner in which a belief in this subject was usually received was with shouts of derision, and not uncommonly with personal abuse. Fools, impostors, and lunatics were the words used as arguments against those who had, after months of the most careful investigation, been driven to the conclusion that the facts proved spirit communication to be a truth. Fortunately, perhaps for myself, I

had previously passed through a similar experience. Such terms, assumed to be arguments, had been employed against me by the Dutch Boers, when I had told them of the electric telegraph. The result consequently was that I did not doubt the facts either of the telegraph or of spiritual communication. They were equally established in my experience, but I did not estimate very highly the intellectual capacity of those who, without evidence, of which I possessed a quantity, loudly proclaimed their conviction of the impossibility of what I knew to be true. In the present day there seems to be a scarcity of reliable physical mediums; why, I cannot tell, and I do not care to theorise. Another wave of this power may come, but that the force which did act some thirty or forty years ago has not been in vain is proved by the believers in the fact being now counted by millions. That there are hundreds of persons who, in spite of abuse, ridicule, pecuniary loss, and the sneers of the conventionally respectable, are yet not deterred from stating what they know to be true, may be fairly accepted as a proof of their sincerity. That among these we have men and women of the highest social position, and of the clearest intellect, calmly relating the facts with which they are acquainted, is a fact that precludes us from putting down all of them as fools or impostors. On the other side we have persons who have never witnessed any phenomena, who may have attended one or two sances, who have failed to comply with the most simple conditions, which they were told by the experienced were essential to success, and who, consequently, have themselves prevented results from occurring, setting forth their opinions and theories as infallible, and asserting that all those who did not agree with them were idiots. When we find the discriminating powers so feeble as to fail to perceive the difference between the tricks of a conjurer and those phenomena which occur with a medium, we are not likely to respect the opinions of those who are thus feebly endowed. When also we find even a society, which will claim the failure to dot an *i* or cross a *t*, or will assert that persons who wink both eyes at once are incompetent and unreliable witnesses of phenomena, but which will put forward prominently the vague statements of fraud, asserted by a drunken and unprincipled medium, as an utter refutation that any real phenomena ever occurred, we cannot fail to come to the conclusion that some of these self-elected judges may be looked at much as the experienced lawyer looked upon certain juries, when he said, "If I am guilty let me be tried by a jury, but if I am innocent, and am tried by them, then God help me!"

During the first four years that I investigated these phenomena, I attended upwards of 300 sances, the mediums present being either D. Home, Squire, Foster, Mrs. Marshall, or others. Many of these sances took place either in my own house or in those of intimate friends. I listened willingly to the theories invented by outsiders to account for the facts, but their theories I found in nearly every case so ridiculously stupid that after some time it tried one's patience to hear really sane men making such feeble guesses. Since those early days I have heard and read the theories which have been put forward as explanations of the facts and phenomena. It has been gravely stated by profound gentlemen that involuntary pressure, delusion, biology, trickery, thought-reading, cracking toe-joints, machinery, conjuring, &c., &c., would explain everything that has ever occurred. Put all these together and they will not explain one-hundredth part of what I have witnessed. *The theory of spiritual influences and communication will explain them all*; and until some other theory is invented which will better explain the fact, this theory must hold its own with reasoning men, in spite of the jeers of those who have never witnessed any of the phenomena or tested them.

There is no doubt that those persons who in the present day put themselves forward to condemn what is called Spiritualism mean well; their defect is that they don't know. These opponents are of two very different classes. First, the down-right materialist, who denies a God, denies a second existence to man, and claims that he knows all the laws of nature. To him it would be a fearful thing to be compelled to admit any one of the phenomena of Spiritualism, as it would prove him to be utterly wrong. He therefore denies the facts, refuses to examine, or, if he does examine, undertakes his investigation fully determined to prove that his preconceived opinion is correct. What more powerful proof than spirit communication can be produced to demonstrate that the materialist is in error?

