

# Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe

"WHATEVER DOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul

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### NOTES BY THE WAY.

They greatly err, or sadly miss the mark, who see in 'the occult' only a sort of wizardry, and in the Spiritual only a kind of field for wonderful phenomena: and they also err and miss the mark, though in a less degree, who by 'the higher Spiritualism' mean conduct or philosophy, important as these are. The innermost truth of Occultism or Spiritualism is that which elevates the mental and spiritual self above all material conditions, and gives one the victory by giving one one's-self. Margaret B. Peeke gives, in 'The Arena,' a beautiful exposition of this truth, and shows that the ideal is moving on to fulfilment. But what an ideal! How impossible it seems!—

What is the need of the hour? What should we think of life on this planet if we had never seen it before, but dropped upon it from some other sphere? Open-eyed let us look upon humanity as we should then find it, forgetting that we are a part of the great tragedy. The first thing we notice is the fact that the universal elements, earth, air, fire, and water, the four free gifts of God to man, over which man should have no control, are not free to the race, but are taxed, restricted, and monopolised by the few. Such a condition would not be deemed possible by advanced intelligences of other worlds, for this alone would be sufficient cause to breed crime, sickness, and poverty. If true occult law prevailed, all this would be blotted out, for this philosophy teaches that the realm of true knowledge is open only to the subjective mind, the subliminal self, and this can only be reached by the subjugation of animal desires and selfish propensities. This at once excludes from this realm all who accumulate property at the expense of others; all who hoard up wealth for selfish purposes; all who do not exercise the law of love in their private, social, and business relations with others. Does this all seem chimerical and Utopian? Nevertheless it is at hand. I speak of what mine eyes have seen, I testify of that which I *know*.

We have only to consult the great leaders of the day in spiritual matters—and this does not mean clergymen and church officials; we have only to compare the world of to-day with the world of twenty-five years ago; we have only to study the rise and progress of the Salvation Army; we have only to note the bearings of the World's Parliament of Religions; we have only to observe the work being done by the rich among the working-classes; we have only to read the live periodicals of the day; we have only to listen to the snatches of conversation in travelling, to be forced to the conclusion that a peculiar spirit is at work beneath the surface of humanity (even as a leaven works beneath the surface of the flour) that is surely bringing forth a new order of things that will establish a new kingdom upon earth.

'God and the Ant,' by Coulson Kernahan (London: Ward, Lock and Co., 1s.), is an original little booklet, daintily presented in every way. The worst of it is that it can be read in half-an-hour: the best of it is that it could be profitably thought-over for a month. It is not exactly a pleasant book, but it ends well. The title is accounted for by the central incident in the dream. In reply to the

blasphemies of millions, a wise woman comes to the defence of God, and says many convincing things, one of the best being this:—'Can the ant crawl up into the brain of man to see man's world as man sees it? Yet has man, whose whole world is, in the eyes of God, but as one ant in a universe, thought to creep into God's brain, to think as He thinks, to see as He sees, and to judge the Omnipotent by man's little laws.'

'Lyrics,' by R. H. Fitzpatrick (London: W. Stewart and Co.), has touches of promise in it. The tiny bits 'From "Meta,"' the last five lines of the first sonnet, 'Hymn to the God of Liberty,' 'Father,' 'Sonnet—to G. D. F.,' are distinctly noticeable, though by no means great. The following verses from 'Father' will give a fair idea of the 'promise' we find here:—

When anxious care corrodes the day,  
And nights of calm no comfort bring,  
And hope, a bird on wounded wing,  
Is weakening down to bite the clay;  
In anguish, bitterer than pain,  
A weeping child, I turn to Thee;  
And sobbing, through my tears I see  
A road to heaven in the rain.

'A road to heaven in the rain,' is a true poetic gleam. Unfortunately there is rather too much on the other side, for so very small a book: but the worst things in the book are mere juvenilities, though, for all we know, the author may be threescore years and ten; but, spiritually, very much of sentiment, love-passion, sentence-building, rhyming rhapsody, and readiness to die are very juvenile.

What a pretty and instructive little story William E. Bryant tells in 'The New England Magazine' concerning Joseph Jefferson! Here it is:—

One pleasant summer's day, after enjoying a fishing excursion with him, while riding home to 'Crow's Nest,' jogging along through the forest path, I had occasion to remark, turning from some discussion of stage matters, that it sometimes seemed to me that life was not ordered as wisely as it might have been, that we had too little opportunity to exercise our mature judgment and utilise our experience. The first twenty years of life, I said, are spent in preparation, and the next twenty in experiments and blunders, and when we are old enough to appreciate life and its opportunities, when we are really well-balanced mentally and physically, then decay begins, and before we know it we are ready to be shelved, if death does not cut us down before our powers have begun to decay. Mr. Jefferson listened quietly to my murmurings, putting out his hand occasionally to guard his face from the overhanging branches of the trees as we drove through the tangled wood-path, and then said, with a quiet earnestness that was impressive:—

'My friend, you are not right. You would be right if this life ended all. It does not. I feel sure you are wrong. It seems to me that there must be a hereafter, where we shall continue to grow. I am convinced that this is merely the beginning of life. There is much in Nature itself to enforce the idea of immortality. The caterpillar even teaches that. Would God have made that crawling, unpleasant grub, and transformed it into a beautiful butterfly, perpetuating its existence from one state to another, and leave man, the noblest of his creatures, to grope through this world and be annihilated? Oh, no, my friend—there is



surely a future for you and me not bounded by time. What it is I have no very clear idea ; but it will be somewhere. It will be where we can grow and expand.'

It really behoves all good Spiritualists to literally set their faces against the gross fashion of wearing birds and birds' wings on their heads. How near we are, after all, to the savage squaws ! Frances E. Willard is on the war-path, we are glad to say. She has just fired the following shot at the bird-wearers :—

The most shocking experience of my life this year was consequent upon an unwary visit to a Boston milliner's establishment, where without stopping to say 'By your leave,' an attendant perched upon my head a fifteen dollar bonnet crowned with five canaries ! I asked them where they got the brilliant birds with which their show cases were filled, being curious to know if they were slaughtered by the Zulus of Africa, or the wild Islanders of Terra del Fuego ; whereupon they intimated that there had been great *sparrow-killing* in America this year, and that the feathers of these little creatures had been dyed. This helped to explain the new style and the superabundance of material. If Indians in Alaska should so trick themselves out, as an offset to that leaden sky, one might better comprehend the motive ; but for Christians to go to church wearing a small flock of birdlings and piously listen to the sweet lesson, 'One of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father,' is a curiosity of cruelty for which no adequate explanation can by any possibility be furnished.

The Baptist 'Watchman' (Boston, U.S.) makes a lively admission concerning old sermons. It is pretty reading, remembering what a Baptist 'Watchman' used to be :—

As a matter of fact truth needs to be retranslated, not only from century to century, but from decade to decade, from year to year, from month to month. This principle applies to the Scriptures themselves. One of the main duties of a Christian preacher is to translate the Bible into the vernacular of his age. Whenever you find a Moody or a Parkhurst, a Spurgeon or a Gordon, you find a man who succeeds in doing this. On their lips the truths of revelation address us in the tongue 'wherein we were born.' Let any minister attempt to preach a sermon written twenty-five years ago, and he will confront an illustration of our meaning. He may hold to the same truth he held to then, but the old sermon will not preach. The better sermon it was a quarter of a century ago the less preachable it is now. There is no mystery about this. The things he could take for granted then he has to prove now ; what he had to prove then he can take for granted now.

The surface meaning of that is startling enough, but there is also a good deal between the lines. What an encouragement it is to go on teaching and wakening up these dear old creed-spinners !

It really is a fact that people who are identified with religious and kindred (may we say 'Spiritualist' ?) subjects are specially touchy and curiously apt to take offence and turn militant. What is the reason ? Let us hope it is zeal for the truth ! The St. Louis 'Christian Advocate' spots the malady but does not indicate the remedy. It says :—

Why do Christian folk, preachers especially, take offence so easily at statements with which they do not agree, and display irritability for causes so trifling ? If charity 'is not easily provoked,' then many of us have a very slight acquaintance with that noblest member of the triad, for *we are* easily provoked, and, being provoked, we let fly through the church paper and say ugly personal things that we could not get into the columns of any 'worldly' paper of our acquaintance.

THE LATE DR. WILSON.—Mr. J. J. Morse desires to acknowledge the receipt of ten dollars from 'B.C.,' British Columbia, for the widow of the late Dr. Wilson.

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## MR. W. T. STEAD ON SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

In our last issue we alluded to the remarks of MR. W. T. STEAD, when opening the proceedings on the second day of the Conference, as being of sufficient general interest to warrant our publishing them at length, and we now have pleasure in doing so.

After some general observations relative to the position he occupied as chairman of the meeting, Mr. Stead said that one of the questions they (as Spiritualists) had to deal with was how they could best impress upon the minds and hearts of their fellow men and women the faith which they had, more or less by their own individual inquiries, verified for themselves. A person who, having a faith which comforted him when he was depressed, strengthened him when he was weak, and who did not wish to communicate that faith to his fellow-creatures, was a scoundrel. He (the speaker) hoped, therefore, that, friends or unfriends alike, they had no scoundrels there—he hoped they all wished, so far as in them lay, to communicate what they believed to be true to others and get them to believe it also.

