

# Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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[A NEWSPAPER.] PRICE TWOPENCE

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

"Spiritual Law in the Natural World": by J. W. Thomas (Longmans, Green & Co.) is a somewhat notable book. The writer believes that the physical universe is penetrated and controlled, to the minutest atom, by God as "The Holy Spirit"; and he works this out in a rather startlingly realistic manner. He is for no half measures, and holds that God is really present in every function of the body, and "permeates the rocks and dwells in them as He dwells in human hearts." The working-out of this theory carries with it much that is interesting to Spiritualists. Indeed, if the writer of this book had been less captured and controlled by somewhat obsolete Biblical theories, he might have produced a book of real value, not only from a Spiritualist, but also from a scientific, point of view. As it is, he has to continually resort to demoniacal interferences in order to help him over incidents and phases of life that puzzle and perplex him. But he has got hold of a very deep truth, though in a rather crude fashion. Some aftercomer will free it from imperfect knowledge and the old-world fog.

Mr. J. W. Chadwick, writing in "The New World," draws an instructive distinction between "Universal Religion" and "A Universal Religion." The one is a blessed fact; the other is an unblessed delusion. Religion is universal now; but no one form of religion can ever be universal. He says:—

All religions are like the animal organisms, which are gradually developed in harmony with particular environments. It is not a question whether the elephant's amusing trunk and baggy trousers are better than the outfit of the lion or the horse. They are better for him. They are better for him because he is used to them, because they are correlated with his general anatomy and physiology. So it is, comparing great things with small, with the religions. Let their absolute values be what they may, relatively, to the peoples who acknowledge them and believe in them, they are doubtless the best religions possible because they have come into existence in answer to their special needs. Here is no plea for general stagnation. Each great religion, as each sect, may learn of every other. Yet the ideal, whose coming realisation shines afar, is not that of religious substitution, but that of religious development, a Christianised Brahmanism and Buddhism, a Brahmanised or Buddhisised Christianity, each to its native centre fast, while patiently remoulding many things and seeking everywhere the best.

In the Australian papers now arriving, we see frequent references to Mrs. Besant, whose lectures appear to have been very successful: but the opinion we formed of her appearances in England is confirmed by what we read of her work in Australia. Mrs. Besant honestly thinks she is teaching Theosophy and building up a Theosophical organization. In reality she is a strong ethical and social

teacher: Theosophy being her peg for the time being. We are convinced, too, that Spiritualism will absorb more of her permanent influence than Theosophy. "The Harbinger of Light" has a very useful reference to her work:—

Mrs. Besant's visit to Australia will undoubtedly give a substantial impetus to the Theosophical movement in this part of the world. . . . She has not brought any new doctrines, or supplemented anything that was known to those who had given reasonable attention to the subject; but she has put soul into the form, and given life and vitality to it. Her lucidity of expression enabled her to present the doctrines in so comprehensible a manner that few could fail to grasp at least their leading features, whilst her evident earnestness and oratorical powers had a psychological effect upon her hearers. Though, probably, the majority of these were not convinced of the soundness of her hypothesis, none could fail to appreciate the beauty of the ethics which accompanied it. The broader subjects which she essayed, such as "The Dangers that Threaten Society" and "National and Individual Ideals," were unexceptionable and calculated to uplift the hearer, being redolent of the purest ethics and containing the very essence of religion. Another great charm in connection with Mrs. Besant's method is the absence of dogmatism in her teachings. Even in the presentation of the doctrines of Theosophy, she made it distinctly understood that it was not incumbent on members to make any profession of belief, or accept any of the doctrines save that of brotherhood and its obligations; and, unlike most of the Theosophical cult, she spoke respectfully of Spiritualists, tacitly admitting the fact of spirit intercourse, and advising the recipients to judge of what they received by its merits.

During the seven occasions we had the pleasure of listening to her, not one harsh or unkind expression fell from her lips; Theosophy was her keynote and the basis upon which she built, but she surrounded it with such high ideals, and filled in the interstices with such beautiful ideas, that all its angularities or objectionable points were for the time hidden from sight, the spirit of the teachings subordinating the form. There has been some jealousy and antagonism between Theosophists and Spiritualists in the past, but Mrs. Besant's teachings and example, if they take hold, will do much to bring the two bodies in unison and fraternal relations; the principal stumbling-block has been the insistence by Theosophists on dogmas that were repugnant to the experience and knowledge of Spiritualists, and impossible of acceptance whilst they remained such. With the withdrawal of these, a closer relationship will probably be established, as the central ideas of both bodies is universal Brotherhood and the cultivation of man's spiritual faculties.

The Sydney "Daily Telegraph" illustrates our meaning when we say that Spiritualism will absorb more of Mrs. Besant's influence than Theosophy. For one person who will steadfastly go on with Theosophy, ten will stop short at the conviction that the visible is not all, but that spiritual beings are not vain imaginings. Says "The Telegraph":—

There is absolute and intensifying hunger throughout the world for an assurance, in the name of science, that the death of the body is not the end of the life principle inhabiting it. The religion of the future, or, rather, at least, the belief of the future regarding spiritual continuance and development, will not accept its conclusions from one or other of the schools of Theology. . . . Perhaps we are on the eve of a discovery that all the mysterious messages and portents which the folk-lore



of countries are full of, were not baseless; that all the ghosts and visions seen were not hallucinations of superstitious minds.

That is about where the majority of Mrs. Besant's readers and hearers will stop.

The "Westminster Gazette's" witty, remorseless, and somewhat overdone "exposure" of what Mr. Garrett regards as the great Theosophic swindle will do good. It will, in any case, act as a gigantic winnowing machine—and it was wanted.

## MRS. WILLIAMS OF NEW YORK.

### Mrs. Williams in Self-Defence.

SIR,—I thank you for inserting my letter in last week's "LIGHT." Most of my statements have been confirmed in the interviews published in the same issue; and no one could have depicted Madame Raulot in blacker colours than she has painted herself. In one important particular, however, there is a material difference between the statement of the "conspirators" and mine, for they say that I was caught in man's clothes. This extraordinary assertion I learned for the first time when I read it in "LIGHT," and I herewith pronounce it an *absolute falsehood*. It is precisely on a level with your fancy sketch of the incident, purely imaginary, although artistically circumstantial in detail. I assert that my version of the "grabbing" is absolutely correct.

To criticise your representative's interviews with the three women would take up too much of your space and of my time; they are full of errors of detail, even where they corroborate my account, and the speeches attributed to Mr. Macdonald and myself are apocryphal. Moreover, I do not wear false hair; neither do I attribute my phenomena to God Almighty. One of those minor points, however, I must mention more fully. It is wholly untrue that I ran downstairs after being pushed into the dressing-closet (or after running into it of my own accord, as another of your accounts says). I there tried to get a glass of cold water, and while so engaged one of the "conspirators"—as they are proud to call themselves—entered the closet by the door from the back stairs and handed me a glass. As to passing for Miss Bessie Williams, the statement is too ridiculous, since I am perfectly satisfied with my own name and reputation as a medium, however excellent this good lady's may be.

With the letters in my possession from the Duchess and Madame de Morsier, her friend (and, by the way, a most excellent lady), regarding the transference of the séances to the Rue Hamelin (copies of which I herewith enclose for publication), I cannot believe, without further evidence, that either of them was a party to the "trap." If so, I fear that there exists no longer any such thing as good faith among European Spiritualists.

Unfortunately for me, not a single word of doubt or dissatisfaction with regard to the genuineness of the phenomena at my séances ever reached my ears; but, on the contrary, the greatest delight and astonishment were universally expressed; and my manager's book contains the names of many distinguished people who had expressed satisfaction at our public séances, and made arrangements for private ones. Had the Duchess or other responsible persons expressed any doubt as to the genuineness of my phenomena, I should have been perfectly willing to submit to such test conditions as would have completely satisfied them; but that is not the course which the "fraud-hunter" or the "spirit-grabber" ever adopts.

To have opened our boxes while we were sight-seeing in Paris would have been an easier way to "expose" us, for I cannot be imagined to have carried half a shopful of wigs, masks, and so on, about with me all the time. The conspirators, however, could hardly have ventured to break open my boxes without legal authority, for, although I am a medium, I am, nevertheless, an American citizen, and the presence of a representative of the law would have made it impossible to smuggle the dolls and other trappings into my boxes.

The conspirators have the wigs, dolls, and masks which your representative and the persons he interviewed say were found in my cabinet—which may be true enough, although I declare the statement that they were brought there by me a downright falsehood. I, on the other hand, have still my mediumship, and the power of proving that mediumship beyond the shadow of a doubt, which I shall continue to do while my health and strength permit.

Yours truly,

London, November 12th, 1894,

M. E. WILLIAMS.

(COPY.)

MY DEAR MRS. WILLIAMS,—I am certainly sorry to have to send you the enclosed from the Duchess.

I know her doctor thought the excitement of the séances was too much for her now, but I thought we could have continued for two weeks at least.

The Duchess herself had told me she would let you have the drawing-room till she left for Nice.

I have not seen her since Friday, but it appears she has been worse. I will go to Holyrood to-morrow.

Madame Leymarie will have time to send notice to the sitters for Wednesday, and I do not think it will make any difference to them.

I hope to call on you very soon to express to you my regret for this occurrence. With kind regards,

(Signed)

Yours truly,  
E. DE MORSIER.

(COPY.)

124, Avenue de Wagram, Holyrood, Paris.

Saturday, October 27th, 1894.

Madame de Morsier.

DEAR FRIEND,—I have just written to Madame Leymarie what I much regret I must now also write to you, and that is to beg you to let Mrs. Williams know that the doctor finds the state of my heart so much aggravated this morning that he has strictly forbidden me to have any more séances here for the present, not even my own Tuesday séance.

You know what a devoted Spiritualist I am, and how deeply these séances interest me; perhaps, indeed, I take everything of the kind too vehemently; but the fact is that I am in a state of nervous agitation, and cannot sleep, and from what the doctor says it seems my heart has again commenced those alarming throbbings which he had almost succeeded in overcoming with the strict diet of milk on which I have lived lately. He therefore orders me the greatest quiet and tranquillity, without the least excitement, and, above all, "no more séances of any kind!" You know he had prohibited me from attending the one of last night, and, unfortunately, as you know, all those ladies came to my room afterwards to tell me their impressions, and they completely tired me and finished by upsetting my nerves, so much so that I never closed my eyes all night; and this morning I am again very feverish, and in a state that requires the greatest care and the most perfect quiet. I am, indeed, ordered to see no one. I beg of you, therefore, to communicate my letter to Mrs. Williams, telling her at the same time how *very, very* sorry I am, and wishing her from me every success in Paris. Very fortunately she is in a house in which she can hold the séances in her own apartment.