The other class of opponents (worth answering) are those who from an imperfect knowledge of the communications admit that

communications are possible, but allege that all come from demons or evil sources. The judgment of these latter objectors has been formed, not from an accurate knowledge of the facts, but too often from two or three cases, where unprincipled mediums or persons have dealt with subjects above them. If a father, mother, near relative, or dear friend who dies gives a message teeming with love for those left on earth, impressing on these the necessity of leading a pure life, of searching for truth, and bearing with patience the trials to which they have to submit, I cannot but believe that those reckless writers or speakers who assert that such messages are the work of demons are themselves under the influence of evil spirits, although probably unconscious of the fact. No greater blow could be given to the lowest demons than to be able to prove to the whole human race that there is a second state of existence; that according to the life we lead here so we take our place in our next state; that all the evil we do here we have to undo there; that it is our actual thoughts, words, and deeds which build up our future, not the number of psalms we sing, or the beliefs we profess, but never practise. Spiritual communication teaches these things, and if such teaching, combined with a proof of our immortality, be the work of evil, then the house is divided against itself. Many well meaning people with more self-esteem than reason have set themselves up to scandalise spirit communion. They would have been more prudent had they acquired more knowledge of the subject before rushing in where angels might fear to tread; for perhaps they are doing the very work which evil influences would desire to be done, and are opposing the one great power which must overcome materialism.

At the close of the address a cordial vote of thanks was accorded to General Drayson, on the motion of the President, seconded by Sir Charles Nicholson, Bart.

CHRISTIAN THEOSOPHY.

A society under the name of the Christo-Theosophical Society has just been formed, not at all to pose as an opposition to the already existing Theosophical Society but for the purpose of studying Theosophy upon definitely Christian lines. It will be perfectly open to earnest truth seekers who are willing to join a society which bases its position upon the Christian apprehension of God as the Father of all humanity, and Christ as the Manifestation of the Father to His children; and who further recognise that the one end of the knowledge of the true is to enable man to do the good.

It appears to the founders that such a society will meet a very serious want of the present day. There is a growing consciousness in many earnest minds that the ordinary Christianity of the day is demonstrably devoid of power to solve the pressing social problems that are forcing themselves upon the attention of the world. This arises from the fact, not that Christianity has no word to speak upon these problems, but that its real significance is so little understood by those who profess it; and who, while they say the words, entirely fail to appreciate their practical meaning.

Many others, too, are feeling that the view they have been taught to hold of Christian truth is now inadequate to satisfy either the conclusions of their reason or the perceptions of their intuition, or else is proving itself devoid of power to raise and ennoble their lives, and enable them to master self and live up to their own ideals.

Many of those who are beginning to feel thus are inclined to abandon Christianity as effete, and look elsewhere for Divine help and guidance; but it is believed that before doing this they would gladly listen to and consider a presentation of Christian truth which, being more spiritual and central, might be able to accomplish that which an external and often sectarian apprehension cannot. It is with this view that the Christo-Theosophical Society has been formed. Its founders would shrink from nothing so much as being thought to want to pose as teachers; they seek not for disciples, but for fellow students. And they are persuaded that if a number of earnest, intelligent, and spiritually minded people would unite in a sincere and open-minded study of the actual significance of the life and teaching of Christ, they would be rewarded by the finding of the truth which makes free both from powerlessness to help the world, and from powerlessness to live themselves more ideally.

The Society meets every Thursday at 4.15 p.m., in the drawing-room of the St. Nicholas Club, 81A, Queen Victoria-street (near the Mansion House station). All who sympathise

with the objects of the Society are invited to attend. A list of speakers and subjects for discussion for the next quarter, and any further information, can be obtained from the Rev. G. W. Allen, 3, Featherstone-buildings, High Holborn, W.C.

THE LATE DR. DIXON.

Dr. Jacob Dixon, the veteran Spiritualist, and one of the best of men, passed to the higher life on Wednesday, January 29th, in his 84th year. His mortal remains were interred at the Necropolis, Woking, on Tuesday, February 3rd.

Some reminiscences of him by one who knew him intimately for nearly forty years may prove not uninteresting to the readers of "LIGHT."

Dr. Dixon was a personal friend of Robert Owen, and a warm admirer of his philosophy and of his plans for the regeneration of society. When it was attempted to reduce these theories to practice on an experimental scale, about half a century ago, at East Tytherly, in Hampshire, Dr. Dixon relinquished his practice in London to become a member of the community. He was also a contributor to the periodical literature of that movement, and in 1842 contributed an article on "Mesmerism" to one of its magazines called *The Union*, in which he related a remarkable case of the cure of epilepsy by Dr. Elliotson, which came under his personal observation. His knowledge of mesmerism prepared the way for his acceptance of modern Spiritualism, and he was one of the first in this country to recognise its truth.

His house in Bedford-row became the chief rendezvous of the Spiritualists of the Metropolis, and an unofficial centre of inquiry.

