

# Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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### NOTES BY THE WAY.

It is by no means certain that we have passed beyond the perils of persecution on account of Spiritualism;—not the major persecution of the faggot-monger and the hangman, but the minor persecution of the bigot and the alarmist. There was timely meaning in Lyman C. Howe's late reference to a singularly pathetic story in 'Satan's Invisible World Discovered.' He said:—

In 'Satan's Invisible World Discovered,' Sinclair relates the touching and terrible story of a confessing witch. Who could defend a self-confessed criminal? How little men reasoned in those days, and how little they reason *now*, when religious prejudice leads them! How blind they were, and *are*, to the causes that mould the conduct of society! If a suspected witch or other heretic, under the most excruciating torture, continued for many hours, only to be repeated after a brief release, yielded in the delirium of agony to the demand of the tormentor and 'confessed' as the only means of temporary escape, that confession settled it, and the poor victim was doomed. If she did *not* confess, the torture was repeated and continued until nature mercifully interposed a suspension or escape by a coma or death.

The confession of the witch had sealed her fate, and she was on the way to the stake to be burned, in the presence of an exulting mob of pious maniacs who regarded her sufferings and sobbings, her groans and cries, as a pleasing memorial, and a special favour to God and His loving Christ!

What a scene in a Christian land with devout and zealous Christians as principal actors! As the hapless victim was being conducted to the place that was to end her trials, she makes this pitiful declaration: 'Now, all you that see me this day know that I am now to die as a witch by my own confession; and I free all men, especially the ministers and magistrates, of the guilt of my blood. I take it wholly upon myself, my blood be upon my own head: and as I must make answer to the God of heaven presently, I declare I am as free of witchcraft as any child; but being delated by a malicious woman, and put in prison under the name of a witch, disowned by my husband and friends, and seeing no ground of hope of my coming out of prison or ever coming in credit again, through the temptation of the devil, I made up that confession on purpose to destroy my own life, being weary of it, and choosing rather to die than to live.' Who can read this terrible arraignment of the tendency and influence of dogmatic Theology, and the cruelty it generates, the utter paralysis of human sympathy and moral discrimination, and of all tender emotions and natural affections, as illustrated in these persecutions and religious murders, without a shudder of horror and a thrill of deep, tender, tearful emotion and infinite pity for the millions upon millions who have passed such ordeals during the ages of the world's evolution?

This is as instructive as it is pathetic. Not many years ago, a celebrated medical expert on lunacy said that he would regard belief in spirit intercourse as proof of insane delusions. As an opinion it was contemptible: as the judgment of a man whose verdict might mean imprisonment, it was a public danger. At this moment, notwithstanding the great change that has come over the world in

relation to this subject, it is not always safe to confess all one knows to be true. But how awful to live in days when confession that meant death was resorted to, to escape a life that would be worse than death!

It is by such historical measuring lines as this that we see how we have improved; and it is by such glimpses into the past that we learn our duty to one another now. Blessed are the free-minded seekers after the truth in the present, for they shall prepare the way for the revealers of the future!

It will not do to laugh at anything which achieves an object, or to cry 'impossible' when a thing is done. Far better try to explain it—or wait. An intelligent writer, whose thoughts are always worth pondering, says of 'Christian Science' or 'Faith-healing':—

The new, the rising science and art of healing, is study and work first in the spiritual body, to discover the secret and law of disease there, to open the way for, or call in, some higher invisible elements and energies that may restore strength and harmony to the spiritual body, thence work outward and heal the material.

In hypnotic healing, the operator seems to impart some invisible energy or establish some occult condition in the mind or body of the patient that works the cure. Here we distinguish at once that the curative law and power belong to the infinite domain of the unseen, the spiritual, and that it works in the invisible part, the spiritual, of the patient; from thence comes the healing of the grosser material body of its pains and diseases.

In Christian Science, mental and spiritual healing, while names and forms vary, if we mistake not, the law and power are essentially and practically the same.

The Christian Scientist says: 'We have no bodies, what you call trees, flowers and animals are only illusions. All that is real of us is God; God cannot have sickness and pains, neither can we in reality. Disease and pain are simply our false ideas and desires concerning life. If we only know, and will have absolute faith in this fact, we shall be freed from all sickness and sufferings. We shall thus lay ourselves open, and be filled by the infinite health-tide of truth and harmony that rises and flows from God.'

Considered from the scientific standpoint assumed in the beginning, what does this mean? Simply that the attitude, the thinking, desiring and willing, towards the infinite spiritual world and life, opens the way for, attracts, this higher invisible power and life to flow in and heal the spiritual body of the Christian Scientist, thence outward, giving health to the material.

But Mr. Cram has a strong word of caution for those who make so startlingly free with 'God.' He says:—

Are you quite sure, Christian Scientists, that it is God's hand direct from the throne that touches you with its healing? May it not be as with Jesus, who in humbler love, more kindly and tolerant faith, accepted Heaven's gifts of power, of love and healing willingly from God, through ministering angels' hands, even from Moses or Elias, or any of the 'ten legions of angels' from above, that he thankfully recognised as Heaven's messengers and gift-bringers to this world?

Is it not a part of the immortal *Christ-science* to see and know that God feeds and molds His universe of worlds not according to one name or creed, not in one Church, but ever more and more through many prophets and teachers, under all names and forms, all creeds and Churches?

But this we hope and trust, most of all, that God's bounty and healing best flow where rising faith is humble and tolerant,

where science is conscious of ignorance, and hungers for more and better, where the secret of being healed is in striving to heal, and where we receive Heaven's gifts of higher life even though 'wandering ghosts' bring them.

Mr. G. S. Carr, M.D., has added another book to the pro- and anti-Kidd literature. His 'Social Evolution and the Evolution of Socialism' (London: W. Stewart and Co.) is worth noticing by those who are specially interested in the subject. It is essentially a fighting book for the hour, well-written, and charmingly presented, with its noble printing and dainty binding.

The New York 'Christian Herald' concerning the wonderfully important frescos now being unearthed in Egyptian tombs, says:—

It was for a long time a subject of wonder that the Egyptians should have devoted so much skill and labour to the production of works of art which they took special pains to conceal from the sight of men. They knew, or rather hoped, that no one would ever gaze upon them, yet they lavished upon them all their best efforts. It is now suggested as a result of study of their ancient records, that they had philosophical reasons for the apparent inconsistency. They believed that every man had a principle of life, differing from his mind and soul, permeating his being, and this they called his Ka. They thought that at death it was not extinguished, but merely left the body, and would reanimate it after the lapse of a long period. The Ka, they supposed, went to the tomb with the body, and waited there with it until the soul returned from long pilgrimages, when the man would be reconstructed and live eternally. If the body were accidentally destroyed the Ka would be homeless. The embalmers did their utmost to prevent the catastrophe, but if all failed, then the statue of the deceased might serve as an abode for the Ka, or it might even occupy it while waiting for the soul to return. In the absence of any more reasonable explanation, this may be accepted as certainly plausible, if not absolutely true. It shows how in that remote time men were groping and searching for the truth, which the Apostle Paul records: 'We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'

#### TALKS WITH 'TIEN.'

Those of our readers who have had the good fortune to talk with Tien Sien Tie when controlling his medium, Mr. J. J. Morse, will be familiar with the ready and satisfactory way in which he at once replies to any questions which may be put to him touching the facts and philosophy of Spiritualism. There are very many, however, to whom, from a variety of circumstances, no such opportunity ever comes. For the sake of such of our friends as are in this position, we are glad to be able to announce that we have arranged for the acceptance of written questions, which may be forwarded to us by post, and which, if of an appropriate character, will be submitted to Tien, whose replies will be duly chronicled in these pages. But it must be distinctly understood that we reserve the right to withhold questions of a purely personal or irrelevant character, or such as may relate to matters of no possible interest to other persons than the writer. Our arrangements with Tien were completed some weeks ago, but we found it inconvenient to put them into execution till after the recent Conference. Written questions, dealing with the various phases of phenomena, and with matters relating to what may be termed the philosophy of Spiritualism, may now be sent to us, accompanied, of course, by the name and address of the writer—though these need not be published.

#### ORGANISATION FOR COMBINED ACTION.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE RECENT CONFERENCE OF SPIRITUALISTS BY MR. S. S. CHISWELL, OF LIVERPOOL, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL SPIRITUALISTS' FEDERATION, MAY 14TH, 1895.

'Organisation for combined action and work' has become essentially necessary and of paramount importance, but it should be undertaken with a due regard to 'personal freedom' and 'individual liberty'; for, while we are not desirous to formulate a sect for the mere purpose of converting the world from Ecclesiasticism to Spiritualism, or with a view to inducing everybody to join us, yet would we wisely combine, so that we can present a united front in our fight with the foes of humanity—'ignorance and superstition.' As Spiritualists we have accomplished the object of our nearly fifty years of destructive effort; we have broken the fetters that bound us to a belief in a religion of symbol, form, and ceremony; we have done with priestcraft for ever; we have answered the question—'if a man dies, shall he live again?' We understand the naturalness of the spiritual world and the certainty of the law of eternal progress; we have destroyed the fear of death; we have disestablished hell and purified our conception of heaven; we realise that by personal effort only we can attain the true dignity of perfect manhood and womanhood. And now do we not all agree that the 'fulness of time' has indeed come and that this is the hour for re-construction and building; and are we not prepared to take our part in the glorious work, and combine all existing efforts in one complete whole, thereby forming a closer union of all societies and all workers in the movement for action and work?

