

# Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 868.—VOL. XVII. [Registered as] SATURDAY, AUGUST 28, 1897. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

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### NOTES BY THE WAY.

It has lately been seriously said that the present-day eagerness for social reforms is due to the decline of faith in immortality; as though, failing to see any kingdom of heaven hereafter, people all the more resolved to get some sort of heavenly kingdom here. We do not think this is sound. The history of the race does not show that belief in God makes one heedless of man, or that hope of heaven makes one careless about earth. On the contrary: God's freemen have always been man's freemen: and to-day some of the most ardent apostles of social or even socialistic reform are ministers of religion of all churches. If this were not the case; if belief in a hereafter weakened man's resolve to have better conditions here, that belief would not be an unmixed good; and it might easily become an unmixed evil: for, assuredly, our first business is to make earth a happy home for God's pilgrims.

We have just come across, once more, that apparently simple but really profound line of Walt Whitman's:—

I find letters from God dropt in the street,  
And every one is signed by God's name.

A finely subtle suggestion,—poetic and yet the deepest and most real of all facts. 'God' is the innermost of all thought and action, giving ceaseless verdicts and judgments on every thought and every action. The sights which the material eyes behold are the unrealities: all the realities are in the sphere of intentions, qualities, causes. In the street we pass by bodies, and, after all, they tell us next to nothing.

What if we could see thoughts, anxieties, hopes, fears, loves, hates! Can we, in any degree, imagine what a crowded street would be, so seen? It might drive one almost mad with sheer excitement, if not with horror,—though one can imagine there might be times when it would look as though we had parted with earth and its squalors, and found our way to Heaven. And truly, in that innermost, God is and God writes His verdict and His name: and every one stands at His judgment-bar.

Ah, what pity, what tenderness, what light upon behaviour and manners and utterances, might come to us if we could really see and understand! Perhaps, who knows? perhaps not one poor soul would appear altogether bad; perhaps not one would touch us with any deeper emotion than profoundest compassion; perhaps every one is a letter from God, signed with His name.

The Spiritualist is the only person who could afford to be an Agnostic. It is the Materialist who as an Agnostic is

hopelessly floored; for he has no foundation and no hope. Once feel the certainty of the vital truth of Spiritualism,—that there is an Eternal Life in whom we live and move and have our being,—and we can happily leave much unsolved. All the Agnostic Materialist can say is,—I see nothing, I expect nothing beyond: but the Spiritualist, conscious of the tremendous possibility, can say of it,—'That also is provided for.' What, with the Agnostic Materialist, is ignorance and a blank, is with him, ignorance and boundless trust. He feels that he is compassed by boundless life, visible and invisible, and knows that the highest wisdom will be seen in simply doing his day's work well, and then confiding in the Life of the glorious whole.

There is perhaps nothing which so much excites wonder and disappointment at séances as the failure of the unseen beings to remember names and events which, we say, 'They must know if they are the beings they claim to be.' This is the ground for many a conclusion that the communicating person is 'a lying spirit.'

That seems to us to be a very hasty judgment. Even in earth-life it frequently happens that persons—especially those who have lived very varied lives—almost entirely forget names and incidents connected with earlier periods of their history. But the parting with the earthly body and the entrance into a new mode of existence,—to say nothing of the fresh and perhaps astonishing experiences of spirit-life,—may make earthly remembrances well-nigh impossible. What we call 'stupidity' or impersonation may really indicate the reaching of an immensely higher plane.

'The spirit is willing but the flesh is'—fouled. Every spiritual person ought to pay steady (not restless and over anxious but 'steady') attention to diet and ablutions. It is not our duty, as some say, to fight the animal in us and to subdue the body, in the sense of weakening it, but it is our duty to cleanse it through and through. It is useless to adorn the mind with beautiful thoughts if we let the body wander into defiling ways. The body at present is, as a rule, the dominant partner. Sydney Smith was right, and his humour has scarcely any exaggeration in it:—