Many were the conferences and séances that were held there among the latter some of a very interesting character at which the late Mr. P. B. Randolph was the medium. Some of the discourses delivered by him in the trance state, and on subjects chosen at the moment, will probably never be forgotten by those who had the privilege of hearing them. They were all the more remarkable from the circumstance that the medium was an uneducated mulatto, and these discourses were far beyond his own knowledge and normal capacity. When the *Yorkshire Spiritual Telegraph* was started in 1855, Dr. Dixon became a constant contributor to its pages, and among other contributions from his pen was a detailed account of his early experiences in a series of articles entitled "How I Became Convinced," which, with perhaps some little abridgment, might usefully be reprinted. The *Yorkshire Spiritual Telegraph* was merged into the *British Spiritual Telegraph*, to which he was also a regular contributor. He took great pleasure in assisting earnest investigators, and many, like the present writer, are indebted to him for their introduction to a practical knowledge of the subject, and he did good service at this time by assisting many who desired to place their experiences on record, but were unaccustomed to literary composition, in preparing them for publication.

When the *British Spiritual Telegraph* was replaced by the *Spiritual Magazine*, during the whole of its continuance from 1860 to 1878, he was an occasional contributor, as he was also to the *Spiritualist*, and to the earlier volumes of the *Medium*.

To "LIGHT" from the first he regularly contributed translations, abridgments, and original articles, to within about a year of his decease, when from age and infirmity he was incapacitated from using the pen, and his services were gratefully acknowledged in these columns.

Beside all this, Dr. Dixon was the writer of several pamphlets. He had been trained, and practised in the allopathic school of medicine, but his study of homœopathy convinced him of the truth of Hahnemann's theory, and with that consistency and courage which always distinguished him he at once abandoned his allopathic practice, much to his professional detriment, and commenced anew as an Homœopath. His little treatise, *Thirty-two Papers on Homœopathy*, each dealing concisely with a separate phase of the subject, is a gem of plain statement and clear reasoning in the briefest possible compass.

His *Hygienic Clairvoyance* is a small, but most valuable pocket compendium, and he still further illustrated the subject in his *Clairvoyance as a Means of Cure*.

I may also mention a luminous essay in exposition of Leibnitz's theory of monads, and two professional treatises, one on *Cholera* and another on *The Management of Infancy*. He also many years ago translated Thiers' voluminous *History of the French Revolution*.

Such is a brief and, I doubt not, very imperfect record of the literary labours and services of our departed friend.

Dr. Dixon was a man of remarkably gentle nature, of calm and even temper, and of a singularly sweet and amiable disposition, which never failed to attract the affectionate sympathy and regard of all who intimately knew him.

Farewell, beloved friend, until we meet again in that better world, where the cares and troubles, the sorrows and painful bereavements of our mortal life, shall be known no more!

T. S.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Great Names.

SIR,—Will you allow me to say a few words upon the subject of a widespread idea, which occasionally finds vent in the columns of "LIGHT," that it is impossible for high spirits, viz.: those on a high plane in spirit-life, to communicate directly with mortals, much less to appear personally to them in materialised form?

Now there has always seemed to me an unanswerable reply to this, in the fact that the very highest Spirit—and whom all Christians acknowledge to be such, in connection with our earth—not only was incarnate on the earth for over thirty years, but after His Crucifixion was continually present on the earth in materialised form until His Ascension.

That such was the case, and that He did not re-inhabit His earthly body, is shown by the fact that He was not recognised by His closest followers on His re-appearance; as also by His sudden appearance in, and disappearance from, their midst, on various occasions.

If the question arises as to what became of the earthly body, it seems to me answered when we contemplate *whose* Spirit it was to whom that body had been an outer covering; and that from His exalted spiritual state, the body was of such a proportionately spiritualised nature that dematerialisation of its particles into the atmosphere would naturally take place so easily and rapidly as to render it speedily invisible; thus fulfilling literally the solemn prophecy of David, "Neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption."

If, therefore, He could then thus re-appear personally, He whom we all recognise as the highest and most exalted Spirit of this planet and its spirit world, surely we may conclude that not only He could again do so, but that all lesser luminaries could most certainly manifest also, whenever in Divine Wisdom it was seen to be for the good of their fellow-creatures on earth that they should do so.

In saying thus much I need hardly give a caution as to those spirits who are said to revel in high names.