Ever, dear friend, affectionately,

(Signed)

M. CAITHNESS DE POMAR.

### In Defence of Mrs. Williams.

SIR,—I hardly know whether the text of your representative's report should be taken more seriously than your confessedly supposititious and imaginary illustrations; but as I have freely endorsed Mrs. Williams's mediumship in your columns, I will ask leave to say a few words about the recent "alleged" exposure, now that I have read that "report."

I do not know any of those who were engaged in setting and springing the "trap" for Mrs. Williams in Paris; but, if correctly reported, their interviews with your representative show them to be persons whose word ought not to inspire much confidence; for they have confessed to sustained deceit and gross deception. I should certainly require something more than the stories told by such apparently contemptible and certainly hostile individuals to outweigh my actual knowledge of the genuineness of Mrs. Williams's mediumship, and of the *bona fides* of that lady herself. Moreover, I cannot believe the story of these "grabbers" without at the same time believing that many of the cleverest men in America—lawyers, doctors, clergymen, business men—who have testified for years to the genuineness of her phenomena and to her own honesty, are arrant fools; and also that my own senses and intellect have conspired for years to deceive me.

You see, to me it is "the same old story," although the "grabbing" of mediums has for you all the charm of novelty. During my residence of many years in America, I studied critically, with much interest, the accounts of several "outrages" on mediums, and they all closely resembled that in Paris lately. They were the work of unknown and irresponsible people, and there appeared two diametrically opposite accounts of the seizures; that of the grabbers, saying that the medium was caught outside of the cabinet, while personating a spirit; and that of the other side, saying that the medium was found entranced in his or her chair, and dragged off it and stripped by the grabbers. There was also in every case the same parading of wigs and masks after the seizure of the medium, which were declared to have been found in the cabinet by the "grabbers," and by the medium asserted to have been brought there by the grabbers themselves. It must be remembered that to place things so that when found they will compromise



the person on whom or on whose premises they are discovered, is an old trick, which seems to be ever new and efficacious with the unjudicial mind, although it would be worth nothing in a court of justice.

These American outrages on mediums were generally the work of confessed enemies of Spiritualism, who stuck at nothing to destroy it; and I fancy that it is enemies of Spiritualism that were the real instigators of the Paris seizure. I knew personally that two of the mediums said to have been "exposed" in America were real mediums, and, as far as I could judge, honest ones; so I came to the conclusion that it was easier to believe that the "grabbers" brought the theatrical properties with them, than that the mediums were so silly as gratuitously and needlessly to provide such apparently damning evidence against themselves by taking completely useless articles into the cabinet—useless, because no experienced investigator, or old Spiritualist, or anyone, in fact, but a simpleton, would be taken in by them. As to the medium being grabbed outside of the cabinet, the story told by the grabbers in each case I found to be always the same in outline, but differing in details, which is precisely the case when "conspirators" agree beforehand upon a story to tell, as conspirators generally do. In the present instance I see no reason, even on general principles, to attribute more truthfulness to the account given by the grabbers, and less to the story told by the medium, than in other cases; to this general presumption I personally add my knowledge of Mrs. Williams and her mediumship; therefore, to use an expressive British way of putting it, I would (metaphorically) "lay my money" at long odds upon Mrs. Williams, and bet heavily against her grabbers.

At the time I speak of, some eight to twelve years ago, Spiritualism was much weaker in America, and Spiritualists there much more timid than is, I understand, the case now. The Spiritualists were, no doubt, honourable people, but a large section of the public regarded them as knaves and dupes; and being conscious of that fact, the Spiritualists were nervously timid about compromising what reputation they still enjoyed in the business world for common-sense. The consequence was that no medium could look to the Spiritualists for protection against violence or defamation; partly because their endorsement of the honesty of a medium in a case of "exposure" amounted to next to nothing with the public, owing to their own poor reputation for good sense; and partly because they hesitated to defend their mediums on account of their fear for their own good name, which rendered it only necessary for someone in the crowd to raise a cry of "fraud" against even their most valued medium, for most of them to desert him or turn against him. The way the Spiritualists themselves put the matter was, "We cannot afford to countenance even the appearance of fraud," which simply meant that if anyone manufactured "the appearance of fraud," the Spiritualists at once ran and stoned the suspected medium. That was the state of things ten years ago in America, and, from recent developments, it seems to me to be very much the condition of affairs at present in Europe.

After all, it takes a long experience of a public medium to warrant the conclusion of "perfectly reliable"; and for most people the only really satisfactory and convincing phenomena, occurring *not* under test conditions, are those which happen in the family circle. Ten years ago I urged Mrs. Williams, as I do now, to devote more of her time and mediumistic power to the development of private mediums. In her developing circles, when, after a few sittings, the conditions became "harmonious," phenomena were apt to occur, as I am told is even more the case now—phenomena such as voices, lights, and even partly materialised forms, which were not "part of the programme," since in a developing circle phenomena are not looked for as a rule, and which yet are more than happen at séances held purposely for phenomena by the "common or garden" variety of medium.

It seems to me that if Mrs. Williams wishes to further the cause of Spiritualism in England she should avoid falling again into the hands of those who require a scapegoat now and then to load up with their sins of credulity, or who feel it incumbent on them occasionally to offer up a medium as a sacrifice to the Philistines. Let her, in addition to forming select developing circles, give materialising séances by-and-bye to the scientific inquirers, as was her original intention when she arranged to come to Europe. Those people are, at all events, gentlemen and honourable men, who will not invent and elaborate "traps" for her; but will tell her straightforwardly if they are dissatisfied, so that she may, if possible, remove

their doubts. I am inclined to think that the endorsement of two or three such scientific investigators would go further with the public to establish the truth of spirit return than the most flattering testimonials from ten thousand professed Spiritualists. There are, perhaps, a dozen men in Europe to convince whom is to convince the public, for people do not believe their own senses so readily as they do the affirmations of those on whose judgment they rely.

Mrs. Williams, however, longs for the sympathy and for the society of those who are already perfectly convinced of the truth of spirit return. That sympathy and society she has got fully among her friends in America, and it is because she misses those things here that she will in all probability go back almost immediately to the United States. If she does so, I venture once more to predict that it will not be long before English and French Spiritualists begin to bitterly regret that they have virtually driven her away.

London, November 12th, 1894.

RICHARD HARTE.

### An Open Letter to Miss Florence Marryat.

PARIS, 14, Rue de Thann,

November 7th, 1894.

DEAR MISS MARRYAT,—Though I have been greatly interested in reading the whole of your book, "There is no Death," yet I must say the most striking part, and also the most beneficial to me, has been chap. xxiv., "On Spiritualism in America," devoted to Mrs. M. E. Williams, as I have been fortunate enough to witness this woman's skill in cheating the people, and to find out the real value of her mediumship for materialisation, which consists only of the vilest tricks I ever saw. Mrs. Williams and her manager, Mr. Macdonald, are nothing but impostors and swindlers, who shamefully abused the Parisian public by swearing, before the opening of the sittings, to the truth and honesty of her religious principles, whilst her so-called spirits were nothing but mannikins, and some proved to be Mrs. Williams herself, as it was discovered in her last "séance" given on October 31st, at 8.30 p.m., and is fully explained here below.

Mrs. Williams had intended making a Continental tour to propagate the doctrines of the Spiritualists in the great capitals, Paris, Berlin, and St. Petersburg. She claims to be able to materialise the spirits of the departed and show them to the sitters through her mediumship. She arrived in Paris on October 21st, at nine p.m., by the French Line steamer, "La Bretagne," and took rooms at Madame Raulot's "pension de famille," 46, rue Hamelin. Her sittings were to be held at the house of the Duchesse de Pomar (Lady Caithness) who kindly placed at her disposal a special room for her performances. Two "séances" only were given there; a trial sitting on the 23rd, at 8.30 p.m., and a regular one for the public on the evening of the 26th, which was attended by thirty-two people, each paying ten francs, admission ticket. Neither of them proved to be a success—the dampness of the Parisian atmosphere being very much against the manifestations (*sic*). The public meeting was rather a noisy and ridiculous one. Some persons, more clear sighted than others, having discovered the fraud, broke out into a laughter in which the whole audience joined, and only a few apparitions came to the platform. Then the séance was closed. Thenceforth Mrs. Williams was no longer allowed to hold her sittings at the Duchess's, and she decided to have them at her boarding-house, 46, rue Hamelin, in the future.

The third sitting was a private one, given on Sunday evening, October 28th, to my family and a few other persons, altogether ten, for which I had to pay twenty francs a piece entrance money. As usual, Mrs. Williams opened the proceedings with the same little speech as you allude to in your book:—

I am very pleased to see you here, and I hope you may derive pleasure and profit from our meeting. We have only one rule for the conduct of our séances, that you shall behave like ladies and gentlemen. You may not credit all you see, but, remember, this is our religion, and the religion of many present; and as you would behave yourselves reverently and decorously if you were in a church of another persuasion to your own, so I beg of you to behave yourselves here. And if any spirits should come for you whom you do not immediately recognise, do not wound them by denying their identity. They may have been longing for this moment to meet you again, and doing their very utmost to assume once more the likeness they wore on earth; yet some fail. Do not make their failure harder to bear by roughly repudiating all knowledge of them. . . . (*sic*).



These were the words uttered by that scoundrel (who was to commit a few minutes later a wilful perjury) in a speech which at first I believed to be true, and which I was willing enough to translate into French, as most of the people present did not understand English. Then, the curtains having been drawn in front of the cabinet, out of which the spirits were supposed to come, the audience sang, and the séance was opened almost in darkness.