There undoubtedly have been, and still exist, many amongst us who are opposed to organisation. They seem afraid, in their intense individualism, that by combination there is a danger of the formularisation of creed, doctrine, or dogma in connection with the movement; that our professional mediums and platform workers would become a priestcraft as objectionable and as intolerant as any in the past; that personal ambition would probably lead to the exercise of authority for private advantage; that considering there are those on the one hand who are more desirous to promulgate the philosophical teachings of Spiritualism, and on the other those attaching paramount importance to the investigation of the phenomenal aspect of Spiritualism, whichever section were in authority would be likely to use that authority to the detriment of the opinions of the other section, and confusion, nay, failure, would ensue. They say further that organisation would be distinctly fatal to the highest interests of our movement, seeing that it must and would interfere with the freedom of the individual by asking him to subscribe to certain opinions and claiming his adherence to certain lines of action necessarily repugnant to his conception of liberty. And they affirm that we should never recognise the leadership of anyone, but, relying on our individual development, should strive for the benefit of our fellows in the way that seems best to each of us, and in accordance with our own conception of what is right and wrong. Have these friends considered that we have had in operation for nearly six years 'The Spiritualists' National Federation'; mainly composed of societies and workers in the North, and that none of these disasters have as yet overtaken us? True, little has been accomplished, comparatively speaking, and that mainly because societies have not embraced the opportunity for combination as they might have done; have not sufficiently interested themselves in the direction of unity, and we have unfortunately not had the co-operation of our metropolitan friends; notwithstanding all of which, sufficient has been done to warrant the existence of the Federation and to encourage the members to increased and continuous effort. One fact has, however, been clearly demonstrated, viz., that both professional and lay workers have combined together, and with little friction and with self-sacrificing labour have endeavoured to place our cause in such a position that it may not only command the respect of those outside of us, but claim their attention and secure their help in investigation. Mediums and platform workers have honestly done their part at considerable sacrifice to themselves and without the expectation of fee or reward, and it is not only a duty but a pleasure to me to testify that without their valuable aid it would have been impossible to carry on the work of the Federa-

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tion. Their connection with, and their appearance on, the executive has at times been misunderstood, but generally by those only who were not prepared to do any work or take any action themselves. There is little danger in the direction that has been suggested, for are not all actuated by the one motive, viz., love of the movement and the desire to see it occupying the position its importance demands?

The first necessity in regard to organisation is 'personal conviction of the individual of the truths of Spiritualism, and, where possible, the intelligent study of the subject in the family circle.' This is the foundation of all desire for association, for from being quite satisfied personally comes the desire to join with others like-minded and engaged in a similar pursuit, and there naturally follows the connection with the semi-private or public circle; from this we arrive at that stage when, being desirous to know more of the phenomena that came under our notice first in the family circle, and again in the more public circle, and, being enlightened by the philosophy, we are tempted to join a society in the hope that we may receive assistance and guidance in our investigations. And here let me suggest the sort of rules, constitutions, or laws that should govern a society of Spiritualists. In the first place, I would say let the government in every case be 'by the people for the people,' and let the laws be as simple as is compatible with good order and discipline, and then are we likely to solve the problem of 'organisation for combined action and work' in each district.

First, as to Name:—We like the distinctive title 'Society of Spiritualists.'

Second, Objects:—(a) To unite fraternally all persons interested in the investigation of Spiritual phenomena and the promulgation of the Spiritual philosophy. (b) To promote and encourage intellectual inquiry and systematic study of the various phases of Spiritualism.

Third, Methods:—(a) By religious services on the ideal lines laid down by Mr. E. W. Wallis. (b) By Lyceum meetings for children. (c) By psychical discussion classes. (d) By meetings for personal testimony. (e) By a circulating library. (f) By distribution of suitable literature. (g) By investigating circles. (h) By sésances for the judicious development of mediumship. (i) By such other methods as may be found expedient.

Membership.—Persons of moral worth and progressive thought.

Subscriptions.—To be decided as may be found requisite.

Management.—By the members, who shall meet monthly, with an executive of three, who shall report to the members at the monthly meeting.

Objection may be taken to the suggested system of management, but my desire is that it should be thoroughly democratic, thereby minimising the possibility of friction, as the members really manage the society themselves, having a small workable executive to carry out their policy. One of the difficulties found in society work is the fact that strangers attend the services, seek admission to the sésances, and having satisfied themselves of the fact of spirit-communication and spirit-return, leave us and return to their old haunts, possibly doing good among their fellows by spreading our facts and living our philosophy, but preferring to remain amongst their early associates. Other friends, and sometimes members, prefer either to form or to join circles which meet on Sunday evenings for the convenience of the sitters, thereby depriving societies of their presence and support and preventing combination for action and work. It should be a matter of conscience with the members not only to attend the religious services themselves, which is of the utmost importance, but also to endeavour to ensure the attendance of thoughtful inquirers likely to join the society and be of use in the movement. I would like further to insist on the duty of societies towards any of their members who exhibit signs of mediumship, so that by judicious care and attention they may become useful to the society, and, what is even of more importance, swell the ranks of our advocates, teachers, and exponents, who are, alas! at the present hour all too few for the work to be done.

I have ventured to spend some time in consideration of societies, for I am of opinion that a 'greater uniformity in the manner and mode of working' would be of advantage both to societies and to the movement. I would not like to lay down hard and fast rules, feeling sure all will recognise that my duty is to suggest to the Conference merely what can be threshed out in discussion, and my earnest hope is that good may result. I feel confident that when societies are working smoothly and successfully there

will grow a keen desire for union with other societies, that by combined effort increased work may be done and the truths of our Religion disseminated far and wide. And for that reason I would advocate the formation of 'District Conferences,' where representatives from each society could meet as often as might be found convenient, for the distinct objects of:—

1. Bringing the societies into closer sympathy and union.
2. Extending the work in the district.
3. Being helpful to each other in any and every way that may be found necessary or advisable.

This, I am of opinion, would tend to strengthen each society in the district, and would be instrumental in removing obstacles that might arise detrimental to the successful working of a society; and the members, being drawn together by the ties of united purpose and effort, would realise their duty and responsibility to each other, and set in operation methods which would work harmoniously and well.

And now I come to the most important feature of organisation, 'A National Federation,' and I cannot do better than claim your attention on behalf of an existing institution, 'The Spiritualists' National Federation.' I would not like to say that the constitution is perfect, but I would confidently assert that it is the best yet before the movement in this country, and we can, by national co-operation, make it serviceable to every society in the kingdom. Under its auspices much good has already been accomplished, which augurs well for what might be done were it taken up by every society and every earnest Spiritualist. Societies and Spiritualists are needed; literature is needed; and funds are needed; so that the services of organising workers may be engaged, and propaganda and missionary work be undertaken in a manner befitting our movement, and in proportion to the importance and magnitude of our work. We trust these meetings may stimulate us to increased desire for amalgamation, so that when the International Conference of Spiritualists takes place, in 1896, we may be found a federated body, presenting a bold and united front worthy of so great a reformatory movement.

For the better advocacy of our cause it has become absolutely imperative that some scheme should be conceived that would ensure well educated and prepared teachers for our platform, and it seems to me that Mrs. Britten's reiterated contention that we need 'A School of the Prophets' and a 'College for Mediums' has come within the range of practical work. Truly 'the harvest is plenteous but the labourers are few.' There is a constant demand for highly developed mediums and speakers, and we are lacking in our duty while we delay to make provision to supply the want. Cannot a scheme be at once devised that shall inaugurate so magnificent an institution? As Heaven helps those who help themselves, let us take the initial step, and assuredly those of our friends who have the means will aid us to the utmost of our requirements; and we may also confidently expect the co-operation of those bright spirits whose mission it is to assist us at this crisis in our movement. One of the stumbling-blocks to our progress is the fact that frauds exist in our ranks, and nothing would tend to stamp out fraud and deception quicker than the formation of such a school or college, and nothing would prove such a protection to our honest, hard-working, and worthy mediums.

It is often asserted that the phenomena of the present day are neither so distinctive nor so satisfactory as those experienced in the early days of the movement. I have no means of confirming or refuting these assertions, but I do feel that there is lukewarmness and want of system on the part of our members and societies, and I am confident that 'the arm of the Lord is not shortened, neither is His ear heavy,' but that he who seeks shall find, and to him who asks it shall be given, and to him that knocks the door shall be opened. The fault, therefore, must lie within ourselves, and this might soon be remedied were we organised for combined action and work.

Recently a badge of recognition has been adopted in the North; an effort has been made to commence a sick and benefit fund for aged and indigent workers; and a national hymn-book is in process of compilation. Do you not think that these and kindred matters are of such necessity and importance that they are forcing themselves on the consideration of the movement, and that it is our bounden duty to prepare ourselves by organisation for combined action and work in relation to them?

It has been anticipated that I would present a strong plea for organisation, but really it seems to me that the necessity is so self-evident that all are satisfied, all are favourably disposed, all

are desirous for united action. Do we not recognise that organisation is the result and not the cause of life? It is said that animals and plants live, not because they are organised, but that they are organised because they live. Does the Spiritual movement live? Do we recognise that we are living members of it? Have we made the world conscious of our existence? Then, because we live, organisation must follow as a natural sequence, and pleading becomes unnecessary.

I feel that I have merely introduced the subject, and in the words of Oliver Wendell Holmes :—

Our largest hope is unfulfilled,  
The promise still outruns the deed,  
The tower but not the spire we build.

### ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

BY MRS. HARDINGE BRITTEN.

The last of the meetings of the Conference at Portman Rooms, on Tuesday evening, May 14th, was that at which MRS. EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN replied to written questions from the audience, Mr. John Lamont (Liverpool) occupying the chair.

The first question was as follows: Why, in trance interviews with spirits, do we so invariably get descriptions of personal appearance, wearing apparel, &c., and never a loving message or a word as to the surroundings of the departed, the mode of their being, their occupations, and whether or not they are happy?

ANSWER: The writer of that question is unfortunate. Whilst the appearance, the dress, all other specialities of identity may be and are absolutely necessary to prove that it is not mere thought-transference or aught but the real fact of a spirit manifestation, we scarcely know whether the world at this date would number its millions of thoughtful believers, of grateful Spiritualists devoted to the great truth, had the spirits failed to reveal something of their condition both by way of encouragement to the good and warning to the bad. As the evidence offered you so clearly to-night by the reader and speaker showed, the life beyond the grave is one of progress. Oh! friend, search again—search, and you shall find that not alone to give messages of love and kindness and affection are the spirits impelled to return, but to give evidences of their condition, aye, and warnings of your own, and encouragement of your struggles in life. These will all be given you, though not all at once. The powers of the human mind had been many thousands of years unfolding, before the lightnings that have been man's destruction were made his post-boys to carry his messages round the world. Be patient for the unfoldment of the grand powers of spirit-life as you have been in the upholding of the possibilities of material creation; and all your doubts and difficulties will disappear in the glorious revelations of life beyond the grave.