Referring to the fact that at one of the debates on the preceding day he had drawn attention to the desirability of converting such men as Professor Huxley and Mr. Maskelyne to a belief in the genuineness of Spiritualistic facts, Mr. Stead said that he had no particularly idolatrous regard for either of the gentlemen named, but he did recognise them as persons whose word and authority would be recognised as decisive by vast multitudes. 'You and I,' proceeded the speaker, 'cannot go round and convert thirty or forty millions of people all over the country ; but if we could convert the bell-wethers of the flock, the flock would follow all right.' While, therefore, he did not regard the scientist and the conjurer with any spirit of idolatrous veneration, he felt that they had to 'noble' these people somehow. But they would never 'noble' them with idle talk. They would have to show them facts, to give them tests, to prove to them that Spiritualists were not idle, deluded fools, but men and women with their heads screwed on their shoulders the right way. It was easier now to convince people than when modern Spiritualism first began. This was due largely to the efforts of the very men whom some of them were inclined to belittle and degrade—he referred to the so-called vulgar and uneducated mediums. If they wished to convince people of the truth of spirit communion they could do it by utilising the later researches of physical science. How could anyone, for example, be brought to believe that the room was full of spirits ? They could not demonstrate the presence of spirit beings by any process of physical analysis. He did not know whether any of the persons present had seen an experiment he had once witnessed, but it was one that enabled a person to understand how the room might be full of disembodied spirits. He had seen a woman hypnotised. While in the hypnotic state she had been told by the hypnotiser that he (Mr. Stead) had gone out of the room. She had then been brought out of the hypnotic state, having previously been told that when she came to herself she would find that Mr. Stead had gone. On coming out of the mesmeric condition (but under the influence of the suggestion made to her), the woman went and looked all round the room for Mr. Stead. Everybody else could see him except herself. To make the test as strong as possible, she was induced to take the chair occupied by Mr. Stead, and try and sit down upon it. Naturally she would find this impracticable, but would be entirely ignorant of the cause in spite of repeated attempts to occupy the chair. To carry the experiment further, a piece of paper bearing some printed words had been pinned on Mr. Stead's back. The hypnotic person would then be



brought face to face with Mr. Stead, and be caused to read the writing on the paper pinned to his back, all the while unconscious of his presence. It was a very simple experiment, and might be witnessed in any hypnotic chamber. That Mr. Stead should have become invisible (although not intangible) to a hypnotic subject under the influence of a suggestion, and that this hypnotised person should be able to see through his body and read printed words on his back, made it seem no longer impossible that we might be surrounded with people who were invisible to us.

Another experiment related to the subject of crystal gazing. If any of those present had never seen a camera obscura, he would advise them to take an opportunity of doing so. You go (said Mr. Stead) into a darkened room, with a table in the centre. Over the table was stretched a sheet of white paper; at the top of the room was a circular tube with openings in it. The operator pulled a string, and you beheld on the table pictures of the outer world. Thus, in the camera obscura at Edinburgh one could see a pictorial representation of the soldiers drilling on the esplanade of the Castle, or a view of St. Giles', or it might be 'Arthur's Seat,' or a piece of the High-street with the people moving along. If one told a person who was ignorant of the science of optics that such a thing was possible—that pictures of the surrounding country could be projected on to a table in a darkened room in the manner described, he would probably set his informant down as a perverter of the truth. Yet the fact remained—the pictures were seen. Somewhere or another, up aloft, there was a celestial camera obscura, by which it was possible for persons gifted with a certain faculty to look into a crystal or a goblet of water and to see the living, moving, miniature resemblances of things that had happened, that were happening now, and, stranger still, that were going to happen in the time to come. On the previous evening they had heard a most interesting paper read by Mr. Traill Taylor on Spirit-Photography—a paper which opened a door through which it seemed not improbable that, as they went on, they might obtain solutions of many of the problems relating to the unknown laws of optics and of light. The idea that it was possible to secure by photography pictures of a person thought of, pictures of pictures, or landscapes themselves, without any lens or camera, opened up possibilities and suggested thoughts before which the imagination itself trembled and faltered; but these possibilities were of the future; what they had to do with was the immediate present.

What would our grandfathers have thought had we told them that in the twinkling of an eye the flight of a bird could be indelibly printed on a sensitive plate? Men were, however, on the brink of even greater discoveries. They were beginning to learn that by some invisible method, they knew not what, all they said and all they did was imprinted elsewhere, to be revived when the proper treatment was applied—psychic or otherwise—that corresponded to the photographic process. Take the phonograph. Anything more absurd than the statement that our voices could be reproduced after death, any number of times, could have hardly been imagined a few years ago. But what a flood of light the phonograph threw on many of the phenomena of the under-world. They might go to haunted houses—to houses haunted by what the Psychical Research Society would call 'rehearsal ghosts.' They might go to a place where every night, or on certain nights, some tragedy was set forth, reproducing some old murder done, perhaps, ages ago. The old explanation was that the spirit of the murderer had, for a punishment, to go, over and over again, through the scene of his crime. But that did not account for the fact that the victim was also there, and that unhappy person had presumably to be murdered over again. Yet if they took Edison's kinetoscope in

combination with a phonograph they might obtain, by the turning of a handle, the reproduction of some scene as it was, and the words of people spoken long ago, reproduced together. Then they began to understand better the nature and possibilities of these hauntings. There was yet another of the discoveries of science, and that was telegraphy without wires. They had heard quite recently how, on one side of a strait, wires had been stretched, and on the other side another set of wires, and that messages sent along the wires on one side could be read on the wires on the other side. This experiment had been carried out by the electrician of the General Post Office. If clumsy, bungling experimenters like themselves, experimenting in matters the very nature of which was unknown to them—if they could obtain these results, was it altogether improbable that those who were on the other side of the veil knew how to communicate with them without the aid of mechanical means or appliances?

He had only one word to add in conclusion, and that was regarding what they should do in order to utilise the powers which some of them possessed. If the people on the other side were (and he believed they were) anxious to open up a way by which they could communicate freely and constantly with the loved ones whom they had left behind, was it showing much regard for their wishes to allow them, or such pallid rays of their thought as came to our minds, to drivel away in inane commonplaces and truisms which every Sunday-school boy learnt before he was ten years old? It was terrible, when they were trying to solve some tremendous problem in natural science, to be told that they ought to be good—that they ought to love each other. It was all very true; but it did not need a spirit to come from 'the vasty deep' to tell them that. He had frequently consulted 'Julia' on these matters, and when she had written about it he had said, 'What do you wish to be done?' And what she had said was this: 'What you want is mediums—good mediums—not merely good psychics, but mediums who have some care for the cause and the desire to labour for their fellow-men in their hearts.' Supposing you had obtained a supply of good mediums, and someone came to you mourning, broken-hearted, yearning to gain some tidings of someone who had gone before, and of whose fate they felt in utter darkness. You went first to an ordinary clairvoyant, and stated the desire of the bereaved to gain word of the departed. Then let a record be made of what the clairvoyant said, let the description be noted and taken down. Then it was necessary to go from the normal clairvoyant to those psychics who were somewhat further advanced, who were not only clairvoyant but clairaudient, and let them say what they saw and heard as to the identity of the spirit who might appear, allowing no communication whatever between the normal clairvoyant and the clairaudient. Next go to a medium for automatic writing, and ask whether the person whom it is desired to hear from will use the hand of the automatic writer. If a letter is obtained, then go to a medium like David Duguid, and see if you can obtain a photograph of the person. Then a psychographic medium might be consulted—one of those mediums through whom autographs in the direct writing of the departed are obtained—and an effort made to obtain, under test conditions, in locked slates, the signature of the deceased. Then, if there was an approximate agreement in the results obtained through all the mediums, as a final experiment a visit might be paid to a materialising medium in order to ascertain whether it was possible to get the spirit sought for materialised. Then (so Julia had written) if you do that, and you have the whole range of tests, and they all agree, how much longer do you suppose that people will go about indulging in the old fallacy that dead people are dead and not alive? (Applause.)



Mr. Stead concluded his observations with an apology for trenching upon the time of the Conference. We venture to think the apology needless, and the time excellently well occupied. The address was altogether helpful and suggestive.

## PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS OF SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY MR. JAMES ROBERTSON AT A MEETING OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SPIRITUALISTS, IN THE PORTMAN ROOMS, LONDON, MAY 13th, 1895.

A wise man has written, 'We should talk about those subjects we have had long on our minds and listen to what others have to say about subjects we have studied but recently.' This subject of public phenomena I have had long on my mind, have given it some consideration, and yet at times have thought that my views regarding it might be mistaken. A few words should suffice to tell all I feel with reference to the matter. My reasons in favour of the bias I hold may appear crude and imperfect to many. I am here, however, to listen to what may be stated in opposition to my views, and I think that I am capable of being affected by the thoughts of other minds. We are desirous, that is, those who have got over the borderland of doubt and reached the realm of fact and certainty, that Spiritualism should be presented in its best garb. Many feel, after dwelling closely within its sphere, that it is the one authentic finger-post which can give direction and guidance regarding a future life. We want, therefore, to utilise this knowledge, so that others may acquire that satisfaction which has brought gladness and rest to our own lives. We are being often told by writers whose views are without much permanence, and who have never come close to genuine Spiritualism, that the cause has suffered more from the ignorance of its friends than from the malice of its enemies. Now, we do not want ignorance to rule. We want to discover the more excellent way, and work wisely and with method. We cannot forget, however, the words of the immortal Shakspeare: 'Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny.' I for one cannot forget what the enthusiasm, the courage, and the deep reverence for the truth shown by some of those less cultured people who are called ignorant have done for the cause, knowing it better than their critics, for they have kept the flame lighted, and held it up prominently to the world. We are met to confer, however, with all classes and types of Spiritualists, and I have little doubt that our talk will be read widely, and carefully weighed by the many who are not present with us, for Spiritualism has a tendency to make men and women think. I come from a Northern latitude, and have had much less experience of public exhibitions of phenomena than many of my friends elsewhere, so that my views regarding the question may not be the result of an enlarged survey, but I have never encouraged promiscuous gatherings to witness physical phenomena and materialisations. I have never felt that they could assist in any way the growth of the work, seeing that the conditions under which they have to be presented are such as could not satisfy the sceptic. Whatever the future has in store, we certainly are not warranted from past experiences in inviting the public to witness these forms of manifestation, save under exceptionally good conditions, unless we wish to bring forth a further crop of exposures, and thus discredit the movement. The Spiritualists have ever been few who would offer their marvels to the unready. There are, however, the phenomena of clairvoyance and psychometry, which already play an important part in our public meetings; and regarding these, I know pretty fully the opinions of many tried and earnest workers, to whom Spiritualism is the pearl of great price, and several of those who have seen much are most emphatic in their condemnation of exhibitions of these phases on Sundays. They hold that it is only the philosophy that should be expounded on the platform, that Spiritualism is too sacred for sensation-mongers, and under no consideration should we seek to satisfy curiosity or phenomena hunters. Others, again, equally wise and devoted, and with lengthened experience, are very positive in declaring that the growth and success of the movement largely depend on giving the public some glimpses of evidence for the claims which are made. We have come from so many different schools to reach our present home that the subject is bound to be viewed with differing eyes. I feel, how-