A few minutes had hardly elapsed when the voice of a child was heard from behind the curtains, and announced to be "little Bright Eyes." She was in conversation with Dr. Cushman, another spirit guide of Mrs. Williams, who is indeed a thorough ventriloquist. Two or three forms dressed in white clinging garments appeared at the opening in the curtains; and, finally, an old man called Dr. Holland (alias Mrs. Williams, and dressed in a suit of evening clothes) made an appearance, but did not advance much beyond the curtains. Some of the audience were invited to go up and speak to the spirit. I was myself favoured with the same invitation, but on my asking to shake hands with the phantom, I caught a hand as earthly as mine, made of flesh and bones, which I grabbed at with such a strong hold that it had to struggle hard to get loose from my grasp. I had now, of course, sufficient proof of Mrs. Williams's trickery and falsehood; but this fact could not convince some of the sitters, who were altogether too anxious and hopeful to see one of their departed relations, and would not believe that those mysterious forms were but rags and puppets. A more obvious test was necessary for opening their eyes, and we decided to take the wretch in the deed and to lay our hands on one of these white phantoms. Everything was arranged and ready for the "séance" to be held on October 31st. Mons. Leymarie, son of the well-known director of the "Revue Spirite" of Paris, was to bar the cabinet, and, as soon as a materialised spirit made its appearance, to lay hold of it, whilst two other gentlemen were to seize the manager and hold him fast to prevent him from making a diversion in favour of the medium. This was done in perfection. A signal was given at the very moment of Dr. Cushman's appearance, the lights were brought, and the phantom proved to be Mrs. Williams herself dressed in gentleman's clothes, with a beard, and a mask over her face. Her dress was discovered in the cabinet, and in a bag, which she had doubtless brought to the "séance" concealed beneath her skirts, were three raiments for white phantoms, two for black phantoms, three wigs, a pair of moustaches, and all her stage properties.

The audience, having first succeeded in recovering their entrance-money, made an official report against the offender, and compelled Mrs. Williams and her accomplice, Mr. MacDonald, to leave Paris the same night or take the consequence of being punished according to the French law.

I hear that Mrs. Williams is exerting herself to the utmost to deny the facts and put the public on the wrong scent, and that she has already written to the Duchesse de Pomar, complaining of having been outraged by the Parisian people; and I am not surprised at it, as such women have neither shame nor conscience; but no one could now place reliance on a creature who trampled on the most sacred laws of nature and religion.

Now, I come to a conclusion, and say that I feel that in vouching for the truth of so important a matter to the public, I have no more right than you to repeat anything but what I could swear, if need be, that I have seen and heard with my own eyes and ears. Now the question is this:—

Either your senses deceived you when you saw Mrs. Williams in America.

Or the woman who came to Paris this last October of the name of Mrs. M. E. Williams, Psychic, 232, West 46th street (New York) is not the same person alluded to in your book "There is no Death."

I must say, however, that she appeared to me to be the same person—a stout woman, of middle age, with dark hair and eyes, a fresh complexion, and wearing eye-glasses.

I trust you will fully understand the importance of the statement made in your book, "There is no Death," on Mrs. Williams's behalf, and I shall wait for a true and fair explanation, so that your "work" may deserve, in the opinion of your readers, the credit you are claiming for it.—Yours truly,

C. M. MOUTONNIER,

Professeur à l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales.

Miss Florence Marryat.

## The Shocking Scandal at Paris.

SIR,—Whilst every honest thinker, whether Spiritualist or opponent, must give you the highest credit for bravely and candidly publishing both sides of the disgraceful affair above indicated, I am quite sure you, with scores of other dispassionate seekers for truth everywhere, will agree with me in urging that despite the mass of seemingly incontrovertible evidence of the professing medium's atrocious fraud, there is, at least, an act of justice due to her, and one which, successfully carried out, might place the Paris affair—as rendered by the two opposing parties—in a somewhat different light.

Let Mrs. Williams have one chance at least in this country (where she seems to have sought refuge) of proving that she is something more than the impostor she is represented as appearing in Paris. Let a small company of earnest persons, half composed of Spiritualists and half of sceptics, meet with her in some quiet private room, wherein a well-prepared cabinet can be placed, and let Mrs. Williams (for her own sake, if she ever again proposes to face public inquiry) submit to be thoroughly searched, before appearing in the cabinet, by a committee of ladies. This search, even to the last garment, has again and again been carried on in the case of the Fox Sisters and some scores of other physical mediums, both in America and England. For her own sake, also, Mrs. Williams should court this method of investigation. For her own sake she should submit the room, cabinet, and her clothing to crucial search, and if, after this preparation, any unmistakable proof positive of spiritual agency occurs, why, I need say no more, save to assure her that her revolting appearance in black tights, moustache, &c., will all be attributed to a temporary satanic possession, and her return to "the ministry of angels" be hailed by every true believer in that faith, with forgiveness for the past, and renewed hope for the future.

An American acquaintance of mine has just sneeringly asked, "if Mrs. Williams's seventeen years of New York successes are not quite sufficient to wipe out the odium of the Paris fiasco?" I unhesitatingly answer "no," seeing that the seventeen years of Mrs. Williams's New York successes have been obtained in her own house, and that not even a hired one, whilst her cabinet arrangements have also been prepared and carried on by herself, and her men, women, and children of business.

I would again strongly urge the offer of the chance above suggested—not in any sense for the benefit of Spiritualism, for that has been as unquestionably demonstrated by thousands of true mediums as their successes and facts have stimulated thousands of frauds and tricksters to simulate them. What I ask for—but only under the conditions above laid down—I propose, first, for the sake of rendering, if possible, some justice to the party accused, and next, to redeem the good old English character for "fair play," and the disposition to give even the fabulous "gentleman in black" his due.

EMMA HARDINGE BRITTON.

[We are in receipt of further communications from France, which we hold in reserve.—ED. "LIGHT."]

## QUESTION.

Dear and blessed dead ones, can you look and listen

To the sighing and the moaning down here below?

Does it make a discord in the hymns of Heaven,

The discord that jangles in the life you used to know?

When we pray our prayers to the great God above you,

Does the echo of our praying ever glance aside your way?

Do you know the thing we ask for, and wish that you could give it,

You, whose hearts ached with wishing in your own little day?

Are your ears deaf with praises, you blessed dead of Heaven,

And your eyes blind with glory that you cannot see our pain?

If you saw, if you heard, you would weep among the angels,

And the praise and the glory would be for you in vain.

Yet He listens to our praying, the great God of pity,

And He fills with pain the measure of our life's little day—

Could He bear to sit and shine there, on His white throne in Heaven,

But that He sees the end, while we only see the way?

MRS. CHANDLER MOULTON.

THE highest knowledge can be nothing more than the shortest and clearest road to truth; all the rest is pretension, not performance, mere verbiage and grandiloquence, from which we can learn nothing, but that it is the external design of an internal deficiency.—COLTON.



## A TRAP TO CATCH PRETENDERS.

Mr. T. J. Murday, of 55, Northburne-street, Gateshead-on-Tyne, describes in "The Two Worlds" an ingenious contrivance, by means of which he detected a fraud on the part of one John Huggins, who pretended to be a medium for materialisations. The séance was held in Mr. Murday's own house. The circle consisted of about twenty sitters, the majority being Spiritualists. Mr. Murday says:—

Mr. Huggins placed two special friends next the cabinet—Mr. Ancrum and Mrs. Golightly, of Gateshead. A very faint red light was used. Forms came out frequently, and one or two got about two yards from the cabinet, the others just outside the curtains. They were all enveloped in white drapery, and apparently about the same height. No small forms were shown. Attempts were made to recognise the forms, Mr. Ancrum and one or two others imagining a resemblance to some of their departed friends. Permission was given to some sitters, myself included, to feel the drapery, and I and others are positively certain that it was the hand of the medium we felt underneath his coat sleeve, which was also in evidence when a lady (?) spirit was out. After an hour's sitting the medium, apparently much exhausted, was led into another room. In his absence we discussed the matter, several thinking that the phenomena were genuine, but the majority were of the opposite opinion. I then entered into a full explanation of the test to which the medium (unknown to anyone but two or three friends) had been subjected. Beneath the carpet a large flat board was placed. This board was kept slightly raised from the floor by means of springs. An electric contact was attached, and the wires laid under the carpet to a battery and galvanometer. The medium's chair was placed on this board, and the electrical arrangements were such that on the board being left with no other weight upon it but the chair an electrical current flowed through the galvanometer, causing a continual deflection of its needle. On someone sitting on the chair or standing by it within the cabinet, the board was pressed down, thus separating the electric contacts and arresting the flow of current through the galvanometer. The arrangement was balanced so as to act with the weight of only a few pounds, and so long as the medium remained in the cabinet the needle of the galvanometer remained undisturbed. Now as to the results. I sat with the galvanometer under continual observation, and found that each time a form emerged from the cabinet the needle was deflected, and remained so deflected until the form had returned, proving conclusively that the medium had left his chair and the cabinet on each occasion. . . . A more clearly proved case of fraud cannot be conceived, and every one of the sitters was satisfied thoroughly, before leaving, of the absolute reliability of the electrical detector. Mr. Huggins offered to be searched *before* the séance, but his offer was not taken advantage of. After all was over, however, someone proposed to search him, but he doggedly refused to be searched then. On a move being made to secure the door and force a search he bolted, and we saw no more of him. . . . Personally, I could have no ill feeling against Mr. Huggins, never having met him before. My strong desire was to prove him *genuine*, not a fraud, and I can only add that it has been a severe disappointment to myself and friends to have been compelled to witness such a fraud perpetrated in the name of Spiritualism. I hope this will be a lesson to mediums, Spiritualists, and investigators. Have nothing to do with any materialising medium who will not allow tests to be applied to prove that he or she is in the cabinet while the forms are well outside the curtains. The light is usually so bad that imagination plays a prominent part in the recognising of departed friends in the "sheeted forms." I shall be glad at any time to explain to any intelligent correspondent the method of fixing up the electrical test; it is simple and absolutely reliable.

We are glad to see that the Editor of "The Two Worlds" urges the duty incumbent upon Spiritualists themselves to make fraudulent dealings impossible. This is good advice as far as it goes, but unfortunately there are sitters who will not take the trouble, or have not the courage, to insist upon the requisite precautions against deception. The Spiritualist Press should combine to withhold all encouragement and support from public physical mediums who do not, for their own sake, and of their own accord, freely

supply the conditions necessary to guard against the devices of fraudulent pretenders. Honest mediums cannot object, and we do not doubt that we shall have the cordial co-operation of our contemporary in impressing upon them their imperative duty in the direction we have indicated.