The longer I live, the more I am convinced that half the unhappiness of the world proceeds from little stoppages, from a duct choked up, from food pressing in the wrong place, from a vexed duodenum, or an agitated pylorus. My friend sups late; he eats some strong soup, then a lobster, then some tart, and he dilutes these esculent varieties with wine. The next day I call upon him. He is going to sell his house in London and retire into the country. He is alarmed for his eldest daughter's health; his expenses are hourly increasing, and nothing but a timely retreat can save him from ruin. All this is the lobster; and when over-excited nature has had time to manage this testaceous incumbrance, the daughter recovers, the finances are in good order, and every rural idea is effectually excluded from the mind. In the same manner old friendships are destroyed by toasted cheese, and hard-salted meat has led to suicide. Unpleasant feelings of the body produce corresponding sensations in the mind, and a great scene of wretchedness is sketched out by a morsel of indigestible and misguided food.

One of the facts ever to be borne in mind by Spiritualists is that nearly all the true poets are essentially with them; and, by 'the true poets,' we always mean the men and women of true insight: for the poet is not a mere sentimentalist, a spinner of dainty fancies. He is a seer. The man of the world lives on the surface. It is the poet who lives behind the veils. Especially noticeable is the hold of the poets upon notable personalities. It seems unable to let them go. The great poets always insist upon continued life, activity, service. We hold this to be a moral and intellectual argument of great value.

Not often has this been better illustrated than by Matthew Arnold's fervid call to his father, on the other side:—

O strong soul, by what shore  
Tarriest thou now? for that force,  
Surely, has not been left vain!  
Somewhere, surely, afar,  
In the sounding labour-house vast  
Of being is practised that strength,  
Zealous, beneficent, firm!  
Yes, in some far-shining sphere,  
Conscious or not of the past,  
Still thou performest the word  
Of the spirit in whom thou dost live—  
Prompt, unwearied, as here!  
Still thou upraisest with zeal  
The humble good from the ground,  
Sternly represseth the bad!  
Still, like a trumpet dost rouse  
Those who with half-open eyes,  
Tread the borderland dim  
'Twixt vice and virtue; reviv'st,  
Succourest!—This was thy work,  
This was thy life upon earth.

Surely this great natural confidence of the human spirit—this fine uprising of the inner self against the seeming defeat inflicted by death—is, of itself, an impressive argument, and almost more than an argument—a prophecy and pledge.

#### "HAVE DOGS SOULS?"

'Have dogs souls?' asks a correspondent who has just been reading Lamartine's essay on the subject. The French author firmly believed that dogs and horses possess within them some immortal essence which survives this life, and which, in a happier future existence, will recompense the owners for the trials they have suffered here. Eugene Field, the well-known American author, held a similar belief. In a letter written by him to the Rev. C. J. Adams, of Rondout, N.Y., author of a book in which the question is discussed, Eugene Field wrote: 'My fox-terrier, Jessie Davis, has a soul.' Those who have studied dogs incline to the belief that the animals possess some germ of spiritual essence, cultivable by companionship with man. Affection elicits it, and intelligent efforts to develop the dog's innate reasoning powers are invariably rewarded. The touching devotion of some dogs to harsh and cruel masters proves that they can attach themselves to man without any reciprocity of good will or kindness on the part of the human, but the highest development of rational powers is attained by such dogs as are treated with kindness mingled with firmness. In the Bible, as in Eastern lands, the dog is regarded as unclean and unworthy of the attention of man, and it is only of late years that he has been recognised to any extent in literature and fiction as the companion and friend of man. If we could only gauge what a dog knows, we might be astonished at its amount. Look at one of them crossing the street. He looks out as carefully for approaching vehicles as any human being, much more so than some of the careless ones. In several recent cases of fire, a house dog has given the alarm, and has been the means of saving the occupants from a horrible death. But in at least two of such cases the poor animal itself was burned to death. Their human friends had less devotion than Queen Marie Antoinette, who ran out of cover in the midst of a sharp fusillade to save her little dog. Love is the ennobling germ in the canine brain, and many wise men have been of the opinion that disinterested affection cannot exist without the presence of a soul. Who will venture to assert that a dog has none?—*Daily News*,

## MOVEMENT OF OBJECTS WITHOUT CONTACT.

CONTROL OF A SENSITIVE AT A DISTANCE THROUGH A MESMERISED SUBJECT.