"By their fruits shall ye know them" is as applicable to those out of the body as to those in it; and I cannot conceive that any spirit could not be tested as to his genuineness if the same caution and common-sense were used in regard to the statements made by him, as one would use in every day life, in regard to the statements of a fellow mortal. "LILY."

Lyceums and Sunday Schools.

SIR,—I think that Mr. J. Robinson's indictment against Spiritualism, "as a tree without fruits," seems so true on the surface, it may possibly have the injurious effect of making a careless reader and a possible student believe that it is so.

It is needless to say that if there are any Spiritual(istic) Lyceums where children are allowed "to run to the nearest sweet shop to buy sweets, and to run riot," &c., or any Lyceums conducted by any persons at all, to whom the training of children is entrusted, where such bad discipline is permitted, I should imagine that they would be the last places where careful parents would place their children. They are perfectly wise, therefore, in preferring the Sunday-schools, where unruly behaviour is rightly kept in check. Also, if there are any teachers known as Spiritualists who are "a sorry lot, dogmatic, and the outcasts of all sects," I should think that Mr. J. Robinson would do well to avoid them. But to what kind of Lyceums does he allude?

If he means distinctly secular ones, then I fancy he need not charge Spiritualists with belonging to them.

If he means that there are such Lyceums conducted by such teachers who call themselves Spiritualists, then I still can't help thinking he may be in some error, and that these people are not Spiritualists, but that, unfortunately, as his knowledge of the subject is evidently limited, he has been unable to detect the

true from the false, except intuitively. His intuition has, therefore, happily kept him straight and his children from such foolish and incompetent teaching; and they are—and here I am not speaking sarcastically—doubtless, far better educated and trained by “attending Sunday-school.”

The Church has had well in hand for centuries the education of its members; there is, therefore, not the slightest reason, neither any right, for any Spiritualist to interfere, *as a Spiritualist*, or meddle with what is *not his business*—if it is not. Now, this brings me to the second part of the charge against Spiritualism by the writer, that it is “a dead body,” and has neither halls nor hospitals, &c., &c., and that it makes no collections for poor people in the name of Spiritualism, as the Salvation Army does “to help the cause of Christ.”

Thank goodness it does *not*!

One of the best lessons Spiritual Philosophy can teach the world is by just doing what it does, and that is minding its own business.

The perpetual meddling with other people's views, opinions, actions, habits, and ways is one of the most detestable of things, and, I may add, sins of our civilisation.

Pray who decides effectually, so as to cause the question to be definitely answered, what the cause of Christ is? Probably the Salvationists consider their Army His cause. Each person who makes fetish of his sect considers his cause that of Christ. If any Spiritualist were to do so, he would be unworthy of his name. For what does Spiritual Philosophy or Theosophy teach one to do? Nothing short of putting an end to these miserable limitations, and being ready to help humanity when required, *not in the name of Spiritualism as a sect*, but because he, being imbued with the pure humanitarian and Divine teachings in Spiritual philosophy, can do nothing else, and would shower like the rain of Heaven on the just and on the unjust.

A Spiritualist does not want to build a temple, hall, or hospital, to separate himself and creed from the world: this is not his method of working; this curse of separateness, as is well said in a most able Theosophical pamphlet, has been too long poisoning the blood of humanity; and it is to the credit of Spiritualists that they make a stand against it. A Spiritualist who loves and feels sympathy for his fellow men will and does render willing help to all the good works going on; he will subscribe to good deeds already on foot, not in the name of a Spiritualist but as a citizen who approves of the wants already on hand. Why should he say, No; I won't do this or the other because it is the work of the Church, or the Dissenters from the Church, or of this person or that person; I will keep my money until we can build and manage something for ourselves, and let our good works shine out to the glory of ourselves?

Mr. J. Robinson may learn that this is not the mission of Spiritualists, and because they avoid the sectarian narrowness which I say poisons the very source of all true illumination, and do their duty and their charities and every or anything else with the added light of Spiritualism simply as a necessary proof of their duties towards each other, and not arrogating to themselves any desire to degrade spiritual knowledge by pinning any aggressive banner of sectarian limitation.

How does Mr. J. Robinson know that there are not many Spiritualists among the teachers in the Sunday-school which, fortunately, he finds to answer? How does he know that there are not among the well-established hospitals some doctors who do their work with double ardour and added zeal because they are Spiritualists? Does he not know that many people who would be selfish have become noble and generous because they are imbued with the light of spiritual wisdom shining in on their souls and showing effulgent reason now where there was turgid doubt before?