ever, that it is the same regard for Spiritualism which makes the one say, 'We are not likely to attract thoughtful and religious minds by public displays,' and an equal veneration that makes the other say, 'Every opportunity should be taken to make the phenomena patent to all.' There is identity of sentiment, though difference of opinion.

Now, at this representative gathering, we have to consider all aspects, and make as certain as we possibly can that we are treading the right path. As Andrew Jackson Davis has said, 'Spiritualism is but a little child whose feet are not yet well poised to the earth's centre,' and we may, therefore, have to modify and re-arrange our sentiments on many points of the phenomena and philosophy as well as on this of public exhibitions of phenomena. I have to confess that some of the most painful hours I have passed have been when attempts at clairvoyance and psychometry were given publicly. At these times I have felt that we were not presenting our truth in its best form. To listen to the medium swimming and fluttering in a sea of words—beginning anywhere and ending nowhere, a mixture of oracle and jargon—was indeed painful. So indefinite were the descriptions that it was little wonder there were few recognitions. But at other times I have had pleasant experiences and felt it an honour to preside, when the spiritual medium, without any straining after effect, spoke not only with simple grace, but in words pointed and clear, portraying the characteristics of some who had marched onwards. I have felt that the great bulk of the people were moved and quickened, and that most useful and consoling work was being done. I know how difficult it is for a sensitive to stand forward exposed to influences and impulses from a variety of sources, and give striking evidence; the subtle alchemy connected with the manifestations we know little of as yet. But there is such a thing as training of one's gifts in a given direction, and, if we can get a medium who, in the glare of the sun or the gas, can, in the presence of a hostile audience, produce manifestations, then the cause can be furthered and lifted from a position of indifference into that of absolute and acknowledged truth. It is very pleasant to listen to the finely-rounded and glowing sentences which fall from the lips of our prominent and inspirational speakers; these have for years supplied certain wants in our movement which nothing else could supply; they have at least brought us the credit of being intelligent, if not religious. But when we claim that our facts are abundant, that evidences as to spirit people are at our doorstep and we need scarcely go round the corner to look for them, we should, where possible, give some ocular demonstration. 'Show us these things' is quite a natural request, and if we only give eloquent speech and no facts, does it not look like 'an empty vaunt, a thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want'? Clairvoyance and psychometry are amongst the most important of our phenomenal evidences, their reality is admitted by all who are Spiritualists. We have a striking fact, and the question is, What should we do with it? We are told Truth should be preached from the housetops. Well, if these are real facts, surely we are warranted in presenting them from a spiritual platform. If Spiritualism is to prove to man an after existence, it should, in its elementary stage, display its facts. We can become respectable and have all kinds of nice things said about us if we stick to preaching, but if we wish to advance the subject we should boldly, in spite of all unbeliefs, prove our position by showing the world some of the things about which we are constantly talking. What has the past taught us in this matter? Have these public exhibitions of phenomena helped any human soul? Are there on record well-attested cases of persons who have been arrested and convinced by clairvoyant descriptions and messages which bore evidence of coming from 'behind the veil,' and who from this starting point have gone on and participated in the fuller knowledge? Allowing for some exaggeration in published statements, undoubtedly names and incidents are oftentimes given to strangers. Only two weeks since, in Glasgow, one of our most prominent workers, our vice-president, a man of considerable intelligence, and with strong religious feeling, told us the story of how, being located in some American city, he was attracted to a spiritual meeting-place, and there, a complete stranger, he got such tests as convinced him that what he had hitherto despised was a living and valuable truth. He has not slackened in his devotion to advance the knowledge since that first eventful visit. I have little doubt that there are friends here who could tell a similar story. Now, if we could command mediums who are capable of giving clear messages,



instead of a handful striving here and there to keep open the doors and devising means to meet expenses, we could command respect, and present an unbroken front to every foe and have associated help for every need. I don't say we should convert the world at once to our consoling knowledge. All good and permanent work is of slow growth, but certainly many earnest souls would be helped to a readier knowledge of higher things. The present generation will not have to undergo the terrible mental friction which some of us have passed through regarding theological problems, from the fact that Carlyle and Emerson, Francis William Newman, Tennyson, Theodore Parker, our own John Page Hopps, and some of the brilliant German writers have cleared away the snow, and made a path whereon we can walk dry footed and clean shod. But even John Stirling, after getting out of the theological mists, in his last letter to Carlyle, said: 'As to a future life, certainly I have none.'

Spiritual phenomena, demonstrating a rational after-life, will carry us a step higher up the ladder, and make actual the dreams of poets and prophets. We want to give attention to the development of those who show signs of spiritual gifts, and assist them till they become capable for the special work we need. Of course, we must consider whether public mediumship is prejudicial to the workers, whether promiscuous gatherings are likely to deteriorate them in any way. We will not do any wrong that good may follow. All these are points for the consideration of the real Spiritualist. We hear a good deal about mediumship destroying the moral and spiritual quality of our public workers, but when I look at those prominent men and women with whom I have come into the closest contact, I see no evidence. Who would say that Mrs. Britten is not as bright an ornament of our cause as she was twenty or thirty years since? Is there less of nobility in the character of J. J. Morse, E. W. Wallis, and many others, than at the outset of their career? To return to my main argument, however, I hold that the bulk of the strangers who attend Spiritual meetings have a purpose in view. Many are passionately seeking foothold, and it is not idle curiosity that draws them out, but rather some dim religious sentiment which seeks satisfaction. Religion all the time has been a doubt, and people want to make it a certainty. Very little in the way of evidence might be able to change the whole current of a life. What Robert Dale Owen witnessed at his first sitting in Naples seemed of trivial import; hundreds would have passed it by as of no moment, but to him there came for the first time the possibility that there might be proof of an after-life, and we all know with what devotion he afterwards laboured, and what a rich legacy he left us in those remarkable volumes, so calm and logical, 'Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World,' and 'The Debatable Land.'

If we can by public exhibitions give any one the first hints of the actuality of a future existence, then no better work could occupy our attention. I reached the Happy Valley through another road than platform phenomena, but I am of opinion that had I come in touch sooner with what I have witnessed at times in the shape of public phenomena, they would have stirred me and forced me on to further investigation.

Spiritualism has come to many by glimpses rather than by steady and continuous looking, and I think there is no better method of giving brief glimpses than for mediums who are strangers to their audience to unfold their gifts in this way; and thought, when once awakened, does not again readily slumber. Much of our work hitherto has been of the most chaotic kind; we have started from no premises and, therefore, come to no conclusions. We have done little for our mediums, though we have been ever ready to criticise and look at the worst side of them. We have had little of sober converse together, seeking to adjust our methods. We have been terribly deficient in definite goal or aim, and yet, thanks to the workers beyond, see how Spiritualism has spread! It cannot be written down, nor sneered, nor frowned down. It seems a part of the celestial machinery of God, and continually goes on its conquering way, in spite of our weakness, our cowardice, and our lack of organised method. I hope the outcome of this Conference will be to speak to the consciences of the many who know the facts in their entirety, but who are not workers with us. I do not speak of those who are only on the way to knowledge; with Carlyle, I say, 'What the light of your mind pronounces incredible that leave uncredited'; but I speak to those who hold aloof because the outside world looks upon Spiritualism as a superstition, a bit of weak credulity, forced

into activity by deception and fraud. The truth has suffered less, I think, from 'the ignorance of its friends' than from the cowardice of its believers. A movement that has had amongst its prominent exponents such honoured names as Alfred Russel Wallace, Gerald Massey, the Owens, Halls, and Howitts, and the scholarly Stainton Moses, is surely worthy of being revered and upheld by even the proudest names.

#### CLAIRVOYANCE BY MRS. ELLEN GREEN.

I have often regretted the lack of some systematic record of the clairvoyant descriptions which are regularly given by our principal mediums who exercise this gift on our platforms.