(Continued from page 400.)

In the face of these illustrations; of the similar case of control at a distance by a human operator, given last year on p. 171; of the explanations given by the astral operator at Choisy-Yvrac; of the demonstrations given by M. de Rochas; of the illustrations of the induction of control, the productions of subjective visions, of automatic writing, &c., by hypnotic operators, previously given, the pretensions of the occultists that the phenomena of the séance room are produced by non-self-conscious operators (elementals) becomes untenable, and should be withdrawn.

Equally do these phenomena and the hypnotic phenomena previously given, show that mediumistic phenomena imply suggestion by an operator as their precondition, as much so as do hypnotic phenomena. The inference of the psychical researchers and psychologists that they are produced spontaneously by the involuntary subconsciousness *per se* becomes untenable.

It is evidently the subconscious, involuntary, secondary stratum, or aspect, of the subject that constitutes the basis of the reactions both in hypnotic, in magnetic, and in mediumistic phenomena alike, as is demonstrated by the fact that mesmeric subjects pass into mediumistic control. But all these phenomena alike imply suggestion from an operator external to the subject, whose volition replaces that of the subject temporarily; is transferred to and reacts through her.

The magnetism or aura transferred from the operator and interiorised in the subject has been seen and described by many subjects, and is shown in the above illustrations, and in the demonstrations of M. de Rochas and Professor Boirac, to be of identic character as the exteriorised aura that constitutes the dynamic and telepathic circuit and the double.

The suggestions or transferred thoughts of the operator above referred to, which react through the subject, are therefore shown to be substantial, magnetic, vital, and visible clairvoyantly.

It is to be hoped that it may soon be recognised that it is the exteriorised vital aura which constitutes the basis of all hypnotic, magnetic (mesmeric), mediumistic, dynamic, psychical, telepathic, and magical phenomena, and also that precedential, supplemental interiorisation is the precondition of exteriorisation; as in logic transcendent relation is the precondition of subordinate relations.

A further interesting suggestion arises in association with the above phenomena. It will be noticed that the 'apport' of the letters and pralines from C to A are similar in character to the 'precipitation' of letters and other objects, stated to have occurred in the presence of Madame Blavatsky, but which she claimed to effect herself by her 'occult' powers in some cases, or to have been projected by Mahatmas in others; so also does the control of B by C from a distance, and the case previously given last year, on p. 171, illustrate the similar control of Madame Blavatsky by supposititious Mahatmas. Yet we now find after all that these are merely mesmeric phenomena, producible through a subject with an exteriorisable psychic aura.

It does not follow that Madame Blavatsky necessarily acted in bad faith and intentionally misled the public. All human beings are imperfect. We have all to claim the indulgence of others for our shortcomings. No human being is free from them. The error lies rather with her supporters, who would exalt that necessarily imperfect person to a pinnacle of perfection and superhuman wisdom, and who, apparently to enhance the comparative value of their own cult, decry and vilify Spiritualism and 'countenance the spreading of untruths about mesmerism, hypnotism, and mediumship,' as stated by your correspondent on p. 319. But therein, as also in their illustration of 'brotherhood' by internal bickerings, they, after all, only manifest the usual human frailties as exhibited in the mutual jealousies and rivalries existing among other sects. All schools or cults who are led by personal leaders, and who proselytise, must fail in the same way, as they necessarily come down to the level of the personality,

Madame Blavatsky was perhaps as ignorant of the fact that these phenomena existed outside of her own circle, and inclined consequently to dogmatise, as she certainly showed herself to be (and as her followers do) with regard to the process of their production, as exhibited in her statement that 'her body was *occupied* at such times (when controlled) by foreign entities.\* Yet the facts given below would imply that she should have known more about the process than her teachings exhibit.