QUESTION: It has been said to-day that Spiritualism (in Lyceum work) should teach Nature to the students; but would not Nature (minus spirit) be a shell without the egg?

ANSWER: The Lyceum, as it was organised in the spirit-world, and as it was revealed to the great seer, Andrew Jackson Davis, is nothing more than the first form in the great schoolhouse of eternity. It is nothing more than the first attempt at an infant school to impart to the minds of the little ones those sweet, high truths and principles that will fashion the young mind and draw it out of the morasses of priestcraft into the perfection of the power of the spirit-world. In the present rudimental condition of Spiritualism, the revelation through Andrew Jackson Davis, the Poughkeepsie seer, of the Spiritual Lyceum is enough for the time. It is all your minds can bear; but as the power of the spirit-world unfolds, and as men begin themselves to learn the nature of the grand spiritual science which enables the spirits to produce phenomena in various directions, the Lyceum will expand. For the present, be thankful that the teachings are not only earnest but true—not only true to Nature, but to our Father, God.

QUESTION: Are not three-fourths of the manifestations at séances done by the astral form of the medium, and not the spirits of our dear ones, mediums being always persons who can project one or several astral forms, as ordinary persons cannot?

ANSWER: We have yet to learn that any persons who can project astral forms project any but their own. When you find clairvoyant descriptions given at a circle, they are not descriptions of the astral form of the medium.

They invariably tend to produce evidence, testimony indubitable, that a spirit of another form, another character, is at work. We have, however, great sympathy with those who endeavour to show that the life principle in humanity can and does appear, and that much of the intelligence and power displayed at séances is derived therefrom. We grant all this, and in view of the rudimental condition of knowledge in which humanity has been kept concerning the nature of spirit-life and spirit-power, it is not wonderful that this phase of spirit-phenomena should often be mistaken for another phase. But this does not affect the fact that millions of spirits have come back and identified themselves in a fashion that has left no possibility of mistake—no room for the theory of thought-transference. To earnest and capable investigators it is only one point out of many others that the true Spiritualist has to learn, that thought-transference and the appearance of the astral form of the medium do from time to time intervene in the manifestations. But you are all spirits as much as you will ever be, and from time to time the spirit in this condition frequently becomes eliminated from its external surroundings and appears at different points in the form of what the Germans call the *doppel-ganger* or double. Meantime, this is but one indication that there is a vast realm to study—a world of power, and new and mighty forces unfolding, and we declare solemnly, and that without reference to those who know but one Church and one thought concerning religion, that it will open up the grandest and noblest religion the world has ever yet known—the religion of truth, the realisation that if man is a spirit God must be a Spirit. The day shall come when every one of these phenomena shall be a portion of that grand science. The day is not far distant when it shall become the mightiest reform of the age.

QUESTION: Is it not possible and, in fact, desirable, to remain a staunch Churchwoman and be a Spiritualist?

ANSWER: When you remember that it is historically true, since that day when Jesus of Nazareth appeared as the founder of the Christian religion, that there have been over one thousand sects claiming Him as their founder, each, for the most part, teaching a different form of belief—different sectarian beliefs—and most of them representing different methods of worshipping God, it would be rather difficult to say what 'a staunch Churchwoman' is. Whilst any and every man can realise for himself, through the phenomena of Spiritualism, that the spirit lives and communicates, it depends upon himself whether he pushes his inquiries still further, and asks under what conditions the spirit lives hereafter. When he realises that, he will find a new Church opening before him; for all the infinite number and variety of men, there is one universal revelation. Every living creature is in the state in which his good or evil deeds have placed him. Unless by self-reform and self-atonement he endeavours to repair the wrongs he has done, he will continue in darkness. When he once realises that the Kingdom of Heaven is within him, that will be a 'Church' for him as well as a reform. You need seek no other 'Church' than the blessed truth.

QUESTION: Do children grow in the spirit-world?

ANSWER: What is growth? Is it alone of the body? Nay, there is the growth of soul, the growth of spirit, and therefore it is by thousands of beautiful, comforting, holy communications we learn that the little ones, who have passed from this earth without any consciousness, without recognition of life, become glorious angels. As spirit-children they are brought to their parents' homes, and are constantly attracted to those related to them on earth, to learn the lessons which they have had no opportunity to learn while in the mortal form. It is from these spirits that thousands of communications have come; and bright and beautiful angels have confessed that they have never known the blessedness of earth-life, except when brought by other spirits to the dear home.

QUESTION: How do you account for the appearance of a body if that body is gone?

ANSWER: We do not account for the appearance of a body. We use the term 'body' to signify an accumulation of material atoms. When the material atoms of the human form are broken up and disintegrated, the body is gone, but the spirit and soul remain, and sometimes appear on earth in the similitude of that form, chiefly for the purpose of identification. They may, and do, grow; they change constantly in the spirit-world, where all is activity and progress. But when the spirit returns to the earth, it takes on again the manifestation of the form on earth for the purpose of recognition.

The remaining questions and replies we have only space to allude to very briefly. Replying to the question whether all spirits were conscious immediately on leaving the body, the speaker said that the experiences of spirits in this direction were various. Some were conscious even as they stood beside the mortal form they had but just quitted; in other cases there was a greater or less period during which the active consciousness was suspended. Responding to an inquiry as to the stage prior to birth at which the human soul commences its individual existence, the speaker said that all matter was saturated by spirit in its various grades of development and expression. As it grew towards the human stage it assumed a tendency to gather in for itself a life of its own. Briefly, it might be said that the soul principle did not enter upon its career of conscious individuality in man until the moment of physical conception. To a question dealing with predestination and the extent to which man is a free agent, the speaker replied, in effect, that while the larger possibilities of existence in relation to the divine destiny of the spirit were fixed and inevitable, men were free agents as to the means and methods by which those possibilities were approached and attained. To another question, 'What substitute does Spiritualism offer for the Gods of the Bible?' the speaker answered by a general reference to the tribal deities of ancient nations, affirming that Spiritualism pointed to the Universal Divine Spirit as the one God to be worshipped.

The proceedings were terminated by a hearty vote of thanks to Mrs. Britten.

### WHAT IS MYSTICISM?

There is much in Max Nordau's brilliant work upon 'Degeneration'\* that will be of interest to Spiritualists. The chapter devoted to Mysticism, though largely pathological and at times distinctly unsympathetic, is, nevertheless, in my opinion, a valuable contribution to the psychic side of the question. I quote freely:—

'Mysticism,' according to Nordau 'is a state of mind in which the subject imagines that he perceives or divines unknown and inexplicable relations amongst phenomena, discerns in things hints at mysteries, and regards them as symbols by which a dark power seeks to unveil itself. This condition of mind is,' we are further told, 'connected with strong emotional excitement, which consciousness conceives to be the result of its presentiments, although it is this excitement, on the contrary, which is pre-existent, while the presentiments are caused by it, and receive from it their peculiar direction and colour. To the mystic all the phenomena in the world, and in life, present themselves in a different light from what they do to the normally constituted man.'

Nordau next proceeds to describe the brain condition that gives rise to mysticism. This, paradoxically as it may seem, is nothing more or less than want of attention, or, what amounts to the same thing, deficient will-power. Let us see how the conclusion is reached:—

'Conscious intellection is activity of the grey surface of the brain, which, as is well known, is a tissue consisting of countless nerve-cells united by nerve-fibres. When a stimulus reaches one of these cells, chemical changes ensue, neighbouring cells are affected, and the disturbance spreads itself on all sides in a wavelike circle, subsiding exactly as the wave does, quickly or slowly, according to the strength of the stimulus. In addition to responding to a stimulus, these cells have also the capacity of preserving an image—a phosphorescence, as it were—of the strength and character of the stimulus. Each particular stimulus arouses, therefore, not only in the cell to which it is directly led, but also in countless other contiguous and connected cells, the memory of former stimuli. Thus arise, or more accurately, follow each other in an immeasurably short interval of time, thousands of impressions of regularly decreasing distinctness. This procedure is called the association of ideas. In order, however, that the association of ideas may be of use something more is required, namely, attention. This it is which brings order into the chaos of representations awakened by the association of ideas, and makes them subserve the purposes of cognition and judgment. What is attention? Attention is the faculty of the brain to suppress all impressions that have arisen in consciousness except those directly related to the exciting cause. A state of attention allows no obscurity to persist in consciousness. The consciousness of a healthy, strong-minded and consequently attentive man, resembles a room in the

full light of day, in which the eye sees all objects distinctly, in which all outlines are sharp, and wherein no indefinite shadows are floating. Attention, therefore, presupposes strength of will, and this again is the property only of a normally-constituted and unexhausted brain. But where there is weakness of will, either innate or acquired, and consequently incapacity to control the association of ideas, consciousness acquires a distorted and blurred view of the external world. All is vague and uncertain, true relationships are overlooked and false ones substituted. It may be that a triangle and a planet, or a rapidly-growing vine and a musical note, are conceived to have a mysterious affinity. True, there may be a strong feeling that these connections are incomprehensible and inexplicable; but as they appear to have originated in the same way as other thoughts and opinions, they must be regarded as equally valid.'

Now this state of mind, as Nordau forcibly puts it, 'in which a man is straining to see, thinks he sees, but does not see—in which a man is forced to construct thoughts out of presentations which befool and mock consciousness like will-o'-the-wisps or marsh vapours—in which a man believes he perceives inexplicable relations between distinct phenomena and ambiguous formless shadows—this is the condition of mind known as Mysticism.'