I regard this phase of mediumship as a powerful aid to propaganda work and peculiarly fitted to take a part in our public services, when presented with clearness, delicacy, and discretion. Having presided at nearly all such meetings held in Cardiff during the past five years, and being in the habit of taking brief notes of each description, I am able to speak definitely as to their strikingly successful character, the percentage of recognitions ranging, at the lowest estimate, at from eighty-five to ninety-five. Our principal experience has been with Mrs. Green, of Heywood, whose powers in this direction, always of a high order, appear to have gained greatly in lucidity since her recovery from her long illness. We had the pleasure of a visit from Mrs. Green on April 28th and 29th, and out of thirty-one descriptions given at the three meetings, all except one were recognised before the audience left the hall. Some of them were more than usually striking, owing to peculiar marks, scars, manner of death, &c. One such was given to Mr. W. (one of our members). A young man was described, first as to personal appearance, and then as to manner of 'passing on.' He appeared with clothes dripping, as if he had been taken out of water; and then a peculiar sensation as of suffocation, though not by drowning, was described. The description was a most accurate one of Mr. W.'s son, who, having business to do for his father with a vessel at Cardiff Docks at night time, accidentally fell into the dock, but managed to get out again. He at once went home, where he proceeded to take a bath which was heated by gas; unfortunately, the gas by some means was extinguished without being turned off, and it is assumed that the poor young fellow, being overcome with fatigue, probably fell into a doze, and was then suffocated by the escape of gas. After the meeting Mr. W. (who is still young in Spiritualism) informed me that before coming to the meeting he had communicated (not for the first time by very many) with his son, by means of the 'table,' and got him to promise, if possible, to show himself clearly for description by Mrs. Green. Of course, no one but Mr. W. knew of this, and he was consequently highly gratified with the result.

Mrs. Green's great amiability of character, tact in refraining from describing what would tend to wound feelings, and the incidental side-lights thrown by her remarks upon the various conditions of spirit-life, make this portion of her valuable labours at once interesting, impressive, and convincing. I could say much more upon this most interesting topic, but regard for your valuable space prohibits more at present.

E. ADAMS

(President Cardiff Psychological Society).

#### RECEIVED.

- 'Lucifer,' for May. (London: 7, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C. 1s. 6d.)
- 'The Metaphysical Magazine,' for May. (New York, U.S.A.: 503, Fifth Avenue. 25 cents.)
- 'The Review of Reviews,' for May. (London: Mowbray House, Norfolk-street, W.C. 6d.)
- 'The Arena,' for May. (Published at Boston, U.S.A. London Agents: Gay & Bird, Chandos-street, W.C. 2s. 6d.)
- 'The Palmist,' 6d.; 'The Popular Medical Monthly,' 1d.; 'The Senate,' 6d. (London: The Roxburghe Press, 3, Victoria-street, S.W.)
- 'The Esoteric Basis of Christianity; or, Theosophy and Christian Doctrine.' By WILLIAM KINGSLAND. (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 7, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C. 3s. 6d. net.)

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.



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EDITOR ... .. E. DAWSON ROGERS  
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## Light.

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

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'LIGHT' may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria Lane, London, and all Booksellers.

### A PARTING GLANCE.

Before our late Conference becomes a thing entirely of the past, we think it may be distinctly useful to review its proceedings in so far as they affect the future; bearing in mind that for the sake of the future the Conference was held; though, by the way, we hold that if only for the enjoyment and inspiration of those few hours, the holding of this Conference was well worth our while. It is sometimes not very wisely said that, after all, such meetings end only in talk. That is truly a pitifully short-sighted view of the whole situation. In order to show what they end in we should have to follow to their homes all who attend them; to note a thousand secret thoughts; to trace the effect, upon the will, of a strong or cheery word; to see the effect of a sense of comradeship upon much lonely and apparently unprofitable effort. Truly, we do not know where 'talk' ends. Is it not the well-spring of thought and desire, aspiration and resolve, hopefulness and love?

There was, to some extent, for instance, a divided feeling as to the ideal religious service, but surely no difference of opinion existed as to the value of the Sunday evening service when some six hundred worshippers united in ardent and happy aspiration. We venture to say that the majority of those who were present went away brightened and encouraged, with a deepened sense of the gravity as well as the beauty of our truly glorious faith. The same may be said of most of the meetings during the week. We doubt very much whether many of 'the May meetings' will surpass ours in vivid interest and genuine enthusiasm. Even on the score of numbers, we have no reason to be ashamed. There are some old 'Denominations' who have not done as well.

The discussions were singularly keen, varied, pregnant. At all religious Conferences there are two standing troubles—the eagerness of cranks, and the tendency to pass round the melted butter. From these troubles we were remarkably free. No one could say that we were impractical; and no one could even suggest that we praised one another too much. In fact, for people who so strongly urge the vital point of brotherly love, a cynical critic might suggest that we use 'great plainness of speech.' But we are not cynical, and we do not wish to be specially critical. We rejoice in individuality, frankness, strength of feeling, and eagerness in opinion. These are all signs of health, vigour, growth. Besides, we hold that variety is precisely what we want; not disharmony, but variety. So far from regretting that all do not want the same thing in the same way, we welcome every experiment of living, for the expression of thought and the setting-forth of our 'pearl of

great price.' The only thing we would insist upon is the widest and most respectful charity.

The truth is we need all moods, all points of view, all temperaments, all voyages of discovery. But it is highly necessary to bear in mind that everything is good only in its place and time. What in private would be orderly and edifying, might, in public, be disorderly and injurious. For instance, we are old-fashioned enough to believe in the value of phenomena through the table; but what prudent person would encourage 'table-turning' and 'table rapping' on a public platform? Zeal needs to be guided by a sense of fitness, and enthusiasm by an insight into utility in such matters. Here is room for all. Let every idea be ventilated: let every method be tried: but 'let everything be done decently and in order,' as said the wise and yet zealous Paul.

More than once, there was a dead set made against the 'one man' method. 'How can you arrange to have a preacher inspired for, say, next November 17th at 7.15?' And of course that wins a cheap cheer. But, in whatever sense we believe in inspiration, why should we not time it? Even if we go the whole length of saying that the preacher is used by a spirit, why should we not make an appointment with a sensible guide or inspirer? But should we mend it if we trusted to 'the spur of the moment'? That spur has pricked many a fool to his undoing. And yet we hold that the idea of co-operative and self-conducted meetings is a thoroughly good one—and good from nearly every point of view. But, here again, we want everything in its order and in its place. Experience meetings are most valuable. The time will come when our most interesting and useful meetings will be meetings for the bearing of testimony—when simple-hearted, modest, gentle souls will tell their story, or reveal their hopes, or break the bread of life by offering encouragement to those who need. We are convinced that, for the doing of this work, there is a great amount of undiscovered ability: but, in the effort to discover and utilise it, all must be patient, and to some must be given the power to gently but firmly repress or guide.

We need not recall the various important subjects discussed at the Conference. Every one had its value, and some of them deserve to be read and studied with the help of our printed reports; but we cannot pass over Mr. Stead's challenge, backed up by his sketch of an ideal work. We may say at once that we entirely agree. We want the systematic tests for which he asks, and we want the mediums he tells us are necessary. But, while we are waiting for these, will he excuse us for asking him to set an example? He has told the world that he possesses a gift of unique interest and value. This gift specially lends itself to tests of the very highest interest. Will he take half-a-dozen of us into his confidence, and co-operate with us in an effort to test the reliability of the information he receives? The particulars he has given to the world are as thrillingly interesting as they are profoundly important. In some respects they are different from and surpass everything of which we have heard. Will he arrange for tests?

But, to return to our general parting glance. The Spiritualists of London have shown a part of their strength. We are sure there is much more beyond. What has been done should be only an incentive to begin and carry on a really great campaign.

MR. PAGE HOPPS'S ADDRESS, entitled 'Spiritualism, the Key that unlocks all Doors,' will be reprinted in the next number of 'The Coming Day.'

MR. W. H. DICKSON, Park-lane, Newbury, writes to say that he would esteem it a favour if Newbury Spiritualists would communicate with him.

CONFERENCE NUMBER OF 'LIGHT.'—We have a few copies left of last week's issue of 'LIGHT,' containing a report of the proceedings at the Conference; 2½d. per copy, or 2s. 4½d. per dozen, post free. An excellent number for distribution amongst inquirers.



## THE WATER-DIVINER AT WORK.

We are indebted to the courtesy of the Editor of 'Black and White' for permission to reproduce the following interview with Mr. Leicester Gataker from the pages of that journal, one of the best—if not the very best—of our weekly illustrated papers:—

## INTERVIEW WITH MR. LEICESTER GATAKER.

'Incredulity is my greatest obstacle,' said Mr. Leicester Gataker, to a 'Black and White' representative, as they rushed through the dreary wastes of East London on their way to Essex, whither he had been summoned to find water by means of the 'dowsing' or divining-rod. 'People will not believe the evidence of their own eyes. They see the twig turn and cry "Trick!"; they find water in the spots I have indicated and cry "Fluke!"'

'But this unbelief is only natural in the person of average culture,' I suggested. 'There is something mysterious and uncanny in divination of any kind.'

'And especially in divination which is impossible of explanation, even by the diviner,' Mr. Gataker added.

'How did you discover that you possessed the power?' I asked.

'By the merest chance. After leaving Bath College, where I was educated, I went into a London office; but the confinement made me ill, and I was obliged to go down to the West country to rest. I was walking one day with a friend who

I thought very little about the matter at the time, but when, after another trial, I found that my health would not bear the strain of office life, and when I discovered that my power increased with practice, I seriously considered the possibilities of water-divining as a profession.'

'But surely you met with a great deal of opposition?'

'No; my father, who was a captain in the Bengal Staff Corps, and now lives at Bath, was most interested, and after I had studied and practised some months I commenced my present work with his permission. That was about two years ago.'

'What happens when you light upon hidden water?'

'A sensation not unlike a slight shiver comes into my arms first, and afterwards all over my body. I then hold the twig in my hands, and so long as I am above the water it revolves, ceasing immediately I get off the bed of the stream. A twig freshly cut from the hedge serves the purpose best, but wire answers equally well, copper wire being, however, much less sensitive than steel or iron. This would seem to argue some magnetic attraction, and my own opinion is that water divination is a corresponding power to mesmerism—a kind of animal magnetism. You would be surprised at the number of people who



THE WATER-DIVINER AT WORK.

have the power and are ignorant of the fact, ladies more especially.'