## "A GOSPEL FOR THE AGE."

Some time ago, our readers may remember, we published a report of an address entitled "The Angel of the Daybreak," which was delivered at the Central Hall of the People's League, High-street, Peckham, by Mr. R. J. Lees, the founder and President of the League. On that occasion we made some brief mention of the institution presided over by Mr. Lees, the work of which, as a philanthropic movement, is worthy of very high commendation.

On Sunday last a series of meetings were held by the League in celebration of the opening of the new Central Hall, a fine structure capable of seating a thousand people. A special inaugural service was held in the evening, when a programme in every way worthy of the occasion was gone through to the satisfaction of an audience numbering considerably over a thousand people. The People's League military band discoursed musical selections in good style, and solos, vocal and instrumental, were rendered by talented performers. The principal item on the programme, however, was an address delivered by Mr. Lees, entitled "A Gospel for the Age." It is true that the discourse contained nothing specially germane to those subjects which it is the purpose of "LIGHT" to represent, but inasmuch as the ethical side of those subjects is largely catholic and eclectic we may, perhaps, be allowed to refer briefly to Mr. Lees' exposition of the doctrine upon the lines of which the work of the League is being conducted. He pleaded for a free, broad, and practical Christianity, which should eschew all doctrinal points and theological polemics and apply itself simply to such a standard of thought and conduct as Christ himself might be expected to approve and pursue were he again to live on earth. The lecturer struck an effective note when he remarked that present forms of thought were concerned too much with the elaboration of the truths they presented, so that much of the practical value of those truths was lost, and the interests of humanity were proportionately neglected. This is a suggestion by which Spiritualists, amongst others, might profit. "There is," said the lecturer, "more of religion in making the poor man happier, making his lot easier, and brightening his declining years, after he has spent his strength in the service of the community, than there is in all the sermons that are being preached in London to-night." This sentiment met with general applause, evidencing the widening recognition of the fact (so constantly inculcated by our unseen friends) that conduct, and not belief, is the main-spring of morality.

The speaker then referred to the work done by the League in saving homes from the grip of the bailiff, and generally in assisting the unfortunate to maintain their independence; and said that he believed that to be Christianity, the real gospel of the age.

Such doctrine and practice we can cordially endorse, and we congratulate Mr. Lees, who is so well and honourably known as one who has many times advocated the truths of Spiritualism, on being able to give such practical effect to his belief as the formation of the league over which he presides. We were pleased to learn that during the twelve months of its existence (it was founded in November, 1893) the institution has made remarkable strides, and now numbers nearly 1,300 members, while there are some eighteen subsidiary societies, clubs, and classes.

We were somewhat amused to receive a copy of a remarkable circular which was being distributed (of course, by the "enemy") at the door of the hall. It was entitled "The Immorality of Spiritualism," and contained a portentous indictment against Spiritualists and mediums, formulated by a gentleman bearing the historic name of Smith. The foulest charges are made in this precious production, which, amongst other things, states that "Spiritualism rejects the Bible. Sin is their creed." We thought that the time for this sort of thing had gone by; but it seems there are still a number of narrow-minded enthusiasts who cannot be restrained from exposing their mental deficiencies in print. However, we must expect the final kicks of bigotry and intolerance to exhibit a transient renewal of energy, even as the flickering flame of a candle leaps up once more into its wonted brilliance before it finally expires.



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EDITOR ... .. E. DAWSON ROGERS,  
Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

## Light.

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

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### REJOICING ANGELS.

Surely one of the loveliest and most consoling sayings in the Gospels is that which tells us there is joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth. Two things it at once suggests—that what happens amongst men can give the angels joy, and that the happy ones above think of the sorrowful and struggling ones below. We are persuaded that these two extremely simple but inevitable conclusions might half revolutionise Christendom—and help to save the world.

"Simple": yes; like all that the Master said; but so very deep. It is the simplicity of one who knows, not of one who argues. He tells us the most amazing things in the fewest words. In the truest sense of the word, he was a *revealer*. It may only have been intense conviction or keen intuition; but, whatever it was, it was *unhesitating, lucid, profound*. He did not dispute; he announced: he did not demonstrate; he affirmed: he did not reason; he saw. And, out of all that, grew the precious revelation that when but one poor sinner repented, Heaven was glad.

How near this brings us to the heavenly land, and to the shining hosts of the "New Jerusalem"! There is too much in the conventional creeds that suggests distance or unmindfulness. Heaven is pictured as a "happy land, far, far away," and the fortunate citizens of it are too frequently described as absorbed in ecstatic contemplation or selfish joy. But what a revising of everything comes with the clear inshining of this precious truth, that the happy heavens are aware of the sighs and tears of earth,—that "God be merciful to me a sinner," moaned below, adds a new joy to the blessed ones above! He who can master that will soon have to say:—

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.

We often speak of the blessed ones above, but how seldom do we live in the sunshine of the thought that their joy is not an isolated joy on which we may look from afar, but in which we cannot join!—how apt we are to think that when they "depart" it is "too late" to reach them with our penitence or our love! And yet, if the Master is right, they have *not* departed, and nothing can ever be too late. If he is right, they are very near us—in our rising and falling: they are still our own: they share our triumphs and stay by us in our defeats: they may be anxious because of our offences, but our advancement is still their solace and delight. The dear friend with whom we took sweet counsel is still a sharer in our endeavours:—

That face will shine  
Upon me, while I muse alone;  
And that dear voice I once have known  
Shall speak to me of me and mine.

I watch thee on the quiet shore;  
My spirit up to thine can reach,  
Though in dear words of human speech,  
We two communicate no more.

The good mother who here prayed and pleaded for her child, and saw, perchance, no answering signs of life, is mindful now of his progress in the way he since has found. The work of the wise and good ends not when they leave these dry and narrow fields of earth and time: and many a harvest will be gathered in, long after the sower has "gone home,"—ay! many a harvest sown here with tears and pains.

The effect of this thought upon multitudes, if once thoroughly grasped, might be equivalent to a mental and moral transformation. What, for instance, might the effect of it be upon one who would be startled by the thought, "Why, then, perhaps it rests with me to make my mother's Heaven complete! Her gentle teachings won the obedience and sympathy of my earliest years, but failed to secure the steadfastness of my manhood. And now, in that sphere of light and love, she prays for me and waits for me, until I make her prayers and teachings true." The world has never really believed and grasped it yet; and it has yet to discover what the effect of such a tremendous conviction would be.

And yet more. How this links us, the strivers here, with the dear watchers above! They rejoice not alone, and we strive not alone. United with them in their delight, we are united with them in our eager service. The tears we shed over *our* unmindful Jerusalem are answered by them with the Master's cry, "How often would I have gathered them, as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings!" The seed-corn, it is true, is in our hands, but angels look on and bless us as we fling it forth. The ground we tread is indeed only the common earth—so often, to our eyes, sterile and poor and mean—but it is the object of angelic interest and concern. When we fail, we do not grieve alone, and, when we succeed, we only add our joy to the blessedness of "the redeemed." The little children we teach at home or at school have other anxious faces than ours bent down to watch the growth and unfolding of the receptive soul; and, when we speak our fruitful word, they fail not to add the breath of life.

It is a mighty faith, and, for the joy and inspiration of it, the Christian Church might do well to go and sell all that it hath, that it might secure this priceless pearl: for, in comparison with it, what are all the creeds that ever emanated from man's over-contentious temper or over-curious brain?

### LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

The next fortnightly meeting of members and friends of the Alliance will be held at 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., at 7 o'clock on the evening of *Monday next*, when Miss F. E. Samuel, lately of Melbourne, Australia, has kindly promised to give an address on "Spiritualism in Daily Life."

"THE MYSTERIES OF MEDIUMSHIP."—The continuation of the narrative of Mr. Duguid's mediumship is necessarily deferred till next week.

PROFESSOR WILSON.—We have to acknowledge the receipt of a 20dol. bill from "B.C.," British Columbia, for Professor Wilson, which has been duly handed to him, and for which he desires to express his grateful thanks.

THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.—We have printed, in a convenient form, suitable for enclosure in letters or for distribution at public meetings, "M.A. (Oxon.'s)" "Advice to Inquirers, for the Conduct of Circles." We shall be pleased to supply copies *free* to all friends who will undertake to make good use of them. The only charge will be for postage—25, 5d.; 50, 1d.; 100, 2d.; 200, 3d.; 400, 4½d.; 600, 6d., &c.

THE Spiritualist can joyfully say "I do know, and *all* may know who will patiently seek for the truth." The real conflict of the hour is between the materialistic tendencies of the age and the spiritual philosophy—between those who set up "matter," whatever that may mean, and rule "spirit" out of their vocabulary: and those who recognise in all phenomena the presence and expression of Intelligence, the evidence of spirit as the only force.—"The Two Worlds."



## SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALISM.

DELIVERED AT ST. JAMES'S HALL, LONDON, ON  
SEPTEMBER 27TH, 1894, BEFORE THE MEMBERS AND  
FRIENDS OF THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, BY  
PROFESSOR W. F. BARRETT, F.R.S.E., &c.,  
*Professor of Experimental Physics in the Royal College of Science  
for Ireland.*

(Continued from p. 541.)

Now the general body of Spiritualists—who even outside Great Britain have their hundred journals and number some millions of people—are held together by a common faith; they have had evidence which to them has been sufficient: I am not speaking of your Association, which is, I take it, a semi-scientific organisation, but of the body of Spiritualists. You will agree with me when I say that their methods cannot with strict accuracy be called scientific. Whatever “assurance of things hoped for” they may have obtained, they can hardly be said, in a scientific sense, to “have proved the things not seen.” But if they have erred, science, as I shall show presently, has erred not less grievously, and more reprehensibly (because its knowledge and responsibility are greater), in not keeping its eyes open, as Sir John Herschel has said, to occurrences which, according to received theories, ought *not* to happen. Be this as it may, it is desirable that unscientific Spiritualists should recognise that their faith is foolishness, unless the facts on which it is based can be incontestably established in the dry and clear light of science. And I, for one, increasingly feel that, whilst psychical phenomena will be in the future a perfect gold mine for scientific research, they cannot be a religion—in the sense in which that word is defined by St. James, or as denoting that which prompts us to worship the Divine Being and obey His will rather than our own—though, as I have said before, they may be her handmaid as an aid to faith.