These people don't go up and down the land flying the banner of their sect, or bearing money bags, begging people to help their cause, the cause of Christ, and with it get the superficial credit from ignorant souls that they are in earnest, when they are only selfish and ignorant and narrow-minded. This for ever wearing of badges, trying to prove that your religion and your running up and down and meddling with your neighbours' concerns is a proof of your sincerity, is just what spiritual philosophy advises us *not* to do. So Mr. J. Robinson need not seek for any sectarian zeal in the way he imagines.

Needless to say that he would, however, be perfectly right in thinking a Spiritualist is in great need of considering his ways, if because he is a Spiritualist he should think it would absolve him from any of his duties as a citizen, or, as a man and

brother, from withholding his share of time or money when such share is asked when he has it to give. If he does so, Spiritualism like everything else in a similar case, need not be blamed, only the “weak brother.”

Why, however, “weak brothers” should have this perpetual blaming, I don't know. I confess I think Spiritualism sets a good example in *not interfering* with others, and in “judging no man.” The licence and carelessness displayed by elder people towards their children or pupils is, I agree with Mr. J. Robinson, often most deplorable, and deeply to be deprecated; but nothing can help this, unless, by the added knowledge which is coming into the world, we learn to see that education does not mean, that which is the idea of nine people out of the ten now-a-days, stuffing a child with other people's ideas, and with the history of a crowd of events, but that education means, that is, *it ought*, chiefly training, and supporting, and assisting, just as we would a plant; therefore Lyceums, whether spiritual or unspiritual, or any other places of education, are all at present in an unhappy state of transition, from which time alone, not hasty zeal or pernicious haste, can safely extricate them. When this happy period comes Mr. J. Robinson may yet see that it has been the leaven of spiritual philosophy that has leavened the whole mass!

ISABEL DE STEIGER, F.T.S.

Associated Spirits.

SIR,—Do you think that this saying in 1 Cor. vi. 17, “He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit,” would be a key at all fitting to Mr. A. F. Tindall's lock? Often musing on the puzzle he notices in his letter in to-day's “LIGHT,” I have felt it to be a suggestive hint: and “if,” as Professor Caird wrote some years ago, “the sphere of spiritual reality be that in which nothing exists as a self-identical entity”^{*}—and both Boehme and Swedenborg tell us that the merging of every self in a society is the rule after death—surely any number of spirits may call themselves Plato or Aristotle, with as much verity (if one with the central magnetic spirit of ether) as a particle of your heel might feel itself *you*. Part of you in ultimates it is. If Mr. Tindall can refer to the forty-seventh chapter of Swedenborg's *Arcana Coelestia*, Vol. VIII., and read from p. 208 to 216, he will see that this same process of spirits unconsciously assuming the identity of the human being they surround, is the rule; that it goes on with all our attendant spirits here and now, and also that our sense of self, as a *separate* consciousness, is but a seeming, every one being already *one spirit* with some society in the unseen world.

February 1st, 1890.

A. J. PENNY.

Spirit Identity.

SIR,—In the course of some experiments with a clairvoyante (a young woman whom I have had the opportunity of magnetising for three or four evenings together, with intervals of a couple of months between each series), I have met with a case which has somewhat perplexed me. A few months ago she intimated the presence of a young girl, dead some three years, described her, and told the disease of which she died.

This girl, the clairvoyante said, had known me in earth-life. I had known only one who died at the period stated, and the description given exactly applied to this young lady, of whom, I may remark, the clairvoyante had never heard.

When asked for her name or that of her relatives, however, she declined to give any information, saying that she preferred as yet to remain unknown.

After three or four visits I even suggested her name, and asked if she were that person, but still she refused to say.

At the next series of experiments, however, she declared herself to be the friend I had supposed.

The only feature which makes the case worth recording is that, while the girl's appearance, age, date of death, and the fatal disease were correctly given by the clairvoyante, scarcely one of the numerous questions put to test her identity could she answer correctly, even the correct answers probably being guesses. The names of her nearest friends were unknown to her, and some of her replies were the grossest blunders. There is, of course, nothing remarkable in deception from the other side, but it is curious that in this case the magnetised subject (who is fairly clear-seeing) should declare the spirit to be good and beautiful.

Have any of your readers had experiences of similar cases?