'Surely, the presence of water affecting you as it does, a hidden stagnant pool or a closed drain might deceive you?'

'No. I am only affected by running water, and I can gauge its depth and the number of gallons that it runs per minute.'



From photographs by]

VERIFICATION OF THE DIVINATION.

[Debenham and Co., Weston-super-Mare.

knew a local water-diviner, and he suggested that we should try if we too possessed the faculty of finding water. He was unsuccessful, but, to my great amazement, as I was walking across a field I suddenly felt a mild shivering sensation, chiefly in my arms, and the forked twig I held in my hands began to revolve.

'Is there any attraction between the twig and the hidden water?'

Mr. Gataker smiled. 'So many people ask me that question,' he answered, a little wearily, 'and if the water I find is "pure and fit for drinking purposes." The attraction is in me alone.'



The movement of the twig is merely its outward sign. I can find water without the twig, simply by holding out my hands' (as shown in the smaller picture). 'I guarantee to find water, not pure water ; that is obviously impossible.'

'Have you had many failures in finding water ?'

He shook his head. 'There are failures and failures, you know. I have always found water when water has been there to be found, but sometimes that has not been in the place where it was needed or desired.'

'Water-divining has fallen into such disrepute that I expect you found some difficulty in getting work at first, didn't you ?'

'Well, you see, my friends believed in me and that was half the battle. The smile of the sceptical was rather hard to bear when I started, but I soon got used to it, and now I have the courage of many successes. You see, water-diviners are usually "wise men" in country districts, they rarely come from any but the lower classes and naturally cannot bring any great intelligence to bear upon their discoveries, consequently they are little known beyond their own districts and are only employed upon small work. I go farther than my predecessors. In addition to finding the water, if desired, I sink the well, and in any case I never take my fees until the water is found either by my own workmen, or by those of the people who employ me.'

By this time we had arrived at our destination, and in a short time Mr. Gataker was hard at work, tramping with outstretched hands over a large estate where his services were urgently needed. He found water in many places, all of which were carefully marked for future boring.

'I hope I have convinced you that it is not charlatanism,' he said, when we reached London again.

And I had only to look at his face, worn by the strain of work, to see that his power was no trick.

#### SPIRIT INTERVENTION.

In a note appended to the following communication the Editors of the 'Rivista di Studi Psichici' inform their readers that they do not print the narrative as illustrating a case of spirit intervention, the mode of its reception not being sufficient proof that the message had such an origin. We confess we do not quite see the ground of this conclusion. Some of our readers may. The Editors add that the correspondent is known to them, and that his good faith is indisputable. The communication is in the form of a letter to one of the Editors of the review, Dr. Georgio Finzi, of Milan :—

The telepathic case narrated by Dr. De Facci-Negrati, in No. 2 of the 'Rivista,' has induced me to tell you what happened to myself.

Premising that I have investigated mediumship with the accomplished Professor Brofferio, and that I have myself endeavoured to become a medium—for my own use and consumption—with indifferent success, here is the fact :—

In the night between August 30th and 31st, 1894, I was asleep, when, about three o'clock, I was awakened by two loud raps on a writing desk. The raps were repeated. Then, having lit the lamp, I arose, took paper and pencil and leaning on the desk, asked : 'Who are you ?' 'P——' (the name of my dear wife who died three years ago). In a little while my hand wrote : 'Kindly tell mamma that L—— is ill and requires attention. Speak to C—— about it.' Here finished the message.

I should explain that L—— is a sister-in-law who stays with her parents at C—— L——, and that C—— is my brother-in-law, a doctor in Milan. I must also state that I had no knowledge that my sister-in-law was ill. On the following morning I had a letter from my father-in-law informing me that L—— was unwell. I immediately told my mother, and then informed my medical relative. My sister-in-law was seriously ill, and she owed her recovery to her brother C——'s care.

The Editors requested their correspondent to answer some questions for the purpose of evolving details, but nothing fresh was elicited. The communicant, R—— L——, a man of science, the recipient of the message, merely tells his story at greater length, with an argument or a commentary here and there, and writes under a sense of deep conviction that his hand was guided by the spirit who professed to dictate the words.

#### A VERY STRANGE STORY.

It has often seemed to me when reading accounts of the experiences of investigators of the occult that they do less than justice both to truth and to themselves by so frequently concealing their names. It is difficult enough to get a sceptical world to pay any attention to a tale which savours of the marvellous, even when its truthfulness is vouched for by people who are not ashamed to give their names ; but to place a story of this character before the public endorsed only by 'Mrs. H.' or 'Mr. J.' is to ensure its rejection by all but the few behind the scenes. It is for this reason, and for this alone, that I propose to give the names of the witnesses of the facts I am about to describe.

For the last two years a considerable number of people in Deptford and its vicinity have been more or less interested in Theosophy and Spiritualism. We have gone through the usual course of Ouijas, planchettes, table-tilting, table-knocking, automatic writing, and spirit lights. Sometimes our experiences were interesting, but it must be admitted that for a long time we got but little of value. During the whole time covered by our investigations there was living in our immediate neighbourhood, and known to all of us, James Oliver, of 27, Stanley-street, New Cross, S.E. He was suffering from consumption, and everybody could see that his end was not far off. He took considerable interest in our researches, but was too weak and ill to join a circle. He died, after suffering terribly, on October 19th, 1894. During the last six months of his life he repeatedly told us that he intended to communicate with us after death if such were possible. Sometimes he joked about the matter, but on several well-remembered occasions he gave us his unsolicited promise very seriously. Sixteen days after his death (November 4th), the following persons were holding a séance at 408, New Cross-road : Matthew Giles, John Elliott, Mrs. Elliott, George Eveleigh, Mrs. Eveleigh, Mrs. Connell, and J. Connell. Before we had been sitting long the table began to tilt, and in reply to the question : 'Is there anybody present ?' the words, 'Yes, Jimmy Oliver,' were spelt out. I said : 'Before you left us you said you would come back, and rattle the planchette for us. If you are here now please rattle the table.' The table, which was a rather heavy one, was swung round in a circle with astonishing rapidity. It would have taken the strength of six men to move such a weight in such a way. One of the circle, John Elliott, who until that night was quite unaware that he possessed mediumistic powers, happened to look at a corner of the room near the ceiling, and stated that he there saw Oliver looking smilingly down on the sitters. The figure gradually faded away, and we received no further communication that night.

On Sunday, November 11th, another séance was held at the same place, at which the following were present : Arthur Holdsworth, Mrs. Holdsworth, John Elliott, Mrs. Elliott, George Eveleigh, Mrs. Eveleigh, Mr. Garrett, Mrs. Connell, and J. Connell. When we had been sitting about ten minutes John Elliott became unconscious. He soon attempted to speak, and when he was able to do so distinctly he said : 'I am Jimmy Oliver. Do all you can for my wife. There is an after life. I can hardly understand it yet. I see such curious forms around me. I am not happy. I am encumbered with a burden. I see a man clad in skins, and with matted hair, walking over rocky ground. He has a spear in his hand. He attacks people and uses them cruelly. I see the same, or a very similar man, on board a vessel which has but one mast, and a dragon for figure-head. He is in command. He attacks another vessel, and boards her. This is thousands of years ago, and has reference to myself.' (This last sentence was in reply to a question.) 'There is no religion or philosophy known to you which explains the life I am in now, but I do not quite understand it yet.' At this point the communication became unintelligible, and John Elliott soon afterwards awoke. A few minutes later I saw a hand, which faded away at the wrist, held about fifteen inches above the table. Most certainly this did not belong to any of the sitters. At almost the same moment John Elliott saw Jimmy Oliver rise apparently out of the table, pass through me, stand behind me, smile, and gradually disappear. Several of the sitters saw lights of various colours and degrees of brilliancy.

On Monday, November 12th, another séance was held at the rooms of the Deptford and Greenwich Socialist Society, 395, New Cross-road. The following were present, but did not all



join hands : Matthew Giles, Arthur Holdsworth, Mrs. Holdsworth, John Lenny, Walter Reynolds, John Elliott, Mrs. Elliott, Samuel Cockerton, Harry Mann, Joseph Young, and J. Connell. John Elliott soon became entranced, began to talk, and said : 'I am Jimmy Oliver. I told you I'd come back to you. I see again the man in skins, with the cruel face. He brandishes his spear, and attacks people, and uses them cruelly. The scene changes. I see the same man, on board the vessel which I saw before. She bears down on another vessel, and sinks her. Some of the survivors attempt to get on board the first vessel, and thus save themselves, but when they put their hands on the sides the man with the cruel face chops off their fingers, which fall into the boat. My God ! I can't look.' (Cries.) 'The scene changes again. I see a man, mail-clad, but with a velvet cloak. He is proud and defiant. He is in battle. He rushes on the enemy, but is pierced in the breast by an arrow and falls backward. His face is like that of the man in the boat. Twilight comes, and a search party find him. They cut off his head, and raise it on a spear. They spit at it. They carry it through what appear to be the gates of their town. Everybody execrates and throws things at it. I did not know why I suffered, but now I know all. I see my last four lives before me ; the cave-dweller in the skins, the sea warrior in the vessel with the dragon's head, the cavalier still cruel, and myself a weak, puny mortal. I would like to tell you more. I am struggling to—to—to—' Here Elliott awoke. He felt so exhausted after each sitting, especially the last, that he refused to take any further part in the matter. We have, however, found two other mediums in Walter Reynolds and Samuel Cockerton, and have got some curious but not very reliable results.