It is necessary, therefore, to ask ourselves—what is the exact sense in which the word “Spiritualism” is used? On the Continent this word is often replaced by the term “Spiritism” to distinguish it from the broad sense of the word as used by philosophical writers, to denote a metaphysic opposed to materialism. But the generally accepted sense in which the word is used to-day is defined (1) by Mrs. Henry Sidgwick, in the article “Spiritualism,” in the last edition of the “Encyclopædia Britannica,” as “a belief that the spiritual world manifests itself by producing in the physical world effects inexplicable by the known laws of nature,” or (2) by Dr. A. R. Wallace, in “Chambers’ Encyclopædia,” as “the name applied to a great and varied series of abnormal or preter-normal phenomena, purporting to be for the most part caused by spiritual beings,” or (3) by a writer in the “Spiritual Magazine,” whose definition I curtail, as “a science based solely on facts open to the world through an extensive system of mediumship, its cardinal truth, established by experiment, being that of a world of spirits, and the continuity of the existence of the individual spirit through the momentary eclipse of death.”\*

\* The Rev. Dr. Thornton, Vicar of St. John’s, Notting Hill, London, gave the following comprehensive statement of the belief of Spiritualists at the Church Congress in 1881: “The doctrine of those who are said to profess Spiritualism is, if I do not misrepresent it, something of this kind: ‘God is a Spirit and the visible universe is an expression to man of His infinite life. Man is a Spiritual being; each individual Spirit is a part of the great Over-soul, or Anima Mundi. The Spirit is enthralled in a body during this life; when released it at once enters upon the possession of higher powers and more extended knowledge; and its condition is one of regularly progressive advancement. Disembodied Spirits are able to hold converse with those in the body; not with all immediately, but through the instrumentality of privileged or specially gifted persons called mediums, who are, on occasion, influenced, or as they term it controlled, by the Spirits. Spirits can also apply force to physical objects, perform certain actions, such as writing or producing sounds; they can sometimes show themselves in materialised forms, some of the material being borrowed from the medium. A new era is dawning on us.’” “By intercourse with the Spirit-world man will advance as he has never advanced before, in knowledge, purity, and brotherly love.” Dr. Thornton goes on to say, and I quite agree with him: “There is much of the Spiritualist’s teaching

These definitions, it will be noticed, are somewhat progressive; the last is doubtless the usual meaning attached to the word by Spiritualists. I see nothing to dissent from in it, and, speaking for myself, I do not hesitate to affirm that a careful and dispassionate review of my own experiments, extending over a period of twenty years, together with the investigation of evidence, supplied to me from trustworthy sources, compels my belief in Spiritualism, as so defined. Hence, I place myself by your side, if, by so doing, I can in any way, however humble, help forward the attainment of truth.

As I have said elsewhere,\* “I am not so foolish as to suppose anything I can say will make an appreciable difference in public opinion, or that my testimony is superior to, or ought to have more weight attached to it, than that of several other observers. But it will, I hope, lead others to come forward and inform us of any unexceptionable evidence they possess, until ‘we drive the objector into being forced to admit the phenomena as inexplicable, at least by him, or to accuse the investigators either of lying, cheating, or of a blindness or forgetfulness incompatible with any intellectual condition except absolute idiocy.’” At the same time, I am sure you will all admit with me that much of what passes as evidence among certain Spiritualists has really no claim to this distinction, and is only evidence of the difficulty of preserving a sound judgment and uninterrupted attention when dealing with these obscure phenomena. Nor is this to be wondered at. When any of us have obtained what we deem conclusive proof of some amazing occurrence, and are thereby convinced, we are all apt to relax the stringency of our inquiry, and accept as corroborative evidence what to an unconvinced outsider may seem capable of quite a different and more familiar explanation. At the outset we all start from very much the same level; some, of course, are worse observers than others; some jump to conclusions too readily: their judgment is less valuable; but the uniformity of the laws of nature is the common experience of mankind, and the man who tells us his gooseberry bush is bearing cucumbers does not expect to be believed until we can verify his statement. There are some who assert that *no* evidence, however weighty, could make them believe in phenomena that are impossible. The great Von Helmholtz, whose loss to science we all deplore, once said to me that “neither the testimony of all the Fellows of the Royal Society nor the evidence of his own senses would lead him to believe even in thought-transference, as it was impossible.” I shall deal with what is possible and impossible presently, but the fallacy in Helmholtz’s assertion arises from the common mistake of thinking belief can be given or withheld at pleasure. Belief is not a voluntary act, but an involuntary state, of the mind, arising from the evidence to which we have given our attention. We can, of course, refuse to listen to the evidence, but, having listened to it, belief or disbelief follows, whether we wish it or not, according as our judgment considers the evidence conclusive or otherwise.

Here it would not be unreasonable for an outsider to ask me to relate the evidence that has come under my own observation, and has led to the faith that is in me. To some extent, I have done this in various papers—*e.g.*, in the “Nonconformist” for October, 1875; in my paper upon the British Association in 1876; in two papers in the “Psychological Review” for 1881-2; and in the “Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research,” for April, 1883, and March, 1886. But, as you well know, it is hardly possible to convey to others who have never wit-

with which the Church can most cordially agree, but there is much that is error; the personality of evil is denied, and the Scriptures displaced from the post of honour due to the written word of God.” (“LIGHT,” October 8th, 1881, p. 313.)

\* “Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research.” Vol. IV., p. 38



nessed any of the Spiritualistic phenomena, an adequate idea of the strength and cumulative force of the evidence that has compelled one's own belief.

I may, however, very briefly refer to two investigations, out of very many, because, in these two cases, owing to the unexceptionable nature of the evidence, belief in the genuineness of the phenomena could hardly have been withheld even by, say, our friend Mr. Podmore. The mediums were neither professional nor paid. In one the medium "F." was a bright little child, the daughter of an English solicitor of high standing; and in the other the medium, "X.," was a lady of mature years, the relative of a leading Irish photographer. The phenomena occurred in full light; in the case of the child, in broad daylight, even sunlight; in the other case, in daylight or abundant gaslight; and every opportunity was afforded me of making the investigation as rigorous as possible. Some of the manifestations occurred in my own house, not previously entered by the medium, while all the phenomena occurring with little "F." took place in a house belonging to a personal friend, who was absent at the time and took no interest in Spiritualism. It made no difference whether anyone but myself and the medium "F." were excluded from the room, or whether others were present to check my observations. Now, what occurred were those elementary and yet astounding physical phenomena with which you are all familiar, and which I ought to apologise for describing. The most persistent and frequent occurrences were raps in different parts of the room, more or less remote from the medium and usually far out of reach of anyone present. The raps were undoubtedly objective; the exact spot could be localised and even the physical vibration felt. They were heard by all present and by strangers suddenly called in. The loudness varied from gentle ticks to loud taps such as would be made by smartly striking the table with the edge of a paper knife. The movement of furniture also occurred. Seated one day, in full sunlight, at a large mahogany dining table, big enough to seat twelve at dinner, the little medium "F." and her parents (inquirers and, at first, sceptics like myself) being present with me, all our fingers were visibly resting on the top of the table, when three legs of the table deliberately rose off the floor to a height sufficient to enable me to put my foot beneath the castors. Let anyone try to imitate this by using all the muscular force he possesses, and he will find, as I did, that even allowing the hands to grasp the table, it cannot be done. Even more startling movements occurred in the other case with the adult medium "X." A heavy loo table in my own house pranced about in so demonstrative a manner, and made such a racket, that it was heard all over the house. This, also, was in daylight, and the movements could not have been accomplished even by the combined muscular exertions of all present. But, perhaps, the most startling phenomenon was the unexpected movement of a small table, *without the contact of any person*—a curious swaying and singularly life-like movement, the table advancing until it ultimately imprisoned me in the arm-chair in which I was sitting. Here, too, there was plenty of light; in this case it was gaslight, but sufficient to enable me to read in any part of the room, and I could plainly see that the table was untouched by anyone. To suppose that the table was moved by invisible and non-existent threads, worked by an imaginary accomplice, who must have floated in the air unseen, is a conjecture which sceptics are at liberty to make if they choose.

But the impressive fact in all these phenomena is the *intelligence behind them*, and the evidence of an unseen individuality as distinct as our own. Lively repartee, a pleased assent, or a vigorous and often angry dissent, were exhibited; the characteristics of each influence were preserved, and you felt in the presence of a living but unseen person. In the case of the little medium "F.," the character-

istic of the controlling influence was pure fun; in the case of the adult medium, it was serious purport. The information given was not beyond that possessed by the mediums, or, at any rate, by the unconscious subliminal self, and the intelligence was distinctly of the order of that of the medium. Nor can I say, from my own experience, that I have ever obtained evidence that goes beyond this. That is my misfortune, for a large amount of experimental evidence does exist, which, in my opinion, goes far to prove that those who have once lived on this earth continue to live after "the momentary eclipse of death." Such evidence is furnished, I think: first, by apparitions of those who have recently died; second, by the trance utterances of Mrs. Piper and others; third, by the statements in Mr. Stainton Moses' "Spirit Identity"; fourth, by individual experience such as Mr. Dawson Rogers and others have obtained, and given from time to time in the columns of "LIGHT"; and fifth, by the evidence contained in Madame Home's "Life of D. D. Home," which Mr. Myers and myself have discussed in the "Journal of the Society for Psychical Research" for July, 1889. All, however, that I am prepared to assert, from my own experience, is that neither hallucination, imposture, mal-observation, mis-description, nor any other well-recognised cause can account for the phenomena I have witnessed, and that the simplest explanation is the spirit hypothesis. A provisional theory which physiologists may propose, when they accept the evidence we offer them, is that of an "exo-neural" action of the brain, but this will have to be a sub-conscious action, for, to our consciousness, it is unknown and undesigned. Further, this must be supplemented by a store of available energy in the unseen, which can not only be controlled and liberated by the subliminal self (as the gunner sights the gun and pulls the trigger), but also, in some unknown way, can be made to act directly upon lifeless matter. I daresay some such view will be enunciated with an air of authority before another quarter of a century. Nor must we be surprised. We are laying the foundations of a new and spacious annexe to the temple of knowledge, and we must be prepared to see a forest of scaffolding—in the shape of theories and working hypotheses—arise. Only thus can the solid stones of fact be laid and the temple upbuilt, but we who have adventurously gained a distant glimpse of the plan can hopefully await the time when the disfiguring but needful scaffolding will be removed, and the beautiful and spacious edifice revealed—an enduring possession for those who come after us.