If this were a personating spirit, where was the knowledge of the appearance of my young friend obtained? Not in my

^{*} CAIRD'S *Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*, p. 210.

mind, or else the answers to my questions might also have been read there. And why was not some further information as to her family, &c., derived from the same source, whatever it was? It is worth remarking that, although I taxed her with imposture several times, the clairvoyante said she never looked vexed, except on one occasion when I had said more than usual.

The last time I put my subject into the magnetic trance she saw another young lady who was a slight acquaintance of mine, and died five or six years ago. In this case, however, several satisfactory tests were given, one at least (the present address of her family) not known either to the clairvoyante or myself. The motive of this visit was to send a message to her sister.

There does not seem any reason to doubt the identity in this case, although the first-mentioned entity had been present a minute previously.

G. A. K.

SOCIETY WORK.

Correspondents who send us notices of the work of the Societies with which they are associated, will oblige by writing as distinctly as possible and by appending their signatures to their communications. Inattention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions.]

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL, S.E.—On Sunday last Mr. George Chainey delivered a lecture upon "Revelation Revealed." The room was crowded, and the lecture highly appreciated. Sunday next Mrs. Spring.—MARIE GIFFORD.

ASSEMBLY ROOMS, BEAUMONT-STREET, MILE END.—A delightful evening was spent here on Sunday with Miss Marsh. The audience, which was composed mainly of strangers, had their surroundings accurately described, to their evident astonishment. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Hopcroft.

MARYLEBONE LYCEUM, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, WEST.—The Lyceum was opened on Sunday in the usual manner. Silver and golden chain recitations were given, four groups being formed. Recitations were given by Lizzie Mason, Albert Collings, Anne Goddard, and Bertha Claxton. Twenty persons were present, including visitors.—S. WHITE.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday morning last Mr. W. E. Walker spoke on "Mediumship," and gave some clairvoyant descriptions. In the evening to a full attendance Mrs. Stanley delivered an excellent address on "True Spiritual Marriage." On Sunday morning next, at 11.15 a.m., Mr. McKenzie will give an address on "Phrenology and its Connection with Spiritualism"; at 3 p.m., our Lyceum; at 6.30 p.m., Spiritual service.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

MARYLEBONE ASSOCIATION, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, MARYLEBONE-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last Mr. U. W. Goddard gave a very excellent address on Spiritualism, many strangers being present. On Sunday next at 11 a.m., meeting for Spiritual intercommunion. In the evening, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. Veitch on the "Principles of Spiritualism." Monday, at 8 p.m., social gathering as usual. Tuesday, at 11.30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Busy Bees, Word and Work. Wednesday, at 8 p.m. prompt, séance, Mr. W. Goddard. Friday, 2.30 p.m. to 9 p.m., for conversation and sale of literature.—J. M. DALE.

LONDON OCCULT SOCIETY, CARLYLE HALL, CHURCH-STREET, EDGWARE-ROAD (CLOSE TO THE STATION).—Next Sunday there will be no lecture in consequence of the amount of work in arranging the coming lectures on the Liberty question. On the following Sunday evening Mr. Fawcus (a gentleman introduced to us by the Hon. Auberon Herbert) will deliver a lecture on "Individual Liberty against Socialism." The subject of liberty and freedom of thought is one obviously interesting to our people. I shall speak at King's Cross on March 9th on this matter.—A. F. TINDALL, A.Mus., T.C.L.

KENSINGTON AND NOTTING HILL SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.—Last Sunday, at Zephyr Hall, 9, Bedford-gardens, Silver-street, Notting Hill Gate, W., Mr. John Hopcroft addressed us in the morning on "Mediumship," giving us his experiences, and explaining in an interesting manner the proofs of "slate-writing," specimens of which he brought with him. In the evening Mr. A. M. Rodger addressed us upon "Goodness," showing that evil was only temporary, while goodness was eternal. Next Sunday morning, at eleven, Mr. Percy Smyth on "Physical Phenomena." In the evening, at seven, Mr. J. A. Butcher. A lecture will be delivered in Zephyr Hall on February 23rd, at 7 p.m., by Mr. W. Whitley, on "Theosophy and Occult Buddhism." Last Sunday afternoon the usual session of the Lyceum was conducted by our secretary. The proceedings included marching, calisthenics, musical readings and recitations, and great interest was manifested.—PERCY SMYTH, Hon. Sec., 68, Cornwall-road, Bayswater, W.