The following circumstances may perhaps have an important bearing on this consideration. Madame de Morsier, the well-known leader in women's progressive and charitable associations in Paris, informed the writer that Madame Blavatsky had for several years been the mesmeric subject of a powerful operator of the name of Martial, in Paris. This was before she appeared before the public in New York as a Spiritualist in 1874, and in Cairo as a physical medium.† Madame de Morsier made the acquaintance of Martial after the Theosophical Society had been founded in Paris. Solovyoff had also met him and confirmed this statement to the writer. M. Ed. Schuré, the author of 'Les Grands Initiés,' and a well-known writer in the 'Revue des Deux Mondes' and the 'Revue de Paris,' is also acquainted with these facts; as is also M. Jules Baissac, author of 'L'Immortalité' and 'L'Histoire de la Sorcellerie,' and official interpreter to the French law courts. Her son, M. Aug. de Morsier, can confirm them.

Martial stated to Madame de Morsier that Madame Blavatsky was a wonderful subject; that in the secondary state her character was quite different from that to her normal personality; that, in fact, the two aspects of her personality constituted diametrically opposing contrasts to each other.‡ While he was attracted and even awed by her in the secondary state, he often had to fly before the dreadful fits of temper she gave vent to when returned to her normal state. It was this fact that led to their separation.

It is evident that having been his subject for several years would entail the intermingling of auras, which constitutes the basis of magnetic connection and interaction from a distance as above explained, and that to a very exceptional degree, such as might perhaps constitute a permanent interconnecting link between them.

Martial may, perhaps, have had another subject through whose double he communicated with Madame Blavatsky subsequently, in addition to the telepathic link established between them, thereby reproducing phenomena through the latter, as previously illustrated. Nor is there any reason to deny that some Indian mesmerist may have stood in a similar relation to her, and may have projected the double of an Indian subject to her, as A projects B's double to C; as M. de Rochas projects the double of Madame Vix into the astral plane; as M. Ferroul projected the double of his subject to spy on detectives, and to track an abducted servant girl. He may even have projected his subject's double to her, and made it manifest through her exteriorised aura to Colonel Olcott. She may also have been controlled by such a mesmeriser, and made to write as B was controlled by C; as the sensitive, referred to on p. 171, last year, was controlled by a man from a distance several times and made to deliver addresses; as, I think, Mr. Stead's hand has been controlled and made to write by a living friend from a distance.

In any case, it now appears that the apport or precipitation of objects, control (*i.e.*, thought-transference), the projection of the double and movement of objects at a distance are mesmeric phenomena, and may be effected through an uncultured subject, provided that she has an easily exteriorisable aura; and by an operator who may be a man of the world, involved in many complex occupations and responsibilities and family relationships. These illustrations consequently tear aside the veil of mystery with which Theosophists (and other occultists) would endeavour to envelop these phenomena, and destroy the pretence that the celibate life of a recluse is their pre-requisite, and show that they can be presented by men filling official and useful functions in the world.

\* 'Old Diary Leaves,' pp. 216, 246, 251, 269, 289, 459.

† Dr. Peebles states in the 'Banner of Light,' August 7th, that he had met her in Cairo, where she was a zealous Spiritualist, and a fine physical medium, *previously* to meeting her at the Eddy brothers, that is before she came to New York, whence in her letters to Aksakoff she declared herself to be a Spiritualist 'struggling for the propaganda of that divine truth.' October 28th, 1874.

‡ Dr. Charcot, junr., informed the writer that this was the rule in these cases.

Colonel Olcott himself shows that the secondary state was induced in Madame Blavatsky when these phenomena occurred. He states on p. 211, 'Old Diary Leaves,' that she was entranced when controlled, and refers to the distinct changes of personality, gait, expression, temper ensuing. On p. 290 he shows that the memory pertaining to these experiences did not emerge into her normal consciousness. In other words, control induced the secondary, involuntary state, as it does whether under hypnotic, mesmeric, or mediumistic influence. On p. 267 he describes the exteriorisation of an astral form through her, such as occurs through many mediums. The description following reveals again that she was entranced.