Our author's position is a strong one. His statements as to the functions of the nerve-fibres and cells of the brain are beyond dispute. But when he asserts that without attention there can be no intelligent thought, I venture to think that he goes a little too far. There are many facts that go to show that intelligent thought is often possible without attention. Take dreaming, for instance. In dreams the unimpeded association of ideas is very noticeable; image follows image, in the most extraordinary manner; the connection between them is so slight and evanescent as to baffle analysis; and yet amid much that is notoriously fantastic and absurd, we are sometimes startled by presentiments as clear and definite and capable of verification as those of intelligent thought. Then again, there is automatic writing. Here the attention is purposely kept in abeyance as much as possible, some sitters even going so far as to read a book; nevertheless, intelligent messages are frequently obtained. In clairvoyance, too, there is much that may be attributed to the association of ideas merely. We have a state of reverie induced, in which scenes are built up, occurrences imagined, and names disclosed or impressed, all without the aid of the attention. There has been no conscious effort on the part of the seer to suppress anything; he takes the associated images just as they come, and yet his utterances are often strangely truthful. Of course, Spiritualists have an explanation for all these things; but that does not concern us just now. All I seek to show is that Nordau's assertion as to the relation between attention and intelligent thought is, in many remarkable instances, open to question. In conclusion, I should like to bring to notice the interesting parallel which Nordau draws between the processes of thought and movement. He says:—

'The automatic association of muscular contractions corresponds to the association of ideas, their co-ordination to attention. As with defective attention there ensues no intelligent thought, so with faulty co-ordination there can be no appropriate movement. Palsy is equivalent to idiotcy; St. Vitus's dance to obsessions and fixed ideas. Mysticism finds its reflected image in the aimless and powerless, often hardly discernible, movements of senile and paralytic trembling; and ecstasy is, for a brain centre, the same state as a prolonged and violent tonic contraction for a muscle or group of muscles.'

ARTHUR BUTCHER.

### RECEIVED.

- 'The Spiritual Review,' for June. (London: 113, Edgware road, W. 6d.)
- 'The Lyceum Banner,' for June. (London: J. J. Morse, 26, Osnaburgh-street, N.W. 1d.)
- 'The Magnetic and Botanic Journal,' for June. (London: 280, Mare-street, Hackney, N.E. 1d.)
- 'The Humanitarian,' for June. (London: Hutchinson and Co., 34, Paternoster-row, E.C. 1s.)
- 'The Coming Day,' for June. (London: Williams and Norgate, Henrietta-street, Covent Garden. 3d.)
- 'The New Age,' for May: A Magazine of Spiritual Knowledge and Psychical Research. (Edinburgh: Alex. Duguid, 25, Springwell-place, Dalry-road. 4d.)

NEVER bear more than one kind of trouble at a time. Some people bear three kinds—all they have had, all they have now, and all they expect to have.

\*'Degeneration,' by Max Nordau. Translated from the German. Published by William Heinemann, 1895. Price 17s.

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### PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

In considering the subject of Prayers for the Dead, which seems to be again up for judgment, we would like to lay emphasis on two thoughts which grow out of it; first, that it seems useless to discuss it at all if there are any dead; and second, that, on the assumption that 'the dead are not dead but alive,' the question really resolves itself into the query whether, after the earthly life, the condition of the departed one is suddenly and inexorably fixed.

For our own part, we are, of course, clear as to both these thoughts. We use the word 'dead' in a purely conventional manner, and hold fast by the saying of Jesus that 'God is not the God of the dead but of the living; for all live unto Him.' That is to say, God has no dead. All are alive to Him—all visible, all on the march. So that, to us, the question, 'Shall we pray for the dead?' is, to all intents and purposes, in the same category as the question, 'Shall we pray for those who are in Australia?' We know absolutely no difference, except that God's children in Australia might return to us in the flesh, while His children in the spirit-world can only return on the lines of spirit-life; but these are no more dead than those. So, then, we can only consent to consider this question on the broad understanding that the unseen are as real and as alive and alert as the seen.

Another thing we must insist upon: that spirit-life is an intensely vivid life, and that a child of God on that side of the veil has a multiplicity of needs, duties, and possibilities, just the same as we have here. We must break right through the old traditional notion that a spirit is a poor spectral thing, only given to flitting about in some ghostly manner, without any of the substantial interests and duties of life. That is a grotesque and pagan notion that even some Spiritualists are not quite free from; and yet our very first business is to get rid of it. The real difference between what we call a spirit and a being in the flesh is that the spirit is emancipated from a number of interfering hindrances which stop work and spoil delight, and darken counsel, and block the way. If that is not so, we are all indulging in a vain hope, and are consoling ourselves with a sheer delusion. 'Everything or nothing' is the true Spiritualist's marching cry; and a perfectly sound and sane cry it is, too.

'Death' is either extermination or advance. There is no alternative. As for the half-grotesque, half-childish notion of a long 'sleep' in the grave (or at the bottom of the sea), nothing is to be said but that, as a matter of sober sense, we prefer the old-time verdict of Charles Bradlaugh or the new-time verdict of the rankest and blankest

agnostic. No; we are passing on to either extermination or advancement; and any prayers we have to offer must be based upon that understanding.

One curious thing is that many persons who shrink from prayers for the dead, or even from the conclusion that 'the dead are not dead but alive,' profess to be exceptionally strong believers in the Bible as 'The Word of God.' That is surely remarkable. We admit that the Bible has here and there an agnostic statement (such as Ecclesiastes ix. 5), or that it here and there justifies the conventional opinion concerning the 'last day'; but, taken broadly, certainly in the New Testament, the thought presented is that the departed have entered into a very vivid life (of joy or misery) beyond the veil. The rich man is pictured as in Hell, 'being in torment.' Lazarus is pictured as 'comforted' 'in Abraham's bosom.' The pure in heart 'see God.' Good angels 'rejoice over one sinner that repenteth.' From all this only one inference is possible—that the so-called 'dead' are intensely alive; and the rising again of a body seems absolutely superfluous and an impertinence.

Add to all this another consideration: that if all pass beyond, only to recommence life under higher or other conditions, the activities and duties of the unseen world must be immense. It is not only absurd, it is impossible, to believe that chaos reigns on the other side. Everything must be provided for: supports for the aged, receivers of the young, guides for the ignorant, guardians for the imbecile, hospitals for the sick, reformatories for the vicious—unless, indeed, we fall back on the monstrous idea that death crystallises the character of everyone, and that nothing remains to be done but to go to prison or to the golden streets and the great white throne; a monstrous conclusion, we say, which has nothing to commend it, either on the ground of justice or rationality.

The only reason for not praying for the dead, so far as we can see, is that they may not need it; not because they are dead and beyond our reach, but because they are too intensely alive to need any poor help from us. And really that seems very likely. Why should the tempest-tossed pray for those who have arrived safely at the desired haven? But even that objection breaks down at last. It is not a vain thing that a little child should say, 'God bless father and mother,' though all the time it stands in constant need of father's and mother's help; nor is it a vain thing that we should, 'out of the depth,' remember the safe-havened and, from the black night, waft them a blessing or a prayer. And so, in like manner, it may not be in vain that we, poor wayfarers amid these shadows, should breathe a prayer for the dear dwellers in the light—even though the truth, after all, may be that the main thing is not our poor prayers for them, but their effectual prayers for us.

MR. W. J. COLVILLE, the 'Banner of Light' medium, is about to pay a visit to England, and is expected to reach London early in the coming week. He will, of course, meet with a cordial reception. He will be open to engagements to lecture, on and after Sunday, the 16th inst., for a few weeks only. Letters may be addressed to him at the office of 'LIGHT.'

ANOTHER CONFERENCE.—On the invitation of the Sunderland Spiritual Evidence Society a Conference of Spiritualists of the counties of Northumberland and Durham will be held in Sunderland on Saturday, June 22nd, and Sunday, June 23rd, when several interesting questions will be submitted for discussion. Programmes and full particulars may be had on application to Mr. T. Olman Todd, 7, Winifred-terrace, Sunderland.

HERE is a good story from America:—A hunter in Kansas narrates the following: 'I had shot a sandhill crane. Other birds were near, but every one took to its wing on the instant, except the mother bird, who came immediately to the rescue of her half-grown offspring, which I had wounded so that it was unable to fly. She guided its movements until it planted its feet on her back, and then flew slowly away with the smaller bird to a place of safety.' This cruel hunter of a harmless bird should have learned a lesson from this brave mother. So should girls and women learn it, for the man was probably shooting the birds for bonnets and hats.

## THE MYSTERIES OF MEDIUMSHIP.

BY OUR SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE.

'GENERAL LORRISON.'

*(Continued from page 260.)*

'I think you spoke of having had sittings with Home, General?'

'Yes. I met him frequently at the house of Sir William Gomm—the Field Marshal, you know. Here is a curious circumstance which seems to show that the perception of raps is not entirely dependent upon the physical organ of hearing. Gomm was so deaf that if you wanted to speak to him a servant would hand you the end of a tube into which you shouted, while the old gentleman put the other end in his ear. Yet whenever there were raps he heard them as quickly and as plainly as anyone. At Sir William Gomm's I have seen a chair slide up from the end of the room to the dining table at which we were sitting, I have seen the curtains of one of the windows spread out, and an indistinct figure, but sufficiently distinct for us to see that it was the form of a man, stand forward in the uncertain light. In the full light I have heard a piano that was first carefully locked play the most beautiful symphonies and any tunes that might be asked for. I have seen a hand form and come up through the table and table-cloth, right in the middle of the table. I have held an accordion under the table with the keys down, and heard it play most beautifully. One of the best, and to me most striking feats with Home was performed, I was told, especially for me. It was at the house of Nassau Senior in Kensington, and we were sitting at the end of a room which was one of three apartments adjoining each other and connected by arches. I afterwards found that the length of the three rooms was over forty-five yards. I was seated by the side of Home, who went into a trance, and asked me to lend him my pencil. He put the pencil between the forefinger and thumb of his right hand, rested the elbow on the table, and invited me to grasp the wrist. I had no sooner got a firm grip than I felt a shock like an electric current through my arm, and the pencil was gone. Home told me to go and search for it at the far part of the third room. I found it in a corner, with the end sprayed round like the gills of a mushroom. The velocity with which this pencil travelled so as not to strike the arches on its way must have been enormous, quite beyond the possibility of ordinary throwing. I asked why that had been done and the answer was: "You are accustomed to the firing of shots, and you know the trajectory."'