I will not weary you with reciting other evidence of a similar kind that has come before me. To those who are unacquainted with the wonderful phenomena that have been obtained by Professor Alexander of Rio de Janeiro, I would refer to the full details, which are given in the "Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research" for July, 1891. In this case, also, the medium was one or other of two little girls, daughters of a friend of his, and here, not only did the movement of heavy objects by unseen intelligences occur, but "direct writing," under test conditions, took place in full lamplight; an unseen hand wrote messages on a slate, touched by the child's fingers only, the writing being far superior in execution to the childish caligraphy of the medium. Then luminous appearances presented themselves, at first a flitting, playful light, then growing in definiteness till a form was said to be seen by the little mediums, though not by others present. The clairvoyance was apparently shared by a dog, who gazed upward and barked at the figure, and at another time shared by a baby, who, gazing with astonishment, and pointing to an unseen figure, called, "Man, man," and at last said, "All gone!" Unseen hands were felt by all the sitters, caressing those present, and eventually the imprint of a tiny baby foot, far smaller than that



belonging to any of the sitters present, was obtained on a school slate, over which a coating of flour had been spread.

I have mentioned the name of D. D. Home—in spite of the wide notoriety which he attained and the hostile spirit which he so frequently encountered I can find no *proof* of fraud in any of the amazing phenomena which were obtained through his mediumship. My friends, General and Mrs. Boldero, neither of whom were Spiritualists, gave me some evidence regarding Home which I have published in the "Journal of the Society for Psychical Research,"\* but as that journal is only accessible to members and associates of the Society, I will, with your permission, quote part of it here:—

GENERAL BOLDERO'S ACCOUNT.—It was at the end of February, 1870, Home came to visit me by invitation, at my house in Coupar Fife. He arrived immediately before dinner, and after dinner we, Mrs. Boldero, Home, and myself, sat in the drawing-room for any manifestations that might occur. The room was quite light, the gas being lighted, and a bright fire burning. Home sat with his back to the fire, at a small table, with a cloth on it. I was opposite to him, and Mrs. Boldero was on his right hand. A piano and Mrs. Boldero's harp were at the end of the drawing-room some 10ft. or 12ft. away. Almost immediately some manifestations occurred; in a little while the table moved towards the piano. I saw a hand come out on my side from under the table, pushing out the tablecloth and striking notes on the piano. Afterwards I saw a whole hand as far as the wrist appear without the tablecloth and strike the notes, playing some chords on the piano. At this time Home was some distance off, and it was physically impossible for him to have struck the piano. It was equally impossible for him to have used his foot for the purpose. I was perfectly confident at the time and am now that trickery on the part of Home was out of the question. After that some chords were faintly struck on the harp standing immediately behind me. We asked for them to play louder, and a reply came by raps, "We have not power." Then voices were heard speaking together in the room, two different persons, judging from the intonation. We could not make out the words spoken, as Home persisted in speaking to us all the time. We remonstrated with him for speaking, and he replied, "I spoke purposely that you might be convinced the voices were not due to any ventriloquism on my part, as this is impossible when anyone is speaking in his natural voice." Home's voice was quite unlike that of the voices heard in the air.

MRS. BOLDERO'S ACCOUNT OF THE SAME SEANCE.—On February 28th, 1870, Home arrived at our house shortly before dinner. After dinner we agreed to sit in the drawing-room at a square card-table near the fire. In a few minutes, a cold draught of air was felt on our hands and knockings occurred. Several messages of no consequence came, questions being asked and answered. I was exhorted to pray more. A rustling of dresses was heard, as of a stiff silk dress in the room. [General Boldero recollects this also.] My gold bracelet was unclasped whilst my hands were on the table, and fell upon the floor. [General Boldero agrees to this.] My dress was pulled several times. I think I asked if the piano could be played; it stood at least 12ft. or 14ft. away from us. Almost at once the softest music sounded. I went up to the piano and opened it. I then saw the keys depressed, but no one playing. I stood by its side and watched it, hearing the most lovely chords; the keys seemed to be struck by some invisible hands; all this time Home was far distant from the piano. Then a faint sound was heard upon my harp, as of the wind blowing over its strings. I asked if it could be played louder; an answer came, there was insufficient power. Later on in the evening, we distinctly heard two voices talking together in the room; the voices appeared to come from opposite corners, from near the ceiling, and apparently proceeded from a man and child, but we could not distinguish the words. They sounded far off. Home was talking the whole time the

voices were heard, and gave as his reason that he might not be accused of ventriloquism. During the whole of this séance, the whole room seemed to be *alive* with something, and I remember thinking that no manifestation would surprise me, feeling that the power present could produce anything. Home himself remarked that he had rarely had so satisfactory a séance, attributing it to the fact that the conditions were unusually genial, being undisturbed by any conflicting elements. Throughout, Home seemed to be intensely, and very genuinely, interested in the whole séance. I am perfectly sure that Home could not possibly have played the piano himself; his touching it was wholly out of the question. General Boldero saw a hand playing on the piano, but I did not see this.

If it is urged these things took place some time ago—though I fail to see what difference that makes if the evidence is good—I would point to the remarkable phenomena going on at Milan at the present time through the mediumship of Eusapia Paladino, and which have been witnessed and attested by some of the most eminent and critical English and Continental observers. I am not at liberty to anticipate the paper, even if I knew its contents, that will be shortly presented to the Society for Psychical Research on this subject. But you have already had in "LIGHT"—a journal which is a standing memorial of hard work and honesty of purpose, and which deserves a very wide circulation from the freshness and variety of its contents—for April and May of last year a report of the commission of inquiry on the phenomena attending Eusapia Paladino. The commission consisted of five professors of medical or physical science, three doctors of physics or of philosophy, and one Russian Councillor of State; the names including men of world-wide reputation, such as Professor Lombroso, Professor Schiaparelli, Professor Charles Richet, &c., and the phenomena they describe are similar to those that occurred in the presence of D. D. Home. Even although the delicate *psychical conditions* which underlie these manifestations prevented this commission, and will probably always prevent us, from getting the same exact evidence which we obtain, say, for a new chemical element, yet this ought not to surprise any student of experimental psychology; on the contrary, it is an additional testimony that the phenomena really are, what we believe them to be, glimpses of a transcendental world.\*

(To be continued.)

\* The important paper by Dr. Oliver Lodge, F.R.S., referred to above has since been read before the Society for Psychical Research, on October 26th, 1894, and is referred to in "LIGHT" for November 3rd. In it Dr. Lodge, after the most searching investigation, in which he was aided by Professor and Mrs. Sidgwick, gives the deservedly high authority of his name to the "real and objective existence" of most of the phenomena long asserted to occur by Spiritualists. Dr. Lodge states:—

"The things for which I wish specially to vouch, as being the most easily and securely observed, and as being amply sufficient in themselves to establish a scientifically unrecognised truth, are (always under conditions such as to prevent normal action on the part of the medium):—

- (1) The movements of a distant chair, visible in the moonlight, under circumstances such as to satisfy me that there was no direct mechanical connection.
- (2) The distinct and persistent bulging and visible movement of a window-curtain in absence of wind or other ostensible cause.
- (3) The winding-up and locomotion of the untouched *châlet*. [A musical cigar-box, shaped like a *châlet*.]
- (4) The sounding of the notes of the untouched accordion and piano.
- (5) The turning of the key on the inside of the sitting-room door, its removal on to the table, and subsequent replacement in door.
- (6) The audible movements and gradual inversion of an untouched heavy table, situated behind the medium and out of the circle; and the finding it inverted afterwards.
- (7) The visible raising of a heavy table under conditions in which it would be ordinarily impossible to raise it.
- (8) The appearance of blue marks on a surface previously blank, without ostensible means of writing.
- (9) The graspings, pattings, and clutchings of my head, and arms, and back, while the head, and hands, and feet of the medium were under complete control and nowhere near the places touched."

It is needless to add that the observers satisfied themselves that no other person had any part in these occurrences, which also included the appearance of a large hand and the outline of a large face, outlined against the dim light of the night sky.

WHEN people try to put their weakness on nature they must not forget that nature endowed them with double consciousness—a lower and a higher—to choose between an animal and a spiritual existence for the future. The first leads to ignorance, darkness, and an earth-bound condition; the latter to inspiration, light, and happiness—two conditions known to orthodoxy as hell and heaven.

\* "Journal of the Society for Psychical Research," July, 1889, pp. 127-128. Notes of what occurred were written shortly afterwards, and the evidence was independently given to me by each observer. On subsequently reading over Mrs. Boldero's evidence to her husband, the General agreed that, where a difference existed, his wife's account was more exact. A detailed account of a still more remarkable séance with Home, on February 4th, 1870, was written down by General, then Colonel, Boldero a few hours after it took place. It is, unfortunately, too long for quotation here, but is given in the Society for Psychical Research "Journal" referred to above.



## SPIRIT IDENTITY.

## THE CASE OF "WILL KENNEDY."

By EDINA.

This is an interesting case, and raises some nice points for students of psychology.

In the early summer of 1890, a message was automatically written by the hand of our family medium, purporting to be from "Professor Wilson," better known in Scotland by his cognomen of "Christopher North." With that message I dealt exhaustively in the columns of "LIGHT" at the time it came; and to that article I beg to refer. Suffice it to say that the message was completely verified, except the statement in it that it was Mrs. Gordon, his favourite daughter, who erected the tombstone to his memory in the Dean cemetery. The message contained a reproduction of a portion of the family tree of the Wilsons, which was printed in a foot-note to Mrs. Gordon's life of her father, published in the "early sixties," and which foot-note neither the medium nor myself had ever read before. Very soon after the above communication was written, the following lines were penned on a sheet of note paper:—

It speaks to my spirit, the voice of the past,  
As I listlessly move on my way;  
And pleasures that were far too pleasant to last  
Shine again as they did in their day.

Across the broad meadow and down the green lane  
I have sped on the light foot of love,  
And I stand, as I stood long ago, once again,  
By the old mossy seat in the grove.

The furrow lies deep on my time-stricken cheek,  
And the life blood rolls languidly on,  
But the voice of the past has not ceased to speak  
With the feelings of years that are gone.

WILL KENNEDY.