That Madame Blavatsky was a medium she herself and her relations confess (p. 104). On p. 10 her control at that time is stated to have been 'John King,' and on p. 40 the phenomena described are identical with those now produced through Eusapia by a control claiming the same name. On p. 267 she is shown to have been a materialising medium of the same character as Eusapia again. She was evidently a strong exteriorising medium. In addition to this, she had also been a mesmeriser's subject, and like several of the subjects referred to in the opening illustrations, and others referred to by French magnetisers, she appears to have been used sometimes as a subject by embodied mesmerisers and sometimes by discarnate operators.\* Most of the phenomena produced through her have also been produced through other mesmeric or mediumistic subjects. But as Colonel Olcott shows, when controlled she passed into the secondary state, which entails an involuntary condition; this demonstrates indisputably that she could *not* produce the phenomena, as it is claimed, by her own volition, while in that state, as surely Colonel Olcott, who claims to be a mesmeriser, ought to know.

It has been necessary, in dealing with the fallacious conceptions circulated currently with regard to these phenomena, to refer to the personality of Madame Blavatsky. That is unavoidably entailed in any effort to arrive at a true comprehension of the facts. But this criticism of the phenomena is not intended to in any way diminish the recognition due to her for the services rendered by her in interesting the world in occult matters and spreading some knowledge with regard thereto. The fact that she was successfully used for this purpose, in spite of her shortcomings, carries a lesson that the ways of Providence are not restricted by man's narrow prejudices. Her followers have made the mistake of accepting her teachings as infallible, and, having identified themselves therewith, found themselves obliged to bolster up the ready-made system, instead of proceeding carefully by experimental investigation before formulating conclusions. In that respect, as the writer on p. 319 says, 'They appear to furnish the most striking example possible of both suggestion and auto-suggestion.'

While every attenuating consideration should be advanced for a person who is no longer here to reply for herself, that does not hold in the case of the new theosophical leader, whom Dr. Peebles shows, as mentioned on p. 399, to be again a medium; yet, as Dr. Peebles states, 'these Theosophists of the Judge-Parent-Tingley kind, are the bitterest enemies of Spiritualism to-day; they seem to esteem it a virtue to vilify mediums.' She is consequently maintaining a false position.

It is within the experience of the writer that some of the younger Theosophists who zealously repeated the dissuading arguments of their seniors, against experimenting in Spiritualism, hypnotism, or mesmerism, had no personal experience of these subjects themselves, which nevertheless they eagerly condemned.

This certainly lends colour to the inferences of your contributor on p. 319, that 'their dislike of experimental investigation comes from a lively fear, lest their theories should be proved to be wrong and their boasted "gnosis" a tissue of invention.'

That it is largely a 'tissue of invention' is shown from the extracts supplied by Mr. H. J. Newton, from the original manuscript constitution of the society and published in this journal on November 30th, 1895, in which the object of the society is stated to be 'to seek to obtain knowledge of the nature and attributes of the Supreme Power and of the higher spirits.' Not a word appears with regard to an Indian system; on the contrary, the society 'disclaimed all pretensions to the possession of unusual advantages or to have any creed to dis-

\* Colonel Olcott confesses this on pp. 238 and 239, 'Old Diary Leaves.'

seminate." The society was founded by Spiritualists to investigate the claims of a Kabbalist. It fell flat, and died out, and its leaders left in search of better success and of a living thereby elsewhere. It was only after their residence in India that the Indian paraphernalia were evolved. The subsequent success of the effort testifies to the ardent desire prevalent in our time to learn something with regard to the hereafter from a source which claimed to rest on a scientific and experiential basis. But the truth is that psychic faculties are a natural gift, and no occultism can develop them unless they are there *per se*. Any system which claims to constitute them by a system of training *per se*, apart from the recognition of the above fact, lives on and by false pretences.

QUÆSTOR VITÆ.