'One can understand a test like that being more convincing to you as an expert artilleryman, than to an ordinary mortal. It was a well-chosen experiment.'

'Yes, and to me, of course, entirely satisfactory. This, however, is the sort of thing that would tell with anybody. It occurred through the mediumship of Kate Fox at the house of Mrs. Gregory, widow of Dr. Gregory, of Edinburgh.'

'You mean Mrs. Makdougall Gregory? I have often heard the lady speak, though I did not make her acquaintance till after her decease. She comes in a sort of flutter, says something like this (in the direct voice): "Good-evening friends good-evening I'm very pleased to meet you very pleased I'm sure," all in a breath, and is gone before you can return the greeting.'

'That is Mrs. Gregory to the life. It happened at the sitting I speak of that the lamp on the table was smoking, and our hostess asked me to turn down the wick a little. I was about to get up to do so when Kate Fox said, "Don't trouble yourself; I will ask the spirits to do it," adding aloud, "Turn down that lamp a little,

please," and in an instant the light was lowered in an unmistakable manner, no visible hand being anywhere near the lamp. Another lady medium with whom I sat many times was Mrs. Guppy, and always under test conditions. That is to say, on her arrival at the house she was taken upstairs and searched by a jury of matrons, who satisfied themselves that she had nothing about her but her usual clothes. We sat in a room three storeys up, and when Mrs. Guppy was brought in the door was locked and the key taken charge of by me. We were scarcely seated when what seemed like a gust of wind swept through the room and a shower of flowers rained down upon us. On lighting up, floor, table, and chairs were seen to be covered with numbers of fine flowers, which on examination were found to have been in every case broken off and not cut, and in most instances wet with dew as if fresh gathered. Many were tropical flowers, which could only be grown in this country in hothouses.'

'And, in that case, would not be covered with dew?'

'I suppose not. Foster is another medium I mentioned as one with whom I sat pretty frequently. The first or second night of his arrival in England I was asked to go up to Mr. William Howitt's and test him. He sat down at the table and asked me to sit next him. After a short time he said there was a friend of mine near who wanted to speak to me. I asked for the name. For answer he unbuttoned his cuff, bared his arm, and held it out, and there shortly appeared on the flesh, in red letters an inch long, the initials G. R. B. Upon my saying that I could not recognise anybody by mere initials, he took up a pencil and wrote the name in full. It was the name of the colonel who, as I have told you, was suddenly and unexpectedly summoned to India. What, I asked, had my friend to say to me? The reply was that he had died about forty-eight hours previously at Umballa. On returning to Woolwich I could obtain no further information except that, being unwell, he had been ordered to proceed to Calcutta to embark for England, it being hoped that the sea voyage would set him right. There was no telegraph in those days to India, and it was more than three weeks before I received the intelligence that he became so ill on his trip that he was ordered back to the hills, it being considered that he could not stand the journey to Calcutta. He got as far as Umballa and there died, three days before my visit to the Howitts.'

'A very good case, that.'

'Yes, another puzzle for the thought-transferers. Here is another incident about Mrs. A—— which I omitted to tell you when speaking of her. I was under orders to proceed with my brigade to Ceylon, and going to the medium to bid her good-bye, I asked whether the climate would suit me. After a few moments' silence she said: "You are not going to Ceylon; you are going to India. It will suit you, but you must not stop more than two years." Having received my official orders, this struck me as rather a daring statement. A week afterwards I received fresh orders, stating that my destination had been changed from Ceylon to India. I went to India and held an appointment there which I thought would last from three to four years, but in consequence of a sudden run of promotion, I was unexpectedly ordered to return to England. I left Bombay three days before the two years elapsed, and almost directly after I had gone a terrific outbreak of cholera occurred at the station where I should otherwise have been, and carried off hundreds. Now we get to Mrs. Marshall, a very admirable medium. A friend in Cavendish-square was very anxious to see something of Spiritualism and I took Mrs. Marshall to his house. He had the idea that a wooden table could be played tricks with, and fetched in a heavy open-work iron table, at which we sat, he remarking that if we got raps at that or if it was raised he would be

convinced. Before long raps came, and a message was spelt out, to me unintelligible, but both my friend and his wife, after looking at one another, began to cry. It then turned out that the name of a child they had lost five years before had been given, together with some words known only to the father and mother which she had uttered shortly before her death. I was not myself aware that they had ever lost a little girl, and to Mrs. Marshall they were complete strangers. But the best case I remember with Mrs. Marshall was that in which Sir Ed—No, do not give his name, as he might not like it, but say that he is a great Eastern scholar and poet. He was then Mr. A—, and he said to me one day that he was going to write an article in exposure of the medium Home. I asked him how much he knew of the subject, and he admitted that his knowledge was practically nothing, "but of course," he said, "it was all humbug." I told him my views were different. With some astonishment he asked if I really believed there was anything in it. The result of further conversation was that he consented to wait before passing judgment on Home, but said he must have proofs. He desired me to meet him with my medium, one evening, at eight o'clock, under Temple Bar. I engaged Mrs. Marshall, and punctual to the time we met my literary friend at the appointed rendezvous; and I was much amused to see that, regardless of appearances, he had a round table across his shoulder. Under his guidance we went down to the Temple, entered a house, and ascended to a second floor room, in which there were three chairs and no other furniture. I believe, though I never troubled to inquire, that the room had been specially hired for the occasion. A— grimly locked the door, planted the table in the centre of the room, and the chairs round it, and said, "I have just bought this table at a dealer's, so there is no trickery about that." We sat; and very shortly loud raps came and the table rose in the air. The alphabet was asked for. A— thereupon asked, "What have I in my pocket?" Answer, "A sermon." "What is the text of the sermon?" The text was at once rapped out. My friend pulled a manuscript sermon out of his pocket, remarking that the information was correct and that he had thought to protect himself by choosing a good text. He then desired to know if there was anybody who could communicate with him. The reply was in the affirmative, and instructions were given to place a pencil and piece of paper under the table. A— cautiously initialled the paper before depositing it on the floor. We heard the usual scratching sound and raps followed. I said, "Is that to take up the paper?" "Yes." "Well, I want my test first. Before we touch it will you tell us what is written?" There were then spelled out the names, "Annie and James P—" and a few other words. A— with much emotion took up the paper, looked at it, and uttered the one word, "*Credo!*" It was enough; he believed. He subsequently explained to me that he and an intimate friend had made a compact that if there was a future state of existence and communication was possible, whichever died first should communicate with the other. His friend had died several years before and had never communicated. To prevent delusion this friend was to give the female name as a test; and on the paper were written the name of the lady and the name of the friend; and moreover, the words were in the Hindi characters, which the two men had been accustomed to use in the private correspondence that passed between them. A— always called me his *guru* after that; and the effect of the incident and his after experiences in the same field you may judge for yourself from his writings.

'By the way,' resumed the General, 'there is one I think you knew who often comes to our weekly sittings, and sprinkles scent over us. I mean Stainton Moses. He

and I were great friends, and one of the last meetings at Duke-street that I attended was the one at which his appointment to the editorship of "LIGHT" was announced. As time went on I thought a good deal about him, the difficulties of his position, and his bad state of health, and a curious little incident occurred which I think it will interest his old friends to hear. One morning I woke up at about half-past six and began thinking to myself, "I wish I could get him to come down here for four or five days; it would do him good." I thought this because I have a considerable health-giving power, which I have tested in several cases where people who have been half-dead have been greatly benefited by my influence. I thought and thought of him while lying there in bed, and became conscious of plainly seeing his face before me. I determined to write in a day or two inviting him down, but before I could do so there came a letter from him, which you can read for yourself.'

The General handed me a letter from a packet which he took from an escritoire, and this is what I found in it.

MY DEAR —,— You have been on my mind some days. You came to me and I saw you. Why! Are you ill, or do you want anything of me? I was not thinking of you particularly, but I awoke the other morning with your name on my tongue, and now I see you constantly. Send me a line, as I hope you are still in condition to write. I am better, and await with anxiety what you reply.—With a God bless you, your friend, W. STAINTON MOSES.

'That was curious, was it not? I wrote and told him what had happened and he replied with this letter, which you may also copy if you care to.'

DEAR —,— Your letter is very interesting, and I am much relieved. As I told you, I awoke some days ago with your name on my lips. Since my repeated influenza attacks I have slept fitfully, and often awake with some word or phrase on my lips which I repeat over and over again till fully awake. Then I saw you, and frequently 'sensed' you. Then came a letter from the secretary of the Ghost Club, asking me if I had heard from you, and mentioning a rumour which Lillie had heard of your having died suddenly. This naturally led me to put two and two together. Finally, when my doctor was with me smoking a pipe, at Bedford, I became so conscious of your presence that I wrote to you as I did. I shall communicate the matter to the Ghosts to-morrow, for some very interesting questions are involved. . . .—Yours ever,

W. STAINTON MOSES.

'The Ghosts being some friends interested in *Psychical Research*, I suppose?'

'As you say,' confirmed the General. 'I hope the case impressed them as it should have done. And now you shall hear about my new medium, who, in some respects, beats the lot.'

(To be continued.)

#### HYPNOTIC SUGGESTION.

We are pleased to find that the New York 'American Lawyer' denies that a Kansas jury acquitted a murderer and condemned the instigator of the murder, on the ground of hypnotic suggestion. It is true, however, that counsel for the defence suggested hypnotic influence, that the actual murderer was acquitted, and that the instigator of the murder was convicted. But it was one jury which acquitted the actual murderer, and another which, on the evidence of the murderer, convicted the instigator. The non-conviction of the murderer is explained on the ground that, having been acquitted before his confession, he could not be tried again for the same offence.