KING'S CROSS SOCIETY, 253, PENTONVILLE-ROAD (ENTRANCE KING'S CROSS-ROAD), N.—"The Double" proved an interesting theme for discussion at last Sunday morning's meeting. Messrs. Vogt, Rodger, McKenzie, and others took part in the proceedings. In the evening Mr. W. O. Drake gave an account of his pilgrimage from Methodism, *via* Freethought, to Spiritualism. The lecturer's conversion had been brought about by some very

startling facts. At one of the first séances which he attended a friend whom he had known in boyhood, but had forgotten, was described, and the name given. Fraud was impossible, there being no person present acquainted with his past history. Dr. Sexton's lectures at Cavendish-rooms helped him as far as theory could do, but the culminating point was reached when the materialised spirit of his daughter appeared to himself and his family. This made him a Spiritualist, and anxious to set others inquiring. Next Sunday morning "England since the Commonwealth" will be the topic; and in the evening, instead of the usual service, Mr. James Burns, editor of the *Medium*, will give a phrenological entertainment in aid of the funds. We trust that many of our friends will avail themselves of this opportunity of having their heads read. A charge of 1s. will be made for each delineation.—S.T.R.

THE WAY OF THE SOUL.

Lapt in the luminous dusk which softly lingers
After the sunset glow of April skies,
The sleepy twitter of the woodland singers,
Striking the silence like a glad surprise,
While all the while, soft touch of childish fingers,
Smoothed out the weariness of heart and eyes,
So standing 'mid my stores of precious things,
One of God's angels touched me with his wings.

I cried, "Ah Lord, these children Thou hast given,
They were from Thee, are they not very good?
Bind us all close, till Death's own bonds are riven,
Lead thou us still, with Heavenly grace endued,
Until the gates of that eternal Heaven,
Receive us with the shining multitude."
A sudden whisper stirred the silent trees,
"Be of good cheer: yet must thou die to these."

Dim changes passed upon the childish faces,
Strange alien voices called them from the night,
We met within the verdant garden spaces,
Where Spring came still, but emptied of delight,
At last across the sands of desert places,
They wandered forth and parted from my sight;
"O God!" I cried, "Whose ways are not our ways,
Fill up the vacant measure of my days!"

"Take all I have, all stores of faith and feeling,
Wring from the burning alchemy of pain,
The golden ore won from that fierce annealing,
Heap on some altar for the poor world's gain,
In some brave cause of help, or hope, or healing,
Use all of me—all heart, and mind, and brain."
A sudden whisper stirred the silent trees,
"Be of good cheer: yet must thou die to these."

Removed apart from either hope or fearing,
I sat in dreadful silence with my soul,
Nor sun, nor star for many days appearing,
Thought flickered out like sparks from burning scroll,
Only a sense survived all faith or hearing,
That God lived still behind the dearth and dole,
As if some great heart beat amid the gloom,
Though I lay still—close wrapt in death and doom.

I did not note the hour of my awaking,
Sudden and soft yet with resistless might,
New springs of love in all my nature breaking
Bore through my veins a sense half life, half light,
Keen quivering currents thrilled my being, shaking
Earth's jarring wrong, to God's eternal right,
Bore me through aching loss and vain complaints
Through Christ into the fellowship of saints.

Now having nothing, yet all things possessing,
I live within a life that is not mine.
The risen Christ pours forth the light and blessing;
Souls of just men draw down the Life Divine,
Through broken wills the vital current pressing,
Melts earth's disorder into Heaven's design,
Till all God's Heaven and earth be bound anew
In one great love—"As He hath loved you."

M. L. H.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

It will ensure despatch if all matter offered for publication is addressed to the Editor of "LIGHT," 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to any other name or address. Communications for the Manager should be sent separately.

It seems desirable to make clear that any facts previously published in transactions of any Society or in any journal cannot be printed as original matter in "LIGHT," and should not be sent to us except for our private information. All records sent, moreover, must be accredited by the name and address of the sender, and will gain in value by the attestation of witnesses.

"J. E. J." and "A WORKING MAN."—Next week.

J. B. S. (Toowoomba).—Your kind remittance for subscriptions 1890, duly to hand, with many thanks.

COLONUS.—You do not comply, by sending your name, with the requirement that no anonymous correspondence can be received. We doubt very much the wisdom of discussing points on which we can know nothing, and on which it is not reasonable to expect the spirits who return to earth can know more.