### 'FLAMES.'\*

Mr. Frederick Rogers, Vice-Chairman of Toynbee Hall, sends us the following remarks respecting this new work of fiction:—

Are Spiritualists reading the remarkable novel by Robert Hichens, author of 'The Green Carnation,' entitled 'Flames,' published by Heinemann, Bedford-street, Strand? I have long been a reader of 'LIGHT,' not because I am a Spiritualist, but because I find it a hopeful, helpful paper, and it seems to me that the new novel will be greatly appreciated by other readers of that paper. It will help many; it will stimulate thought in all. It is a great piece of literary work, apart from any philosophy to which it may give expression, and contains passages as fine as any in the whole range of English fiction. If Mr. Hichens writes another book as great as 'Flames,' he will stand in the front rank among modern novelists. The great value of the book at the present juncture lies in the tremendous testimony it bears to the reality of spiritual things and of a spiritual world. The story is cast in the London life of to-day, among the wealthy and idle youth of the West End. The bachelors' flats of Victoria-street, Westminster, the brothels of Euston-road, and the ghastly vice of some of the music halls are the chief scenes in which the characters live and move. Practically, there are only four people in it, and one of the four—a most wonderful study of character—is a street woman of the lowest type. But with all these strange surroundings, painted as they are with a pitiless realism, when we read the book we are in a spiritual world. The author has a marvellous grasp of modern materialistic philosophy and its manifestation in the vice of modern London; his mind is in fierce revolt against it all, and he makes his readers hate its hideousness as he himself hates it. The basis of it is selfishness—selfishness is the devil of the world, and love the world's redeemer. Love manifests itself in the heart of the lost street girl, Cuckoo Bright, and by its power she saves the soul of the youth Julian, who is being lured to destruction by an evil spirit which has taken possession of the body of his friend Valentine. The book is packed full of wonderful thoughts and fancies, some of them strangely illuminating, some almost prophetic; and, powerful as the story itself is, it is the thought that is in it that gives it its value to us. If, as Sir Walter Besant has lately said, the novelist reflects the thought of his age, and gives it forth in imaginative form, then those who would understand how and why it is that the strongest thought of to-day has turned utterly from materialism and is seeking to explain life upon a spiritual basis, should read for themselves what is reflected of that thought in the moving and fascinating story, 'Flames.' It is the kind of book that the average reviewer only half understands, and it has not had the appreciation from the Press it deserves. But, like all great books, it will make its way, and show once more how little value there is in reviews.

['Flames' is in the Library of the London Spiritualist Alliance.

—ED. 'LIGHT.']

THE LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LIMITED.—Copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association may be obtained from the office of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C., price 1s. The Memorandum sets forth in detail the purposes and objects of the society, with the names of the signatories; and the Articles prescribe the necessary rules and regulations for its conduct, including the election of members and associates, council, and officers.

\* 'Flames.' A novel, by ROBERT HICHENS. London: William Heinemann, 21, Bedford-street, W.C. Price 6s.

### SIGNOR ERNESTO VOLPI AND THE S.P.R.

Professor Lodge's letter to 'LIGHT' (June 19th) has called forth a protest from Sig. Ernesto Volpi in the 'Vesillo Spiritista.' That letter Sig. Volpi understands to imply that the chief work of the Society for Psychical Research consists in submitting the cases referred to it to a strict examination. Now this, says Sig. Volpi, is precisely what, in the case of transcendental photography, it has signally failed to do. Some years ago he sent some spirit photographs to the Society, especially calling attention to one of them, concerning which he had for several years made experiments with different photographers which convinced him that its special characteristic of transparency was impossible to reproduce by materials and means purely human. He had already sustained a controversy about it both public and private; had even offered a reward to certain photographers who had impugned his assertions, if they could show that he was wrong by producing similar photographs in the ordinary method, and he had always come off victorious.

It is sufficient to read the *compte rendu* of the Paris Congress of 1889 to see that here, too, he victoriously maintained his thesis on spirit photographs. The Englishman, MacNab, well-known as an expert and diligent experimenter in this branch, having studied the photograph in question, wrote to him after the Congress to say that he shared his opinion as to its transcendental origin. Sig. Volpi is still in possession of his letter. The Society for Experimental Psychology at Munich, after having it tested by their own photographers, informed him through their vice-president, Herr Deinhard (the president is Dr. du Prel), that the photographers had not succeeded in reproducing the characteristics in question. Sig. Volpi would have thought, he says, that after this the honourable society at London would also have made serious experiments on their side before passing judgment. But this evidently was not done. One fine day one of its members, belonging to the fair sex (a member, however, who did good service in supporting the Spiritualist cause at the Congress at Munich in 1896), wrote to the Society's journal that 'she did not think she ought to attach any importance to the photograph sent by Sig. Volpi, because she saw no reason to believe that he had not been deceived, and saw instead some reason to believe that he had been.'