The editor of 'The American Lawyer,' while expressing his gratification that hypnotism has not yet been accepted as a valid defence, is certain that the question of hypnotic influence will be raised in American courts, and will have to be determined. Meanwhile we commend to American lawyers and judges the following profoundly funny anecdote from one of their own journals:—

The Judge (severely): This poor man says that you, prisoner, hypnotised him into committing the crime. What have you to say for yourself?

Prisoner: He's right, your honour. Another man hypnotised me into hypnotising him.



## A STRANGE VISION IN LONDON,

WITNESSED BY TWO PEOPLE.

We live in strange times ; and something very strange is certainly in the air, and may probably come to earth.

Some weeks ago Mr. Morley's experience of the 'New Religion,' in Brighton, created a sensation throughout Sussex, and beyond it ; but a still stranger manifestation has been witnessed in London, by two persons together, and independently of each other, and that in the precincts of Westminster. I have a nephew living in Victoria-street with his wife and only daughter, aged ten years, and what they related to me I shall write in their own words to me.

'Last night,' my nephew said, 'or, rather, on the morning of the 25th (of May), at three o'clock I was awakened by my little daughter Mary Margarita coming into my room. "Papa, look out ; how beautiful ! don't you hear them ?" I had heard nothing up to that moment, but on being thus addressed I ran to the window and threw it up, and there I saw and heard indeed. It was a long procession of priests, friars, nuns, and others, a procession of the Host apparently, just as one might see in Italy, and might have seen in this country in times gone by. Resplendent vestments, lighted tapers, incense fumes, girls preceding the canopy, throwing flowers in its path. They were passing the window, chanting a triumphant Gregorian tone to some psalm or litany. My little girl said she heard them distinctly, and repeated to me the words "Glory to the Father, and to the Mother, and to the Child." "Papa, don't you hear it ? They are singing the new song."

'Struck by this quaint little speech uttered so earnestly, I hastened to throw on my clothes and descended to the street, resolved to find out whether this was really a Popish procession in our Protestant country ! I followed some way, and was amazed to see among them one whom I recognised as my brother, who was a Catholic priest, and died some years ago (I myself am a Protestant). I followed as one dazed, yet certain it was he, and just as they were nearing the Abbey a sort of haze or mist seemed to form in the air (it was a clear morning), and in a moment I lost all sight of them, and the whole thing melted away from my gaze. I was as one in a dream, and yet I knew it was not a dream. I heard the words, too, the same as my daughter heard, only in a different form, ending some other psalm or litany, and they impressed themselves on my memory, so that I could not forget them. They were, "Glory to Father, Spouse, and Son, Glory to Mother, Bride, and Maid, From the ages of ages to the ages of ages." Still those words ring in my ears, more and more commanding assent as the older form never did or could to me, an agnostic. Then, the vestments were curiously antique in pattern, not like those of the present day, being, apparently, circular in form, of some pliant material hanging down in beautiful folds, as would be the case with a circular garment, and which, perhaps, would be more apparent to the eye of an artist like myself. Then the Monstrance, in which, I suppose, the Host was enshrined, was unlike any I remember, the head of it consisting of two equilateral triangles, intersecting each other, with mystic characters in the corners, and countless rays issuing therefrom. The whole thing was most weird at that early, peaceful hour of the morning. As I returned, deeply impressed, I could not find a soul, save one policeman, in the streets. Anxious to find someone else who might have shared this strange vision, so that I might be sure I was not under a delusion, I asked him, "Have you seen it ?" "Seen what ?" he replied. "Why the religious procession." There was something strange in his face as he spoke, and he said, "I recommend you, sir, to go home to bed and best not to be looking after such things." "Then you *did* see ?" I insisted. "You'd better go home, sir," was the only reply I could get, and I saw it was no use questioning further, as he did not want to give evidence on such a matter. As I got near to my door I noticed a boy sitting on a doorstep. I went over to him. "Did you see the procession ?" He began making signs. I saw he was dumb, but his face looked bright as he looked upward, pointing, as much as to say, "Gone up there." I took a piece of paper from my pocket, to try to get him to write what he saw or knew, when he ran away frightened, I know not why. But there was my own daughter at home ; she saw it, and that before I did. She again told me all, and repeated faithfully the words she heard, and I repeated what I heard. "Oh, father," she said again, "it's the new song." I asked my wife, and when I told her my story she said, "You

were dreaming ; it was your imagination." "But Margarita saw and heard, too," I repeated. "Oh, it is all imagination," she replied ; "I never saw anything ; I go to bed to sleep."

So far my nephew, as well as I can remember the order of his narrative. If there are any other persons who might have heard or seen any such procession on the morning of the 25th, or any other time, I should be glad if they would narrate what they saw. For myself, I feel satisfied with two witnesses, both wide awake, together, and apart from each other, the implied admission of the policeman, and the assent of the dumb child to the question, 'Did you see them ?'

Fitzroy-square, W.C.

W. ESPINASSE.

## SOME RECENT MATERIALISATIONS.

BY EDINA.

No. II.

## SEANCES WITH MRS. MELLON.

Before dealing with the two séances with Mrs. Mellon, I find that I omitted to state in my description of the sittings with Messrs. Husk and Williams, that we had undoubted evidence supplied to us from two independent sources at the second of these séances that our boy, who had passed over in the preceding spring, was in the room, and anxious to show himself to us, but was unable to do so. His existence when in earth-life was utterly unknown to any of the persons present (including the two mediums), and the tests given us were both unexpected and convincing.

Dealing now with the two séances with Mrs. Mellon, in my house here in September, 1890, I have to state that the circle was composed of our family, five personal friends all interested in the phenomena, and an acquaintance of one of the sitters, to whom the phenomena of Spiritualism were quite new and strange. Two members of my family had by this time developed strong psychic power, while other four individuals in the circle were strongly sensitive ; so that the conditions were very favourable. The cabinet was simply a curtain put up by ourselves in the corner of the room. The light was fairly good, being from one of the gas jets in the gaselier, on which had been placed a dark blue globe. We sat in a semi-circle in front of the curtain, I being at the one end, while a professional gentleman and his daughter sat together at the other end. I was thus very close to the cabinet throughout the entire séance. Mrs. Mellon first sat for a short time on a chair in front of the cabinet, and before she went inside I distinctly saw a tall, white form build up by her side, and go behind the curtain. After the medium had gone within, her heavy breathing told us she had become entranced, and in a short time she became controlled by 'Cissy, the little Indian girl to whom reference has so often been made in these columns, and who engaged in lively conversation with the circle. After a brief space an opening in the curtain revealed the head and shoulders of 'Geordie,' who was fully materialised from the waist upwards, but who could not come out. He conversed with us freely in broad Scotch, with a perfect accent, and, putting his hand out to a side table, took from it a rose and handed it to my wife. She felt his fingers, which were warm and quite human. His face was distant about three feet from me, and I was able to see the lineaments quite distinctly. He was dark-complexioned, with a heavy black beard and moustache. At the request of a medical gentleman in the circle 'Geordie' opened his mouth and disclosed his tongue, which appeared perfectly natural-looking. In the course of conversation he informed me that he was about to assist our boy to 'build up,' and that he would try to show himself. Shortly thereafter he disappeared, and a small boyish figure clad in white next came out and 'totteringly' walked in front of the curtain, spoke to his mother by the name he was accustomed to use when on earth, repeated one or two words which our boy used to speak when with us, and then disappeared behind the curtain. The only part of the face that was fully developed or visible to us was the right side of the forehead and the hair, while the rest of the lineaments could not be sufficiently identified. Our clairvoyant daughter, who had witnessed the entire scene, informed us that this was our 'F——,' that she had seen the whole process of building up the spirit forms behind the curtain. Thereafter 'Cissy,' the little black girl, came gliding out in front of the curtain, kissing her hands to the circle, and, at the request of my medical friend

at the other end of the circle, took his ring off his finger, and, gliding round to my side, placed it on mine. I felt her fingers, and they were small, soft, and human. She then dematerialised slowly in front of the curtain till not a vestige of her was left; and, after a second or two, rapidly materialised again, beginning on the floor like a little patch of white muslin, and then growing rapidly up to her full size (about two feet). This operation was repeated. Before the séance was closed, our clairvoyant was told to have a little toy cart and horse belonging to our boy, in the room, on the occasion of the next sitting. This was his favourite toy when in life, and it contained a number of small sacks of sawdust. Other spirit forms came out in front of the curtain; but they were too 'filmy' and indistinct for recognition, although my professional friend was satisfied that one of them was that of his late wife.

All through the séance I heard quite distinctly the heavy breathing of the medium, apparently in deep trance, and when light was restored she was found in that condition, and did not awake for some time thereafter.

The next séance was held on the following night in my house. The circle was the same, with the addition of one gentleman, a warm Spiritualist who had sat with Mrs. Mellon twenty years before, on her first visit to Edinburgh. The phenomena witnessed on this second occasion may be said to have been a repetition of those produced at the first séance, with this addition; (1) the little boyish figure in white, represented to be our departed boy, was stronger and more vigorous than on the first night; for he came from the side of the curtain next me, dragged the cart and horse in front of it, crying 'Chick, chick,' as he used to do in earth-life, spoke again to his mother and brother, using two familiar words, and then disappeared. The preceding night, we were told, he had appeared to his clairvoyant sister and said, 'Tell J— (his brother) I will give him a fright to-morrow night.' We did not know what this could mean; but immediately after his disappearance two bags full of sawdust from the cart were in succession thrown out with singular precision; the one striking his brother, and the other falling into his mother's lap. This was certainly a surprise to both, and our clairvoyant daughter informed us that she saw the little fellow behind the curtain laughing with glee at his exploit. Two more tall spirit forms, clad in white and voluminous drapery, then showed themselves in front of the curtain, but we could not identify them, although our clairvoyant informed us that they were our father-in-law (Mr. T—) and sister-in-law (Jane T—). They were not in any way recognisable, except that their height was about the same as those persons in earth-life. 'Geordie' and 'Cissy' both repeated their performances and the former interchanged some lively chaff with the circle as to the Kilmarnock bonnet he wore on his head, which he informed us he had got as a present at a Glasgow séance. Certainly the bonnet was real enough, and whither it disappeared at the close of the séance is still a mystery to me.