Now, the only person of that name, and who subscribed his signature as above, known to me was an Edinburgh Writer to the Signet, who died about 1876, and although he was the last person in the world whom I expected to "burst into song" when in this sphere, I was under the impression at the time of reading the above stanzas that they emanated from him, because very shortly before I had one message, clearly disclosing identity, from his former managing clerk, now also on the other side, whose personality and characteristics were well-known to me, and I therefore connected the "look-in" we now had from Mr. Kennedy, and the writing of the verses, with that old Edinburgh Writer to the Signet. The poetry I had never seen before, and could not conjecture whether the verses were spiritual or earthly. I was perfectly familiar with Mr. Kennedy's signature, having a sample of it in my possession, and the subscription "Will Kennedy," appended to the verses, bore no resemblance to the signature of the deceased Writer to the Signet. The whole matter, therefore, remained to me an unsolved mystery for four years; and I could hardly reconcile the prosaic and keen old lawyer of my acquaintance with the "William Kennedy" who had written the above verses in the summer of 1890.

Over four years had elapsed before the solution of the problem came to me, or at all events before I could formulate a theory as to the production of the above stanzas. In August last we were in occupation of a house in the country which possessed a large and well-selected library, which contained *inter alia* a varied and extensive collection of poetical works. One wet forenoon I was taking a glance over the various editions of the poets on the shelves, when at the top of one of the large book-cases I came upon three volumes of the works of the minor Scottish poets. Turning over the leaves of one of the volumes, I found all the songs or poems had appended to them *fac-similes* of the signatures of the writers, and among these I was much surprised to find a poem bearing the signature, "Will Kennedy." Examining it closely I found it bore a strong resemblance to the one lying in my house at Edinburgh appended to the poem before quoted, and written in 1890. This led me to make a careful search in the volumes for the poems of William Kennedy, who, for the first time, I discovered was a Scottish poet. My search was rewarded by finding the following lines:—

It speaks to my spirit, the voice of the past,  
As I listlessly move on my way,  
And pleasures that were far too pleasant to last,  
Shine again as they did in their day.

In an Isle of the West there's a tangled retreat,  
Which the sweet sun looks bashfully on;  
And my soul has flown thither in secret to meet  
With the feelings of years that are gone.

Across the broad meadow, and down the green lane,  
I have sped on the light foot of love,  
And I stand, as I stood long ago, once again,  
By the old mossy seat in the grove.

Ah! yonder the oak tree; and under its shade,  
One with looks full of welcome I see;  
Yes! Yes! 'Tis my Ellen, in beauty arrayed,  
As she was when she first met with me.

Remembrance is rapture; nay, smile if you please,  
While you point to my thin locks of grey;  
Yet think not a heart with emotions like these,  
Ever knows what it is to decay.

The furrow lies deep on my grief stricken cheek,  
And the life-blood rolls languidly on;  
But the voice of the past has not yet ceased to speak  
With the feelings of years that are gone.

Comparing the poem of six verses, which was "unearthed" by me this autumn, with that written by our family medium in 1890, it will be found that three out of the six verses were reproduced four years ago. The signature in the book bears a striking resemblance to that penned in 1890; and my belief now is that this message was written by a minor Scottish poet, named "William Kennedy," regarding whose life, history, or date of passing over I have as yet no information whatever, although I have consulted more than one book of biographical reference. If you ask me how I account for the appearance of this Scottish poet of a bygone generation upon the scene I cannot do more than formulate the theory that as "like draws to like" on this side of the grave, the same rule holds good in the spirit world, and if, as I am convinced, Christopher North, a leading Scottish poet, wrote us a message disclosing his identity and personality, it is permissible to hold that another poet of the same country has found himself *en rapport* with Wilson on the other side, and been impelled, also, to communicate with us. This case possesses a marked similarity to that of Charles Dickens, discussed by me in "LIGHT" about three years ago, where a portion of the messages consisted of an abridged or condensed version of two of his Christmas stories—this reproduction being, however, quite coherent and intelligible.

I have further to state (1) that at the date this message was written our daughter was not very powerful as a writing medium, her powers being then imperfectly developed; and (2) that neither when Professor Wilson (Christopher North) wrote, nor when the message signed "Will Kennedy" was penned, did she see either of the communicators. This faculty came to her later on, and has continued ever since, so that when a message is written *now*, we are usually able to identify the communicator by means of photographs, which makes this phase of mediumship very complete and satisfactory. Any theory as to the medium having seen the poetry of William Kennedy in 1890 is out of the question. I am quite familiar with every book she peruses, and your readers may take it as an undoubted fact that until August, 1894, neither she, nor any member of the household, ever heard of the poet Kennedy, or had read a single line of his works.

AGENTS FOR "LIGHT."—We shall be grateful if our friends will kindly supply us with the names and addresses of any news-vendors or others, whether in London or the country, who either keep "LIGHT" for sale, or are willing to do so.

THE value of phenomena obtained under real "test conditions" consists in the fact that they are conclusive. Every séance must stand on its own merits. Where manifestations have been carefully observed, and the possibility of fraudulent action on the part of the medium has been eliminated, the facts remain and are unaffected by any subsequent misconduct on the part of the medium. For instance, no charge of fraud brought against Eusapia Paladino, or Mrs. Mellon, after the séances reported by Dr. Lodge and Mr. Morgan, can alter the facts attested or destroy the evidence adduced. But where mediums sit promiscuously under loose conditions, and the sitters rely as much on the good faith of the medium as upon the phenomena, should the medium subsequently fall from the path of rectitude and yield to temptation, a feeling of uncertainty and suspicion then naturally arises in the minds of previous sitters and they fear that they, too, were befooled. Hence the necessity of fraud-proof conditions for the sake of mediums, that truth may be established and the sitters protected.—"The Two Worlds."



## MRS. BESANT AT A SEANCE.

## A SPIRIT REPUDIATES THEOSOPHIC TEACHINGS.

We abridge from the Sydney "Sunday Times" of October 7th, a report, by a special representative of that journal, of a remarkable séance through the mediumship of Mrs. Mellon. The séance took place at Sydney, on Saturday, September 30th, at the residence of Dr. Mac Carthy, Elizabeth-street, Hyde Park:—

As Mrs. Besant was to lecture in the Opera House in the evening the séance was held in the daytime and the subdued light which constitutes one of the favourable conditions for materialisation was obtained by an arrangement of curtains and venetian blinds by which the degree of light could be regulated as required, although it may be mentioned that at no time during the séance was the semi-darkness too great to prevent reading the time by the dial of an ordinary watch.

The arrangement of the room was much the same as on the occasion of the séance previously described in the "Sunday Times," except that all superfluous furniture was cleared out to make room for the larger number of sitters. The cabinet, as it is technically called, consisted simply of a brass curtain-rod and pair of curtains fixed across one corner of the room, behind which was placed a low chair for the medium.

At about three o'clock the proceedings commenced by most of the sitters joining in singing, and after two or three airs had been got through, whilst in the midst of "Ye Banks and Braes," a tall form, enveloped in white drapery, appeared in front of the cabinet. At first the outline was indistinct, but gradually it took on that of a man, and was recognised by previous sitters as that of "Geordie." Soon the singers ceased, and the ghostly visitant announced the presence of another spirit, a lady, and just then a female form appeared to the left of Geordie. Almost immediately he remarked: "There are three of us here," and had scarcely spoken when the little sprite known as Cissie was seen standing on Geordie's right, all three forms being distinctly visible together.

Soon afterwards the female form which had first come, disappeared within the cabinet after bowing several times. Cissie now came out, took up a hand-bell which stood on a small table near, and rang it vigorously. Some of the company asked her to go over to Mrs. Besant, but she appeared either somewhat shy or not sufficiently strong to do so, and, after retiring into the cabinet, reappeared. "Come along, dear," said Mrs. Besant, encouragingly, and the little figure toddled across and handed her a flower, received one from her in return, played a few chords on an auto-harp, and then retired, kissing her hands as she disappeared.

Dr. MacCarthy next formally introduced Geordie to Mrs. Besant, saying:—

"This is George Thompson, Mrs. Besant. He is commonly known as Geordie. Allow me to introduce Mrs. Besant, Geordie; one of the most remarkable women of the age, or of any age."

Geordie replied: "I know it," bowing gracefully; and added, "Most delighted to meet you, Mrs. Besant."

The following conversation then took place between Dr. MacCarthy and Geordie:—

Doctor: "Geordie, will you answer me one or two questions? Tell me—are you George Thompson?"

Geordie: "I am, and no other."

Doctor: "Do you carry with you your own distinct and complete intelligence, or are you the desire-body or Kama-rupa or 'spook' of the Theosophists?"

Geordie: "I have my own complete intelligence. Do you take me for a lunatic? I am not a desire-body nor a spook—neither am I the sub-conscious intelligence of anyone present, doctor."

The latter part of the reply being a palpable hit at the doctor's favourite theory provoked some laughter amongst the circle.

Doctor: "One more question, Geordie. Have you been retarded in your development since you first materialised?"

Geordie: "No; on the contrary, I have progressed."

Mrs. Besant here asked if she could see the medium, and Geordie having answered "Yes," he brought Mrs. Mellon outside the cabinet, when Mrs. Besant was led forward by the doctor, and took the medium's hand, Geordie still standing alongside in view of the whole circle.

Geordie then retired, and after a brief interval another female form appeared, which, by its graceful proportions and long flowing hair, was easily recognised as Josephine, another frequent visitor to the circle. She bowed to the company, advanced with an almost imperceptible motion towards Mrs. Besant, who handed her some flowers, bowed her acknowledgment, and then, by request of some of the sitters, dematerialised outside the cabinet, the form gradually diminishing until only a small luminous cloud with a trace of the dark hair was visible on the floor, and then vanished altogether. Geordie then re-appeared, and remarked, "I don't think I can do much more. I'm afraid I'm overdoing it." He then asked that someone should go to the medium, and thereupon instantaneously vanished as the doctor entered the cabinet.

He found Mrs. Mellon in a very exhausted condition, and states that her pulse was very rapid and feeble, scarcely perceptible. Mrs. Besant also went forward and took her hand, and, as showing the power of contact, the doctor states that after a few moments the pulse resumed its force and volume, and its rate lowered almost to normal.