Until his opponents can come forward with a photograph in which are reproduced the above-mentioned exceptional characteristics, he is convinced that the public will have confidence in his experiments and in those of so many others (who are not tyros in the art of photography nor in spiritualistic investigation) rather than in assertions based on absolutely superficial presumptions. His certitude is based upon physical law, at which he arrived in making experiments of disproof, and entirely excludes the supposition that there was manipulation of the plates, or the use of mirrors, double exposure, or anything of that kind. One has but to compare the two figures seen in the photograph, one of which is himself. Now the figure that he pronounces transcendental presents a lesser density than the other, although it shows the same relief, which is in agreement with that of the furniture making part of the picture. Nor can this be explained by the supposition that the former is less dense from being exposed a shorter time, because the white parts of it are as perfectly developed as those of the figure of himself. The right hand of the former, which rests on the back of a chair, and the beginning of the arm are transparent and allow the objects at the back to be seen through them. The light is reflected from his person and from the surrounding furniture, but not from the spirit form, as may be seen by observing the chiaroscuro of the photograph. The honourable member of the Society does not seem to have paid attention to these facts, any more than to so many other most convincing details, encountered in the long course of his experiments of disproof.

A very attenuated matter having vibrations beyond those of the violet rays, invisible to himself and the bystanders, was able to leave its imprint on the sensitive plate; such was the explanation that he always gave in his writings and his lectures, although antecedent to the discovery of Röntgen. He further acquired the conviction that the figure called by him transcendental was the effect of telepathy or of the doubling of a living person, who presented his fluid body to the plate, while his material body lay in bed, sunk through illness into an almost continual lethargy lasting several days.

During the Spiritualist Congress of 1889 he saw other photographs obtained in other countries, marked by the same characteristics, although less clearly. The case, therefore, was not isolated. Accordingly he sent his to the S.P.R. some years ago. If that Society, he says, starting from the data which he has been setting forth, would continue—with strict test experiments, that is with similar photographs, intentionally produced—the study already begun, but incomplete, it might root up some of the brambles on the road up the steep mountain, of which Prof. Lodge speaks, since it would establish one of the most important spiritualistic phenomena; the phenomenon which gives us the permanently incontrovertible proof of the existence of transcendental invisible beings.

### MEDIUMSHIP AND MAGIC IN THE EAST.

The natives of India, among the higher and educated classes, look on mediumship as one of the direst misfortunes that can overtake a human being, and on the slightest suspicion of it the person is at once watched and taken to some temple where the influence is driven off. Among the uneducated and the lower caste, the obsessing spirit is encouraged, unless it be of a mischievous order, in which case every form of cruelty and bodily torture is inflicted on the unfortunate victim till he or she is either exhausted by the vampirism of the spirit, or killed by the physical ill-treatment dealt out unsparingly. Of obsessing powers there are many, and all these exhibit different forms of psychological phenomena, the low, earth-bound human spirit being dreaded most of all.

Several cases have happened among our own servants. As a rule, the master or mistress is the last person to know of the terrible scenes often enacted in the little 'go-downs,' or out-houses, inhabited by the domestics, and there many a tragedy is played out to the bitter end. Some years ago, one of the domestics in our employment asked for leave to get married, which was accorded to him, and in due time the happy bridegroom brought home the apple of his eye, a plump, nice-looking native girl of some fifteen years of age. For a period of about eighteen months or so the pair lived happily together, and then, in a fatal moment, the wife asked her husband to allow her to go to a certain feast in a village not far from her mother's home. The girl went, and returned at the end of a few weeks so changed that no one knew her. Her eyes looked furtively and cunningly about; she spoke Canarese (a foreign language to her) fluently, and indulged in the foulest abuse of everyone who interfered with her. 'Who do you take me for?' she said in an angry, evil voice. 'You don't turn me out in a hurry; give me arrack (a drink made out of fermented rice, and a powerful spirit). I want arrack if I die for it.' How she got hold of the liquor no one could say, but she would reel home half naked from the bazaar, foaming at the mouth and cursing everyone.