At the close of this séance Mrs. Mellon was still found in deep trance.

Summing up this séance, my opinion came to be that the materialisations of 'Geordie' and 'Cissy' were undoubted; the materialisation of the little figure in white, in view of the statements of our clairvoyant, and the surrounding circumstances, including the repetition of the words in use in earth-life, and the handling of the toy, gave a strong probability to the view that it was our child who appeared to our vision on both occasions. Regarding the rest of the spirit forms, they may be said to have been forms wearing drapery; but except for the statements of our clairvoyant as to their identity, none of us could have said who they were.

As regards Mrs. Mellon's *bona fides* during the whole of these events, I have not the slightest doubt; and have endeavoured to describe all that occurred at, perhaps, unnecessary length. This, however, has been done of 'set purpose,' in view of the chain of identity I wish to forge in dealing with later séances.

(To be continued.)

**THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.**—We have, in a convenient form, suitable for enclosure in letters or for distribution at public meetings, 'M.A. (Oxon.)'s' 'Advice to Inquirers, for the Conduct of Circles.' We shall be pleased to supply copies *free* to all friends who will undertake to make good use of them. The only charge will be for postage—25, ½d.; 50, 1d.; 100, 2d.; 200, 3d.; 400, 4½d.; 600, 6d., &c.

## 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.]

### Conferences of Spiritualists.

SIR,—In my letter on the recent Conference I said the only one of the kind I remembered being present at took place in 1865, or thereabouts. I now remember attending a Conference that took place early in the seventies, under the auspices of the British National Association of Spiritualists, whose headquarters were in Great Russell-street. The 'principal speakers and readers of papers' were the Rev. Dr. Davies, author of 'Unorthodox London'; Dr. Sexton, a recent convert to Spiritualism; Dr. Gully, father of the new Speaker, and myself. There were others, but I forget their names, but a full account was published in the 'Spiritualist.' Notices also appeared in the daily papers; and the 'Standard' had a leader on the subject, in which considerable comment was called forth by what I stated I had witnessed in Mrs. Guppy's special séance-room, the Davenport's being the mediums. Dr. Gully was proprietor of a hydro-pathic establishment at Malvern, where Mr. Home resided for some time and held séances. This was how the doctor gained his experience and published accounts of the same.

Eastbourne.

ROBERT COOPER.

### Materialisations: 'A Necessary Caution.'

SIR,—Under the heading of 'A Necessary Caution,' on page 262 of your last issue (June 1st), your correspondent William Baldwin writes that he attended a materialisation séance at the West End of London about a month ago, which was supposed to be 'a test séance,' but was thoroughly disappointed, and he states several reasons which he evidently considers good grounds for believing that the sensitive was simulating. I do not wish to say that his deductions are wrong, not having been present, but as a very old and practical investigator, it appears to me that the writer bases his conclusion on mere assumptions, and, I should think, is not well posted in the phenomena and philosophy of this most wonderful and subtle form of spirit manifestation. If I am wrong, I shall be most happy to have a personal and friendly interview with him—if he desires, and arranges an appointment by letter—as I would like to attend a sitting with him, with the same medium. This case reminds me of a materialisation sitting which took place at my residence in Cape Town nearly twenty years ago, when some of my friends (Spiritualists), after witnessing a grand materialisation for the first time, went away with the firm conviction that the affair was a great sham, and thought they could imitate the forms; with the result that one of the party nearly lost an arm, having seriously burnt it with the phosphorus which was used for demonstrating the supposed trick. Subsequently all the doubters became thoroughly convinced that the medium and the materialisation were genuine.

I write without malice, and hope your correspondent will favour me with his address with a view to an early interview.

BERKS T. HUTCHINSON, D.D.S., L.D.S.

8, Titchfield-terrace, Regent's Park, N.W.

June 3rd, 1895.

### Cheating Mediums.

SIR,—I feel loath to trespass yet once again on your valuable space, since you have been so good as not only to insert my former letters, but also a kind of subsequent echo of what I said in the shape of letters from Mrs. Boucher, in which that good lady ingeniously perverts and obscures my meaning; inasmuch that your readers have already had two versions of my opinions, the one right-side up, the other upside-down. Still, as Mrs. Boucher ends up her last letter by virtually calling on me rather pointedly to say why I 'oppose the formation of a committee for the testing of professional mediums,' and as the subject is an important one, I desire once more to endeavour to explain my meaning.

Those who say that a thing would be useless can hardly be described as 'opposing' it, and I do not 'oppose,' at least unconditionally, a committee such as Mrs. Boucher suggests. I think I even said that a 'diploma' from such a committee might be satisfactory for those who prefer authority to their own independent opinion, and who, to save trouble, like to have their judgments cut and dried for them by others. What I object to is the acceptance of the verdict by any such committee

as proof of the trustworthiness or otherwise of a medium, and I fear that a 'diploma' would be thoughtlessly taken for a proof of such trustworthiness. I gave several reasons for this objection. Firstly, experience proves that very few people are satisfied with the verdict of a committee of this kind except those who compose it, and therefore when that verdict is the endorsement of a medium, it has hitherto been useless, and would certainly be a dead letter in the future also. Secondly, we do not know enough about the subject of mediumship, or about the laws that govern the manifestation of spiritual entities on our plane, to warrant us in all cases in declaring that *this* phenomenon is fraudulent and *that* one genuine. Thirdly, the only thing that a committee could certify is that they had not detected fraud, which is no guarantee that a medium who is honest to-day may not be dishonest to-morrow; and which certificate *may* show that the medium was clever enough to deceive the committee. Fourthly, in no case does a 'diploma' give more than a presumption of ability, which in this case would mean a presumption of honesty, since the object of the committee would be to certify to the medium's good faith; and, as I understand it, a mere presumption of honesty is not what Mrs. Boucher wishes us to put in the place of our own intelligent judgments. To these reasons I may now add that every medium who was dissatisfied with the verdict of the committee would appeal to the public, with whom judgment in all cases ultimately lies, and the consequence would be a worse confounding of the present confusion.

If, notwithstanding all these considerations, which seem to prove the worthlessness of a diploma given by an examining committee, Mrs. Boucher and the section of Spiritualists (a small one, I think) who agree with her choose to appoint a committee, and issue diplomas, for goodness sake let them do so, *provided* she and her friends do not try to make others abide by their judgment, nor arrogate to themselves the right of *licensing a medium to practise mediumship*, which is, after all, the whole object of a diploma, and what Mrs. Boucher is evidently aiming at.

Notwithstanding her long experience, I venture to give Mrs. Boucher a caution in regard to the constitution of her licensing committee, should she get one up. A diploma such as she proposes would have no value, even for those who believe in such things, if it were not issued by a jury of experts. Now, who grants diplomas in the world of science and art, to which, by analogy, she appeals? Surely it is those who are recognised leaders in their respective arts and sciences, and themselves holders of diplomas. No one ever heard of a committee of patients granting a degree in medicine. Her diploma-granting committee should, therefore, consist, not of those who frequent mediums, but of accredited mediums themselves. Why not? If Mrs. Boucher believes in the general honesty of mediums, 'experto crede' may appeal to her as an argument in favour of this composition for her committee; if she thinks them generally dishonest (and from her letters I really do not know what her opinion is), then 'set a thief to catch a thief' may seem to her an excellent reason.

I have now written as clearly as I can, but I doubt not that Mrs. Boucher will be able to turn this letter topsy-turvy also, and may still consider it 'a curious problem' why I do not agree with her. If so, I fear I must leave her in perplexity.

RICHARD HARTE.

#### Psychic Photography.

SIR,—There is one point, viz., the possibility of photographing the magnetic aura, which Mr. Traill Taylor in his address, as printed in 'LIGHT' of the 1st inst., passes over in a very cursory manner, and which is worthy of having more careful attention bestowed upon it. For more reasons than one this is extremely interesting, as the existence of a magnetic aura is looked upon with more or less suspicion, since mediums claiming the power of seeing it have, when put to the test, broken down.

In a case such as this it is important to know what class of magnet was employed for the experiment, because, if it was a permanent steel magnet—and it is pretty well safe to assume that it was—the instance mentioned is valueless as affording any evidence in favour of the existence of a magnetic aura, since it does not negative the hypothesis that the photograph so obtained might possibly be produced by the mental impressions of the operator.

To thoroughly thresh this problem out electro-magnets ought to be used, and arranged so that they can be magnetised and de-magnetised without the operator's knowledge; in fact, this

should be done mechanically and registered automatically, so that none of those present can or need possibly know the magnetic condition of the iron cores. Also if several cameras were employed at the same time it would be advisable.

Again, since it is a practical impossibility to obtain a piece of iron perfectly annealed so as to possess no residual magnetism, it would be expedient to use coils of copper wire, which, when a current of electricity flows through them, act as magnets. If this was done then the question of residual magnetism could not arise, and the effects of the earth's inductive influence would also be eliminated.

It would also be intensely interesting to investigate the effect of exciting a magnet by means of an alternating current, and of a magnet in vacuo.

29, Methley-street, Kennington, S.E. CHARLES STRANGE.

SIR,—I have read with interest your reports of Mr. Traill Taylor's address before the Conference. It is a pity, and also disappointing, that the very pertinent remarks of Mr. Colbeck were not noticed by Mr. Taylor, or, if so, have not been reported in your paper. To me it seems that it will be time enough to suggest that these so-called spirit photographs are mental pictures in the psychic's mind, when a photograph has been obtained of a mental picture thought of by a psychic, and known to be there at the time.

Mr. Taylor's practical experiences and experiments are of great interest and value to us, but his interpretation of these facts does not seem to throw any new light on the subject, and are at once upset by Mr. Colbeck's objection.

My own experiences in spirit photography all lead me to the conclusion that the psychic's mentality has nothing whatever to do with the phenomena.