The sitting lasted altogether about one hour and three-quarters, and was undoubtedly of a most astonishing as well as interesting character. Upon any other hypothesis than that of spirit materialisation the manifestations are perfectly inexplicable, unless it can be supposed that all present were hypnotised into believing that they saw the forms and heard the conversation which took place. At all events, eighteen persons of creditable standing, and at least average intelligence, and whose word would be taken without hesitation in any court of justice, saw and heard all that is above described, and if such evidence is not to be accepted, I can only ask what can?

Of the genuineness of the manifestations, to whatever cause they may be ascribed, there can be no reasonable doubt. I have been unable throughout my investigations, extending over numerous sittings, besides those reported in the "Sunday Times," to discover the slightest trace of fraud, or the least indication leading to a suspicion of it, irrespective of the improbability that the persons present at the various séances would mutually consent to be duped or to dupe each other.

The interpretation of the matter must be left to others.

Whether it can be explained away by any purely materialistic theory, whether we adopt the theosophic theories of astral bodies, spooks, or elementals, or whether on the whole we must fall back upon Spiritualism as a fact, may, perhaps, be open to question, or reserved for future demonstration. One thing may be freely admitted and ought to be acknowledged by all fair-minded persons, which is, that the unknown and the unfamiliar are not necessarily the impossible.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

[The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents, and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views that may elicit discussion.]

"Questor Vitæ" on "Life as Reality."

SIR,—In the supplement to "LIGHT" of November 3rd, "Questor Vitæ" replies at great length to a criticism of mine which appeared on August 25th. Without allowing as long an interval to elapse, it may be some weeks before I am at leisure to deal adequately with what I regard as the fundamental misconceptions of your very able contributor. But they are of such serious import that I desire to be allowed to say at once that I do not propose to leave the article in question without reply.

C. C. M.

Mr. Maitland and His Critics.

SIR,—I cannot help thinking that by his reply to my strictures, Mr. Maitland has rather aggravated than ameliorated his position. He accuses me of misquoting his words and misrepresenting his meaning. I am sorry to say that he does not quote himself correctly. In his communication to you, which appeared in your columns of November 3rd, he tells your readers that he did not speak of "disintegrating souls," but of "disintegrating debris of souls passed on." Now what were his actual words? Turn to his letter of October 6th and you will find this assertion: "Consisting of debris, in course of disintegration, of souls passed on."

I gave him credit for not using the vile phrase "disintegrating debris," as it is obviously tautological.



Mr. Maitland proceeds to explain, or leads us to infer, that a "phantom" is the *débris* of a soul. Indeed! A phantom may be the most perfect, the most useful, and the most charming pictorial presentment of a being, either an inhabitant of this world or the next! To talk of *débris* in connection with such an object is a misapplication of terms, for *débris* means something ruinous and chaotic, if it means anything.

To speak of the "*débris* of a soul" is to represent the soul itself in a state of disintegration—an actual decomposition of its structure and vitality.

Of course I do not here venture to discuss Mr. Maitland's imputations upon the extent and quality of my intelligence.

I leave your readers to draw their own inferences, and I think that they will agree with me that Mr. Maitland has confuted none of my criticisms.

I now retire from this controversy.

NEWTON CROSLAND.

#### Miss Marryat's "The Spirit World."

SIR,—My attention has been called to a narrative given by Miss Florence Marryat, at pages 226-7 of "The Spirit World," of occurrences which she describes as having taken place at a ball where she and Mrs. Russell-Davies were present. She speaks of "two girls" having so conducted themselves in the Barn Dance that she "really thought they would be called to order by the Stewards of the Ceremonies" as they "might have been matriculating for the music-halls." It is true the young people entered into the dances with much spirit, as young people usually do, but as I was Steward of the Ceremonies on that occasion it is only right that, for the credit of myself and of the company, I should give my assurance that there was no such conduct as Miss Marryat describes, and that the scene which she so graphically depicts only existed in her own imagination.

Woburn House, 12, Upper Woburn-place. A. J. SUTTON.

#### SOCIETY WORK.

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

53, GROSVENOR-TERRACE, CAMBERWELL GATE, S.E.—Sunday next, at 7 p.m., clairvoyant séance; Tuesday, at 8 p.m., clairvoyant séance; Monday and Thursday, at 8 p.m., developing circles.—W. G. COOTE.

218, JUBILEE-STREET, MILE END, E.—On Sunday last Mr. Dale gave a delightful and interesting address, which was greatly enjoyed by the audience. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m. Mr. Butcher will give an address on "The Baptism of Truth."—W. MARSH.

245, KENTISH TOWN-ROAD, N.W.—At our service on Sunday Mr. J. H. Bangs gave an eloquent discourse upon "Why I Became a Spiritualist." The lecturer compared his early experiences in Deism, Atheism, &c., with the soul-comfort derived from a knowledge of the life beyond the grave. Mr. Warren presided at the great organ. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. T. Dales on the "Sun and Planetary Influences on Character." Thursday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—Mr. J. E. Dobson delivered a very able address on Sunday last on the London School Board Election. His programme is an advanced one, and judging by the hearty reception it met with, it was evidently in keeping with the views of the majority of those present. Next Sunday, at 6.30 p.m., Temperance Branch Anniversary. All Spiritualists who are total abstainers are specially invited. On Monday, at 8 p.m., social evening party at Winchester Hall, Peckham. All welcome.—W. E. LONG.

14, ORCHARD-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, SHEPHERD'S BUSH, W.—On Sunday last we had a full meeting. Mr. J. T. Dales delivered a very instructive and interesting discourse upon "Dreams: Whence they come, and their Interpretation," quoting the Bible to prove their spiritual foundation. Mrs. Mason sang the sacred solo "Heaven is my Home," accompanied on the organ by Mr. J. H. Brooks. Sunday, at 7 p.m., séance, Mr. H. Towns; Tuesday, at 8 p.m., Mrs. Mason, séance; Saturday, at 8 p.m., spirit circle.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

LONDON OCCULT SOCIETY.—Our next fortnightly meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 20th, at 8 p.m., at 113, Edgware-road (one minute from Marble Arch). Mr. F. W. Read will then deliver a lecture on "Alchemy." As I believe that this is the first time that a lecture on this subject has ever been given in London, we trust that some of your readers will be present. We hope that friends will not let these occult

lectures pass without attending. On December 4th, Mr. Bryant will lecture on "Magic"; and on December 18th, Mr. A.T.C.L., President, 15, Lanark-villas, Maida Vale.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—On Sunday last Dr. Reynolds gave a very instructive address on "The Omnipotence of the Mover of all Things," marshalling a long array of scientific facts in support of his conclusions. In reply to a question, the speaker explained why his idea of the Almighty differed so materially from the orthodox so-called Christian notions. His main reason for embracing Spiritualism was the discovery, by the help of those who have passed over, that God is truly love. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Rodger; Thursday, at 8 p.m., open circle.—J. B.

NOTTINGHAM SPIRITUALISTS' GUILD, MORLEY HOUSE.—Mr. Bevan Harris's "Lantern Lecture" on Wednesday, November 7th, was an agreeable diversion and a decided success. It was a pleasure not only to have spirit photography, art, &c., described, but also to witness life-size portraits of many of the most prominent workers in the cause of Spiritualism; and when Mr. Harris told the audience of the help he had received from the Editors of "LIGHT," "Two Worlds," and numerous other friends, they were evidently much gratified. A vote of thanks and a hearty "God-speed" concluded a very enjoyable evening.—T. S., Hon. Sec.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—On Sunday next, Dr. Reynolds will occupy our platform, and Mr. Savage will meet inquirers as usual on Friday. Mrs. Stanley's guides, on Sunday last, gave an interesting address on "Spirit Life in the Spheres," the subject being chosen by the audience. We had a crowded hall, not a seat being vacant. Mrs. Robertson rendered a solo, which was highly applauded. We hope our members will remember the half-yearly meeting which takes place on Sunday, December 2nd, after our service, and we earnestly request all members to be present. Friends desirous of tickets for Miss Florence Marryat's lecture, on December 4th, at the Town Hall, Stratford (prices, 2s., 1s., and 6d.) can have them by applying at 23, Keogh-road, Stratford.—T. MACCALLUM.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—The interest continues. At 7.15 on Sunday evening last every available seat was occupied, and a hearty welcome was accorded Miss Samuel, who spoke on "Our Personal Responsibilities as Spiritualists." As we confidently expected, we found that in Miss Samuel Spiritualism has an able and useful exponent. The clearly expressed utterances, the many wise thoughts, and her natural charm of manner at once claimed the attention of the audience, and the address throughout was eminently useful to Spiritualist and inquirer alike. Miss Samuel sang "The Better Land" at the conclusion of her address, rendering this grand song with the ability which has already gained for her so much appreciation. Next Sunday evening, November 18th, Mr. Thomas Shorter on "Spiritual Religion."—L. H.

CHEPSTOW HALL, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Tuesday last Mr. Robson gave an inspirational address, warning people against pretenders, who are just now starting up in all directions, advertising themselves as teachers and mediums when they know practically nothing of Spiritualism, and are doing an inconceivable amount of harm to the cause. The warning was a much-needed one, as, from what has come under our own observation, it is nearly time some supervision was kept on certain advertising persons and places, and their credentials closely scrutinised before publicity is so freely afforded them. Questions were answered by the controls, and several patients were magnetically treated. On Sunday, Mr. Butcher gave a trance address on the "Light of the Ages." The lecture dealt with the evolution of the religious idea from the earliest ages. The address throughout was an eloquent, soul-satisfying sermon. A reading from Lizzie Doten's poems preceded the address. On Tuesday, at 8.30 p.m., open circle, Mr. Robson; and magnetic healing by Mr. Edwards. On Sunday next, at 6.45 p.m., Mr. Stokes will occupy the platform, and a band will assist during the evening.—W. H. E.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We are in receipt of several letters with which we hope to deal in our next issue.

E. L. B. (Paris).—Next week.

H. H.—Good. But for us to publish it would look very much like an exhibition of vanity.

B. (Liverpool).—As we have already suggested, a sufficient reply to your questions would occupy more time and space than we can afford to give, especially as you can obtain all the necessary information by reading the literature of the subject. Copies of "LIGHT" can be procured at the meetings of the Daulby Hall Society, Liverpool.

A. G. S. (Cornwall).—We think you are quite on the right course. Patience is needed, and you should try gradually to withdraw your thoughts from the work that is being done, and after a time you may expect to find that the writing has become really automatic, and that you are yourself quite unconscious of what has been written.