408, New Cross-road, S.E.

J. CONNELL.

### 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.]

#### The Recent Conference.

SIR,—Mrs. Britten's admirable replies to questions at the recent Conference will not be tarnished by my stating my experience in regard to one of them, 'Do infants and young children grow in spirit life ?'

About eight years ago, while staying with a married daughter in Peckham, a séance was arranged at her house. All present (eight or nine) were agnostic and sceptical, except the writer, in regard to spirit-communication. The medium, Mr. Robson, was soon under influence, and became deeply entranced, and, rising to his feet, he held out both hands, one towards me, the other to my daughter, of which we took hold. Then he said, with difficulty, though with great clearness, 'My dear father, my dear sister,' to which I replied, 'Friend, you have called me father ; please give me your name.' With great emphasis, he said, 'George.' To the company I said, 'I have a son living, I believe, in Sydney,' but was interrupted by the control saying, 'No, America.' I remembered then that thirty years before I buried the remains of a little one a year old. I had almost forgotten this. I mentioned it to the sitters, and then asked if the spirit using the medium was George Frederic Harris, the baby buried at Burlington, New Jersey ; and received for answer, 'Yes, father ; and see' (holding up the medium's hands), 'I am taller than you are now.' I may remark that the medium knew nothing of my American experience, and my daughter (one of a second family) did not know of the existence of a step-brother, who died in America. I myself had all but forgotten him, and none of the rest present knew anything of me or mine. How does telepathy and thought-transference explain this ?

BEVAN HARRIS.

SIR,—That I was not able to attend the recent Conference is a matter of regret, but my infirmities, caused by an accident four years ago, from the effects of which I have never recovered, prevented my being present, and I am obliged to be content with reading the report of the proceedings, which is highly gratifying, showing as it does the progress Spiritualism is making and the status it is assuming. Its progress though slow is sure.

The only conference I remember to have taken part in, and was termed a 'convention,' took place in 1865, or thereabouts. It was the day of small things, when Lord Brougham spoke of Spiritualism being 'a little cloud, no bigger than a man's hand,'

and Sir David Brewster was asserting that 'spirit was the last thing he would give in to.' Mr. Home was in evidence, and Mrs. Marshall the only medium accessible to the general public. Mrs. Everitt I heard of, but had not seen her at that time. Mr. Benjamin Coleman was the most active propagandist at the time. The convention I allude to was not a very grand affair as far as numbers are concerned, but was signalled by the presence of the celebrated Baron Guldenstübbe, who came from Paris for the purpose of attending the meeting, and I had the pleasure of being present with him at a séance of Mrs. Guppy's. Several friends from Yorkshire and other places were present at the convention ; and on the whole it was a very successful affair. Whether it was at this time, I cannot say, but I remember a meeting taking place in the grounds of the Crystal Palace, when Mr. David Richmond, of Darlington, was present. He it was who first brought news of the 'knockings' from America, and induced his friends to experiment in this country. A meeting was held in the evening inside the building, at which Mr. Coleman presided. Cannot something of the kind be done again ? It is interesting to look back to those times, and contrast them with the present. Spiritualism has made great strides unquestionably, but not so great as I was sanguine enough to expect when I took a hand in the matter ; but beliefs that have been implanted in the minds of the multitude, and have grown with their growth and strengthened with their strength, require a great deal of eradicating.

Eastbourne.

ROBERT COOPER.

#### Is 'Spiritualism the Key that Unlocks all Doors' ?

SIR,—I write, not to object to the expression, at the recent Conference, of any opinions which the speakers may have held, but to the acceptance of those opinions as representing Spiritualists generally. As I, for one, have read the Bible and learnt Christ, the description given by Mr. Page Hopps of Jesus, as simply a 'supreme medium,' is so deplorably inadequate and misleading that, if Spiritualism be the source of it, it disqualifies Spiritualism altogether from being considered a key at all for unlocking the doors of truth. True, the Christ may rightly be termed a 'medium for the Highest.' But what makes Him so ? Certainly not His being merely more of a sensitive than other mediums, but His being a typical instance of the process on which Jesus insists as the one way of salvation, the process of regeneration. This is the process which, from beginning to end, is the theme of the Bible, and of which Jesus is represented as the perfected example, inasmuch as it is the process whereby man realises the divinity which is his birthright. For by regeneration is meant the re-constitution of the individual of the higher principles of man's system, in such wise that from being man material and phenomenal only, he becomes man spiritual and substantial, and therein divine, and in a special sense 'Son of God.' Thus re-born of his own soul and spirit in their divine, because pure, condition, he is said to be born again of water and the spirit, Virgin Maria and Holy Ghost, these being the mystical synonyms for man's purified soul and spirit. Thus re-constituted, and having the 'Christ formed within him,' man is an individuation of Deity, and has the Highest in himself, being 'one with God' ; and has accomplished his due evolution by the full unfoldment of the divine capacities of the substance of existence. But as regeneration is *from out of the body*, and requires the experiences of a vast number of earth-lives to accomplish it, since only by experience of matter can man acquire the power to overcome the limitations of matter, regeneration has for its corollary, re-incarnation, and would be impossible without it. And as to be a medium involves no such process as regeneration, it follows that between the medium and the Christ there is a difference which is not of degree only but of kind. And so I affirm, unhesitatingly, that 'the key which unlocks all doors' is not Spiritualism, but that of which Spiritualism, as represented by Mr. Page Hopps and not a few others of its votaries, is the negation and antithesis, namely Spirituality.

MYSTICUS.

#### Mrs. Besant's 'Facts,' and 'The Mahatma Puzzle.'

SIR,—I am much in agreement with your correspondents, Gilbert Elliot, Robert M. Theobald, and John Lord, as to disappointment and irritation with Mrs. Besant's lecture, &c. ; nor are her private letters on the subject in any way satisfactory.

I joined the Theosophical Society in May, 1894, only, though I had taken much interest in Theosophy for seven years previously. When joining the Society I had not the slightest idea



about 'the Judge Controversy,' and I must say that, in the last eight months, I have been introduced to more 'tomfoolery' than at any time of my life, and that is sixty-two years. Never have I received such spiteful, vulgar, and disgraceful pamphlets and leaflets; and never shall I cease to regret that the splendid name Theosophy has been so dragged in the mire by the chief leaders and workers of the Society. WM. H. COTTON, F.T.S.

SIR,—Mr. Gilbert Elliot's communication expresses the desire of many thoughtful observers, and it is seriously to be hoped that Mrs. Besant, being, as she says, 'one who has had evidence of that fact' (the existence of Mahatmas), will see fit to make known the nature of that evidence. I should like to ask Mrs. Besant whether, if she has really seen 'a great spirit,' it resembled in one or more particulars the spirit forms she has seen at séances among Spiritualists. Let it always be borne in mind, that at one time both Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott ranked as Spiritualists. In Colonel Olcott's book, called 'People from the Other World,' he gives many instances of what he believed to be evidence of spirit power as witnessed by himself and Madame Blavatsky through the mediumship of the Eddy family in Vermont, America.

Everyone has heard how the buckle of a medal of honour which had been buried with the body of Madame Blavatsky's father in Russia, was placed in her hands at a séance with the Eddys. On page 355, Colonel Olcott says: 'Presently I heard the lady utter an exclamation, and on a light being struck we all saw Madame Blavatsky holding in her hand a silver buckle of a most curious shape, which she regarded with speechless wonder.' If the buckle was not recognised, as alleged, Madame Blavatsky was playing a part.

It is said that spirits were seen and conversed with at these séances, and that at least on one occasion Madame Blavatsky identified a relative. She also appears to have developed the power of automatic writing, and in this way her various works may have been produced.

So much for the identity of the phenomena accompanying the rise of Modern Theosophy and Spiritualism. Colonel Olcott dedicated his book to A. R. Wallace, F.R.S., and William Crookes, F.R.S., 'to mark his admiration of the moral courage displayed in the investigation of the phenomena called Spiritual—a sentiment which he holds in common with many thousands of his countrymen.' I do not know if Colonel Olcott has ever given a reason for his altered convictions, or if we may assume that the one commonly reported is correct. In that case one regrets that the Colonel did not himself possess such a measure of that same moral courage as would have enabled him to stick to his colours even when confronted by treachery within the camp.

Mrs. Besant's position is, of course, very different, and while admiring her fine abilities and still finer thirst for spiritual knowledge, many are hoping to see her ultimately set free of all rules and obligations, discerning no limitation of duty in her pursuit, save that imposed by unswerving devotion to sincerity and truth. 'BIDSTON.'

#### Cheating Mediums.

SIR,—My experience inclines me to agree with 'M.A.I.' as to vanity being one of the causes of fraud in mediums. There seems to be an invincible repugnance in some mediums to acknowledge that error of any kind can possibly come through their own particular mediumship, even when it is evident that it does; and there also seems to be an utter unconsciousness in them that this repugnance betrays a tendency to fraud on their part, and that they are dwarfing the great subject of Spiritualism in their desire for personal aggrandisement.

I may add that I know of cases where mediums have been much puffed up and injured by the flattery of insincere and thoughtless sitters, and by so-called friends, who do not hesitate to deceive mediums as to what they really think of their mediumship, and to give them a wrong impression as to its value. A. C. T.

SIR,—Will you kindly allow me, in justice to my subject and myself, a few words of reply to Mr. Harte? His declaration that I practically declared a doctor's certificate to be a guarantee of his ability to cure, is simply an entire mis-statement. I never even hinted at such a ridiculous idea, and merely asked, as he chose to pooh-pooh their value, why certificates and diplomas were always required by an intelligent public in every

department of science or art. To this question he gives no reply; and I added that surely psychology (not *mediumship*, as misrepresented by Mr. Harte) belonged to the former class. Medical science, for instance, is one thing, medical practice another, and they should certainly be no more confounded than psychology and mediumship.