If mental pictures can be photographed as Mr. Taylor suggests, surely it would be a common experience for photographers to find such when developing plates, the more so that Mr. Taylor implies in his paper that such could happen unconsciously, and, therefore, concentration of the mind of the psychic on the picture would be unnecessary.

91, Main-street,

JAMES McDOWALL.

Bridgeton, Glasgow.

#### Spiritualism and Christianity.

SIR,—In a discourse by the Rev. T. E. Allen, of America, reported in the 'Banner of Light' and partly quoted in 'LIGHT' of June 1st, I note the following sentence, which in the opinion of many is a faithful representation of the views of Mr. Stainton Moses:—

'I claim that the basic truths of Spiritualism were not first revealed to the world (indeed, no Spiritualist asserts that they were) at Hydesville, New York, upon March 31st, 1848; that they formed an indispensable factor in Christianity at its very origin; that they were manifested in Old Testament times; and that they can be traced back beyond that, no man knows how many centuries.'

Now, if this be true—and I think it is—why not acknowledge at once that these so-called basic truths are part and parcel of man's own nature, just as his eyes, nose, mouth, and limbs are; and that neither Christianity nor Spiritualism has anything to do with these truths, any more than they have to do with the genesis of the organs referred to?

Hence, if this deduction is correct, the relation of this kind of Spiritualism to Christianity is that of two thieves or plagiarists pretending to have found out, and to be rewarded for doing so, what was the common knowledge of mankind. When I am told in the latter part of the article that I should supplement the truths of Christianity by Spiritualism, and by my own discoveries, I ask in wonder how is this consistent with the fact that these truths are of immense antiquity, and have nothing to do with either Spiritualism or Christianity?

When *Religious* Spiritualism on the one hand, and Christianity on the other, have determined what (*if anything*) they have contributed to the sum of human knowledge, then will be the time to determine whether there can be any relation between them. To deny, as this article does, that they have originated anything, and then to say that they supplement one another, is like saying that the best assistance to one blind man is the eyes of another also totally blind. An illustration may be useful here. There is a great map-maker named Stanford, who, from time to time, issues maps of the latest discoveries in Africa and other comparatively unknown lands. Now, if Mr. Stanford were to claim that he had made these discoveries

and not copied them from the information supplied to him, he would be in the exact position of those misguided Christians and Spiritualists who fancy there is some originality about their views of this or a future life.

All religions are simply maps of the spiritual progress of mankind, pioneers in thought and intelligence, who have learned more from Nature than other men have. The religions are not the cause, but the result of that progress, and just as a map of Europe 100 years old would be a false guide to the areas and lines of division of the various countries in it, so a religion either fifty or 2,000 years old must be an equally fallacious teacher.

At the same time, I would not ruthlessly try to overturn the faith of a man either in Christianity or so-called Religious Spiritualism. I think the latter would be wiser if they adopted another name for their religion, and left the word Spiritualism to denote the science of spiritual and psychic investigation, in which all kinds of religionists or agnostics might join. I feel sure if this plan were adopted, Spiritualism proper, freed from the incubus of religious creeds of any kind, would advance by leaps and bounds till it became a universal knowledge. As long, however, as a section of Spiritualists claim that it is a religion, and actively conduct propaganda in this sense, they prevent men like Stainton Moses and educated men generally from identifying themselves with Spiritualism, fearing to be regarded as followers of a superstition which they and I deem this aberation of Spiritualism to be.

VIR.

Mr. W. J. Colville, of Boston.

SIR,—I am very glad to be able to announce that Mr. W. J. Colville, of Boston, will spend his summer vacation in England. He will be in London about June 15th.

Mr. Colville is one of the most remarkable psychics in the field. His mediumship is unique; his public discourses are always upon subjects pertaining to the higher phases of metaphysical and spiritual philosophies. In private drawing-rooms he gives character poems, which are remarkable, not only in their faithful description of personalities, but often reach to high prophetic power.

I trust the friends interested in Spiritualism, occult and theosophical studies, will interest themselves in arranging for a series of discourses during his stay in London.

Unlike mediums generally, Mr. Colville has interested himself very much in the subject of mind cure, Christian Science, &c., which have occupied the minds of the American public for the last ten years. He has demonstrated that there is no antagonism to Spiritualism in the teachings of this new school of therapeutics, and his classes formed for the purpose of teaching this truth are very interesting and always well filled.

I bespeak for Mr. Colville from the friends of Spiritualism a hearty welcome.

Kneesworth House, HELEN DENSMORE (PR. L.).  
78, Elm Park-road, South Kensington.

#### The 'Cyprian Priestess.'

SIR,—I think it is time to protest against the continued baiting of Mr. David Duguid about this 'Cyprian Priestess.'

What is Mr. Duguid expected to say? Is he not merely an unconscious instrument for the production of these psychic photographs? What, then, can he know about their production that his co-experimenters do not know better than he? Have they not told all they can tell to clear up the 'Cyprian Priestess' mystery?

Have not Mr. Duguid's friends expressly stated that he does not possess the literary ability to publicly discuss this question?

I dare say we have all known men not possessed of the literary ability to pen a letter for the Press, who yet are often possessed of more true wisdom and gentlemanly delicacy of feeling than the majority of those who have the superficial literary veneer. Yet Mr. Duguid has been sneered at because he shrinks from a public discussion.

In your last issue Mr. James Kinlay covertly, but quite plainly, alludes to Mr. Duguid as being 'the only one entitled to throw light on the subject,' and says that he 'persistently chooses to remain silent.'

As a neutral party, I fail to see that Mr. Duguid is under any obligation to say anything more than his friends have already said for him. For obvious reasons he cannot know so much about the matter as they.

Further, what does Mr. Kinlay want Mr. Duguid to say? What does he want to know about? The 'Cyprian Priestess' is undoubtedly as great a mystery to Mr. Duguid as to anyone else.

But evidently Mr. Kinlay knows something about the 'Cyprian Priestess' himself. He says so. Let him tell us what he knows, and that may help to elucidate the mystery. It would certainly be more practical and more humane than stabbing Mr. Duguid with cruel insinuations and cant about the 'pain' his silence gives his 'friends.'

J. S. HILL.

#### The Theosophical Society in America.

SIR,—It is not the fact that Mr. Judge and a great portion of the American section of the Theosophical Society have seceded, although so stated in 'Lucifer.' They have simply declared their complete autonomy under the above title. The following extracts from the resolutions passed at the Boston Convention clearly show this:—

Whereas . . . the confederated branches in America were regularly organised in 1886, and Whereas, we have outgrown the present form of organisation of the Theosophical Society, and . . . Whereas, a federation of all the branches of the world is not essential to the real work of any section or to the Theosophical Movement as a whole . . . Resolved: First, that the American section, consisting of branches of the Theosophical Society in America, in convention assembled, hereby assumes and declares its entire autonomy, and that it shall be called from and after this date "The Theosophical Society in America." Second, that the administration of its affairs shall be provided for, defined, and be under a constitution and bye-laws, which shall in any case provide for the following:—(a) A federation of branches. . . . (b) That William Q. Judge shall be president for life. ; . . . (c) Autonomy for branches in local affairs. . . .

Temple.

BASIL CRUMP.

#### SOCIETY WORK.

WELCOME HALL, 218, JUBILEE-STREET, MILE END.—On Sunday last we had a crowded meeting, when Miss Marsh's guide Sunshine gave twenty-four clairvoyant delineations, of which twenty-one were recognised. Speaker for next Sunday, Mr. Seymour.—W. M.

SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Long gave an address on 'The Séance of Pentecost.' On Sunday evening next the service will be in the form of the 'Ideal' which he advocates, commencing at 6.30 p.m.—CHAS. M. PAYNE, Hon. Sec.

STRATFORD SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS.—Mrs. Stanley will occupy our platform on Sunday next, at 7 p.m.; Fridays, at 8 p.m., for inquirers. On Sunday last Mrs. J. M. Smith, of Leeds, gave a short discourse on 'Charity,' followed by successful clairvoyance. Mrs. Gozzett rendered a solo, which was well appreciated.—THOS. MACCALLUM, Hon. Sec.

23, DEVONSHIRE-ROAD, FOREST HILL.—On Sunday last Mr. C. Hardingham gave an interesting lecture on 'Bible Spiritualism.' Sunday next, Mr. R. Beel. On Sunday, 16th inst., a floral service will be held at the above rooms, to commemorate the passing away into the higher life of the infant son of our worthy president, Mr. Elphick. The service will be conducted by Mr. W. E. Long and Mrs. V. Bliss. Friends are asked to bring flowers.—J. B.

111, CLARENDON-ROAD, NOTTING HILL, W.—Our service on Sunday last was well attended. Mrs. Mason's controls discoursed upon 'Spiritual Truth,' urging all present to be up and doing for our noble cause. This was followed by successful clairvoyance, nearly all the delineations being recognised. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Treadwell; Tuesday, at 8 p.m., séance, Mrs. Mason; Saturday, at 8 p.m., spirit circle. Inquirers welcome. June 16th, Mr. Bradley; June 23rd, Mr. Bodington.—J. H. B., Hon. Sec.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday last the first of a series of trance addresses was delivered through Mr. J. J. Morse, on 'The Day of Life,' which proved of great interest, and was full of practical advice and illustration. The remainder of the series of trance addresses will be delivered by the inspirers of Mr. J. J. Morse, as follows:—Sunday next, June 9th, at 7 p.m., 'The Night of Death'; June 16th, 'The Dawn of Immortality'; June 23rd, 'Life on the Threshold'; June 30th, 'Through the Gates.'—L. H.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

SEVERAL letters are unavoidably held over for the present.

A.M.P.—Thanks for your communication, but we fail in our efforts to comprehend it, and we fear that our readers would do so too.

'AMEN AND AMEN.'—We do not see that any good purpose would be answered by the publication of your 'automatic writing,' seeing that it would in all probability lead to a profitless discussion. Moreover you have omitted to supply your name and address. 'Amen and Amen' is not a sufficient signature.