Mr. Harte in one letter asks: 'Is there any medium of whom it can be said that he or she never in any degree helped the phenomena?' I naturally pointed out that 'helping the phenomena' meant cheating, of course in a greater or less degree. Mr. Harte never attempts to show that it *does not*, and yet, in his next letter, he appears angry at my taking him at his word, and practically denies the above assertion by declaring that he is of opinion that 'cheating mediums are comparatively rare'! and this in the face of the long list of shameless impostures, extending over twenty years, in Philadelphia, so ably exposed by Mr. Westbrook, and which have well-nigh killed Spiritualism in that city, and in spite of the recent abominable frauds of Mrs. Williams in Paris, and the exposures which have, as we all know, taken place in London.

I am very much obliged to Mr. Harte for his kind gratuitous advice as to the course I should pursue 'if I really wish to study Spiritualism,' but having read, written, and experimented in it both in public and private séances for over twenty years, and having also sat during that time with some of the most renowned mediums of the age, including Kate Fox, Slade, and others, his 'advice to a young person about to investigate' comes rather late in the day.

That the phenomena of Spiritualism are real I have demonstrated for myself, in my own house, and with no known medium present, and under circumstances which would render imposture or delusion as impossible as anything could be on this material plane; but it is too sacred, too infinitely important a matter to be longer left by true Spiritualists at the mercy of ignorant unscientific dupes and clever unscrupulous impostors. Mr. Harte says, 'Mediumship is neither a science nor an art.' If he will refer to my letter of March 23rd he will find that I did not speak of it as either, but as a 'sacred profession,' and if he can give me a better word for describing it I shall feel obliged to him.

Why Mr. Harte opposes the formation of a committee for the testing of professional mediums, such as our brethren across the Atlantic have already decided upon, remains a curious problem, which he alone can explain. ELIZA LUTLEY BOUCHER.

#### Mind and Matter.

SIR,—I should very much like to know on what grounds Dr. Hensoldt states that when a man's mind is removed the objects which he perceives by his various senses '*have vanished into nothingness.*' (The italics are his.)

If matter does not exist, and if, therefore, all the objects we see and feel around us are nothing but hallucinations, then, and not till then, is his statement perfectly true; but what proof has he that such is the state of things? How does he know that matter has no existence apart from mind?

Then again, Dr. Hensoldt, in speaking of the objects perceived by a man, speaks of '*his* chairs and tables,' and '*his* trees and flowers'; but why '*his*,' since we do not know that our material surroundings have not an existence quite independent of mind?

Paris.

BERTRAM W. B. GREENE.

SIR,—Having read in a recent issue of 'LIGHT' a paragraph from the 'Arena,' by Dr. Hensoldt, 'The External Universe an Illusion,' will you permit me to state that practical persons will, I think, agree with Lord Byron, who wrote: 'When Bishop Berkeley said there was no matter, it was no matter what he said'?

When a normal man eats a piece of sugar the sensation of sweetness is produced, and that sensation is caused by matter coming in contact with matter under certain conditions. It may be true that—

Veiled from the flesh, faith sees a world more bright,  
Where all is beauty, harmony, and light;  
And all who suffer wrongly here shall be  
There crowned with love and immortality.

But the ideas of space, time, and matter form the basis of all rational thinking. I noticed the following sentence: 'But where is your universe without your mind? Take away a man's



mind and what has become of his world,' &c. ; in reply to which I may state that chairs, tables, flowers, earth, and stars would remain the same if my mind were blotted from the universe, that my mind did not create them, and that they exist independently of it. We are quite certain that the external universe will exist after our death, but we are not certain whether or not our minds will do so ; that is the important question ; that is what we want with certainty to know.

Warrington.

S. KENYON.

#### Is Spiritualism Suited to the Masses ?

SIR,—Your readers will acknowledge that this question is one of great importance, and an urgent one for believers in our doctrines. My contention is that Spiritualism is not suited to the masses, and, in explaining my reasons for this opinion, I hope to induce more experienced Spiritualists to discuss the matter.

The teachings of Jesus Christ were specially addressed to the uncultivated classes. His deepest human sympathies seem to have been enlisted on their behalf, among whom He had passed His life. He found them as the prophets had described them—sheep without a shepherd, laden with burdens grievous to be borne ; and to these He offered His easy yoke and light burden, and promised them rest. His whole teaching, couched in the simplest language of parable or symbol, was intended for these, and was such as the most unlettered could understand. The stories were mostly taken from the daily life of the labourer, and each had its own moral and spiritual lesson. The doctrine that pain inevitably follows sin was typified by the fire, which even a child could realise as causing the greatest bodily pain. Jesus plainly declared for whom His teaching was intended, and even thanked His Father that such had been His will. To the cultivated classes, who could understand the law of Moses and the Prophets, He addressed His denunciations of hypocrisy, and said that if they did not believe what they so well understood, neither would they believe though one rose from the dead. No doubt some, perhaps many, of the 'wise and prudent' believed the old faith and looked forward to a Messiah and were justified thereby, never receiving the simple teachings of the Carpenter's Son of Nazareth.

Imagine for yourself a Spiritualist giving instruction to an unlettered labourer as to a future life. 'You will have no work there, nor need to provide food or clothing. God does not punish arbitrarily ; your sin here will give you pain of mind and spirit there.' The man replies, 'I like your sort of hell. If there is no fire or other torments I don't care how long I am there ; and I shall not want for company, for most of my neighbours are no better than myself. With no work and with the company of my pals you may rely upon it I will not fret.' The man could see no cause for weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. The fire of hell which he could understand he dreaded, but not the outer darkness and bitter regret which the Spiritualist fears. My belief is, therefore, that a certain amount of mental cultivation and spiritual development is necessary to receive advantageously the doctrines of Spiritualism.

F. L. D.

#### False Messages.

SIR,—I am constrained to offer a few remarks upon this matter, because the existence of fraudulent spirit messages appears to be such a serious stumbling-block in the path of many an anxious inquirer. And first of all let me suggest that we should treat our spirit visitors at least as humanely as the English law treats our criminals, that is, let us hold them innocent until proved guilty. I think that in face of the indisputable fact that communications from the spirit world are being received to-day, we are making a somewhat unnecessary bugbear of the possibility of false intelligence reaching us. As Mr. Page Hopps has well said, the 'value of the communications lies less in the nature of them than in the fact that they come at all.' I hope that we value them chiefly because they prove to us that the gates are ajar, and we can see now that the great heart-hunger of the world is not a matter of indifference to the Father of all spirits, but that on the contrary its satisfaction has been amply provided for in the economy of the universe. That we have not at all times seemed aware of this good gift, or known how to avail ourselves of the priceless boon, is perhaps more our fault than our misfortune. When a message arouses suspicion of its truth or authenticity, it is, of course, desirable to try and settle the question. There is no occasion to wound the feelings of any. We can be just as

courteous and sympathetic in our intercourse with spirits as with our visible friends. And when a message proves to be false, what harm does it do us ? It inflicts upon us, as a rule, a disappointment merely. How often is the experimenter, in his laboratory, disappointed ? Surely we need not be discouraged because we do not always find gold. Sufficient for us is the certain knowledge that the gold is there—to be patiently and perseveringly sought ; stimulated, not baffled, by occasional defeat. If spirit messages were altogether free from the defects common to humanity, we should not be able to accept them as coming from 'all sorts and conditions of men,' to say nothing of the possibility, or even probability, of error in transmission. An almost greater difficulty seems to me to lie in the possibility of a message from the mind of one in the flesh reaching us in the same manner as do spirit messages. But here, again, what a useful indication we find that we have that to learn, respecting ourselves even, which a few years ago we should have regarded as a grotesque presumption ! So let us learn all we can, and not dissipate energy in hot contention over problems we are not yet in a position to solve. Rather let us face them fairly—serene in the happy faith that we are travelling in the right direction. Many can see the light shining plainly ahead, and know of joy and gratitude too deep for words. May we press on to the mark of our high calling.

'BIDSTON.'

#### 'The Occult Causes of Apparent Death, Trance, and Catalepsy.'

SIR,—A volume bearing the above title, by Dr. Franz Hartmann, recently issued by the Occult Publishing Company, Boston, U.S., is exciting some attention among our transatlantic friends, and is of special interest to Spiritualists and others who recognise occult phenomena as matters for study and investigation. There is one aspect of the subject which, while it has been ventilated in Spiritualist journals in America, seems to have escaped the attention of the editors of journals devoted to similar objects at home. I refer to those conditions of trance, catalepsy, and suspended animation which have resulted in the premature interment of the unfortunate victim. Cases of this kind, Dr. Hartmann says, are far more numerous than is generally supposed. The author gives the names of forty writers who have called attention to this distressing subject, and among these are Alexander von Humbolt, Hufeland, Buffon, Niemayer, Thierry, and Winslow, and he devotes sixty-six pages of the volume to a recital of cases of premature burial, while the person was in a cataleptic state and had been certified as dead by the attending physician.

The details of these cases are of the most horrible character, from which I spare your readers ; but surely this is no reason why the subject should be ignored. Dr. Hartmann shows that of the numerous so-called signs of supposed death, one only can be safely depended on, and quotes Hufeland—a most patient scientific observer—who says : 'The appearance of decomposition is the only reliable proof that the vital energy has departed from an organism.'

It is stated that in two countries where, under particular circumstances, the examination of corpses was allowed, one in two hundred showed unmistakable evidence of having been buried alive. The subject is one that should be taken in hand by those who recognise the existence of death-like trance—a condition denied by the average medical practitioner who is called upon to furnish the certificate of death.

14, Clarendon-street, N.W.

JAS. R. WILLIAMSON.

#### The 'Cyprian Priestess.'

SIR,—The 'Cyprian Priestess' puzzle still awaits solution, and the only one entitled to throw some light on the subject persistently chooses to remain silent. I really would be glad to see my friend emerge from this difficulty all right ; yet this deliberate inaction, where something ought to be said, not only pains his friends, but also intensifies the sneers of the scoffers.

Having publicly been urging the study of the occult sciences—including psychic photography—upon the members of our Naturalist Society, I feel justified, as a third voice from Kirkcaldy, in urging on a solution of this vexed question ; for, in preaching truth, one is terribly handicapped to find stumbling-blocks laid across the path, not by enemies, but by friends ; and it seriously rests on them to do what they can to clear the way.

The 'Cyprian Priestess' is quite a familiar spirit in our district—a 'wandering beauty,' so to speak, with a *nom de plume* to suit each locality. In the interests of truth, a stop



must be put to such nonsense, whereby even our great men are beguiled, and made to look ridiculous before the world. A serious responsibility, therefore, lies with certain folks to speak out, and give what light they can on the matter. Who is this mysterious 'Priestess,' and where does she really hail from? Perhaps the offer of a fifty-pound reward might prove sufficient bait to solve the puzzle—and cheap at that. With great patience I await further 'light.'

Pathhead, Kirkcaldy.

JAMES KINLAY.

#### The 'Medium and Daybreak.'

SIR,—Kindly permit me, through the columns of your journal, to correct a misapprehension which may possibly be entertained in some quarters in connection with the withdrawal of the 'Medium and Daybreak' from publication.

I stopped the publication in order that I might devote my entire energies to the liquidation of the liabilities of my late father, for which I am personally responsible, and moreover because of the absence of adequate support from Spiritualists as a body, and many societies in particular, who have enjoyed the free use of its columns for years. In this connection I may say that the week following its withdrawal I received more than a dozen 'reports' and 'announcements' for insertion, thus showing that the active members of those bodies concerned in this remark did not so much as invest three halfpence to obtain a copy of the issue containing their effusions. This is a fair sample of the prevailing spirit among this grade of the 'faithful,' and surely there is nothing savouring of dignity or utility in continuing to make a sacrifice for such individuals, or any of a like disposition.

But that is not the main object of my letter. As there was some talk of forming a company for the future issuing of the 'Medium,' I wish it to be understood by all Spiritualists, and particularly by those who, now that that weekly is no longer in the field, may essay to endeavour to fill the gap by rushing into journalism, that I have not bartered or parted with the rights in connection with my late father's paper for any consideration in any shape or form, and therefore any party or parties who in any sense endeavour to appropriate any portion of its title, or presume, from having publicly identified themselves with my father's obsequies, to claim sympathy and identity with the principles of his many years of advocacy, and thus seek to advance the interests of any new venture, will be intentionally guilty of piracy and misrepresentation.

The 'Medium and Daybreak,' its title, and all in connection, are the property of the survivors of the founder, and I trust every true Spiritualist will make it his duty to see them respected.

So many persons who, when my father was in the flesh, could only throw stones, are now anxious to associate themselves with his memory and works where it is found that there is anything to be made by a sudden avowal of sympathy. J. BURNS.

#### SOCIETY WORK.

WELCOME HALL, 218, JUBILEE-STREET, MILE END.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Carter gave his experiences in Spiritualism, which were highly appreciated by a large audience. On Sunday next, experience meeting. Spirit drawings will be on view.—W. MARSH.

BRIGHTON, LECTURE HALL, NEW-ROAD.—Mrs. E. Hardinge-Britten gave an address on Wednesday in last week on the question, 'What and Where is the Spirit-World?' The lecturer entered with earnestness into her work, and gave one of the most brilliant lectures that it has been the good fortune of the people of Brighton to hear.—F. DUNSTONE.

WINCHESTER HALL, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—Good circles were held on Sunday and Thursday last by Miss Hammond Hill, the medium being Mr. Robson, whose controls on Thursday also answered questions from the audience. Open circles will be held on Sunday and Thursday evenings next, when we shall be glad to be of assistance to any inquirers who may care to attend.—H. E. B., Hon. Sec.

111, CLARENDON-ROAD, NOTTING HILL, W.—Our service on Sunday was well attended, and Mr. Humphries gave us a very instructive discourse upon 'Death and the After Life,' explaining the meaning of the change so called. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. W. E. Walker; Tuesday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason; Saturday, at 8 p.m., spirit circle (inquirers welcome); June 2nd, Mrs. Mason; June 9th, Mrs. Treadwell.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—On Sunday last, Mrs. Bliss, controlled by 'A. L.,' gave a stirring address on the use and abuse of mediumship, showing that its right use was to establish the fact of man's persistence beyond physical death. 'Vigo,' controlling, gave a number of clairvoyant descriptions, the majority of which were recognised.

Sunday next, Miss MacCreadie, at 6.30 p.m., sharp.—CHAS. M. PAYNE.

PECKHAM SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, CHEPSTOW HALL, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Tuesday last we held our weekly circle, several strangers being present. On Sunday last Mr. Boddington kindly gave us an address, in the unavoidable absence of Mr. Atterbury. His guides took for their subject 'Self Will,' and dealt with it in an able manner. At the close several questions were asked and satisfactorily answered. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Stanley will occupy our platform. We hope to have a good audience to welcome her. Tuesday, May 28th, open circle, at 8 p.m.—J. C. JONES, Hon. Sec.

CARDIFF.—On Sunday last, at St. John's Hall, Mr. S. Longville gave an able address upon 'Thoughts in a Garden,' in which, by homely illustrations of the various means used by the gardener to ensure the desired growth and perfection of the produce, he showed how its lessons may be aptly applied to the growth and perfection of the moral and spiritual nature of man, and how by a close study of Nature and the laws of her unfoldment, man can best learn of Nature's God, His attributes and purposes. The speaker for the 26th inst. and 2nd prox. will be Mr. E. W. Wallis, of Manchester, at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.—E. A.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—On Sunday next, Mr. Allen will occupy our platform. Friday night will be devoted to giving information to inquirers. On Sunday last Mr. Kitson gave an outline of the work of Lyceums, he being a most energetic worker in that cause. Mrs. Robertson rendered a solo, which was well applauded. All members of the society are earnestly requested to attend the annual general meeting, which will take place after the services, about 8 p.m., after which the members will remain for business of importance in connection with the society, reading of the balance-sheet, the election of officers by ballot, &c.—THOS. MACCALLUM, Hon. Sec.

245, KENTISH TOWN-ROAD, N.W.—Mrs. Spring desires to inform her friends that all letters are to be addressed to 28, Highgate-road, N.W., instead of 8, Wilkin-street, and begs to apologise to those friends whose letters have not been answered, which Mrs. Spring, owing to unexpectedly having to seek fresh quarters, has been quite unable to attend to. On Monday evenings a séance will be held at 245, Kentish Town-road, at 8 (no admittance after 8.15), until further notice. A lady and a gentleman have kindly helped to release Mrs. Spring from most pressing difficulties. Any little aid will be gratefully received to enable her to open the new room, and continue her work as a medium. Letters of inquiry can be addressed to Mrs. Rorke, hon. sec. of the Dawn of Day Spiritual Society, 8, St. John Evangelist-road, Highgate-road, N.W.

BRIGHTON.—Mr. Frank Dunstone writes: 'It was with some surprise that I noticed a protest in your issue of May 11th. As I sent you the report, I feel I must comply with your suggestion that I should reply. From my point of view, the séance was anything but a failure. If Mr. Douglas Cameron does not see it in the same light, surely that is not my fault. I have nothing to gain in sending you a false report, and the Cause here has everything to lose. As I have the welfare of the Cause at heart it is most unlikely I would do anything detrimental to it, neither would I falsely report in its favour. It would appear that Mr. Douglas Cameron is endeavouring to open up a discussion. If such is his intention let me tell him I have neither the time nor the inclination to enter into one, as I fail to see the utility of such a course; it would simply be one man's word against another's. I still adhere to my former statement that the séance was not even a failure, let alone an utter failure, as Mr. Cameron is pleased to term it.'

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. E. Hardinge Britten occupied the platform, and replied to written questions from the audience. Mr. T. Everitt, the president of the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists, occupied the chair, and in the course of his introductory remarks alluded to the speaker of the evening as a spiritual worker who had not been drawn aside from the promulgation of Spiritualism, pure and simple, to follow after any of the fantastic doctrines and theories of other schools of occult research. So assured was she of the reality of Spiritualism that she might be said to have devoted herself and all she possessed to the dissemination of the teachings she had received from the unseen world, realising their inestimable importance to humanity at large. Mrs. Hardinge Britten then replied to the questions propounded, dealing with them in a manner so lucid, able, and exhaustive as to excite general satisfaction, the large audience testifying its approval from time to time in an unmistakable manner. At the conclusion of the proceedings the opinion was freely expressed that Mrs. Britten had never been heard to better advantage. The strength of the choir was on this occasion augmented by additional voices, and Miss Butterworth, R.A.M., was, as usual, the efficient accompanist. Altogether, the occasion was one of a distinctive character, and in its minor features was, we hope, a not unfitting tribute to the eloquence and repute of one of the foremost women in the movement. Next Sunday evening Mrs. Groom (from Birmingham) will occupy the platform with trance-address and clairvoyance. On the following five Sunday evenings Mr. J. J. Morse will give a series of addresses.—D. G.