By this time *suspicion* of obsession had strengthened to a certainty, and various means were had recourse to without avail, and then the relatives took to beating her till they actually killed her with blows. In such case a police inquiry is a mere matter of form.

'Murder? Dear, no! What an idea! The devil that possessed the girl killed her'; and so it ends. And the obsessing spirit driven out by death looks out for a fresh victim. If not interfered with, he uses up the vitality of the body with a greedy haste, till finding it will no longer afford him gratification, he leaves it, worn out and done to death, and the grave or the pyre soon hides the tale. If the obsessing spirit is at all of a useful nature, gifts and propitiations are made, but in any case the medium speedily pays for the pleasure of lending out his temple of flesh, and a gradual decay of vital power setting in soon settles the question.

With regard to the girl who died in our 'go-down' the relatives, later on, let the story out. They said the girl was perfectly well till she went to the Salem feast; that when there she had sat under a certain tree haunted by a Canarese spirit; she was carrying her mother her mid-day meal, and when she delivered it, she addressed the woman in the Canarese tongue, and ordered her to bring at once a quart of arrack. The terrified creature fled, pursued by the daughter, who entered the house and stole all she could lay her hands on. Carrying the articles off to the bazaar, she realised enough money to get frightfully drunk, and till death released the unfortunate soul, she drank steadily, when and where she could.

'The best of these are but parasites,' said a wise old Brahmin. 'They eat up your will power, suck your brains, absorb the vital life-current, and in return give you—what? Perhaps a little doubtful advice, or a sop in the shape of a pot of buried treasure. Have nothing to do with them; sooner or later the day of payment comes, and then——' He shook his head and sighed. 'Come next Friday to the temple near the river,' he said; 'I will show you a woman possessed by a nature spirit, nothing that has ever been human, or will be for millions of years.'

On the Friday he led the way. 'There she sits; look at her.' Under a tree a woman of some thirty-five years of age leaned wearily against the tree, incessantly swinging her head round and round. On she went as if wound up, till it became a pain to see her. 'She has done that now for weeks,' said the Brahmin, 'scarcely ceasing to take a drink of water. That man there will cure her; watch and see; he is an exorcist.'

The man approached and muttered some muntra over her, at the same time flinging handfuls of various leaves over her in showers. He seized her by the whirling hair and dragged her up to a tree. There he twisted the locks up into a coil, which he fastened to the tree with strong nails. Then, seizing a sharp knife he cried, 'Come forth out of the woman! go thou into the tree,' and with a sharp stroke he severed the hair close off to the head. The woman thereupon fell back on to her hands in a half sitting position, gasping. 'Drink!' he said, handing her a draught of milk, 'you are cured, go home'; and the woman rose quiet and calm, and followed her husband's lead.

The hair was taken and burnt, for the Brahmin said, 'If not, anyone touching that hair, who is mediumistically inclined, will attract the same power.'

Madras.

R. B.

### MR. REDWAY'S NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Mr. George Redway will issue in the autumn new editions of the following works first published in America, and now being edited for the English market: 'Spiritualism,' by Judge Edmonds and Dr. C. T. Dexter, in two volumes; and 'The Gift of the Spirit,' essays by Prentice Mulford, in the White Cross Library. Mr. Redway also announces this season an illustrated book on Mesmerism, by Professor Coates, whose experimental success and long experience in this science add value to his testimony; and an original work on Astrology, by W. Old ('Sephariel'), reputed to be the first of living writers on this subject. Mr. A. E. Waite will contribute an important work called 'The Book of Black Magic,' in which will be found complete translations of the old and rare 'Grimoires,' the most fearsome weapon of ancient magicians. Another interesting book is 'The Perfect Law of Liberty,' the author of which preserves his anonymity.

Mr. Junor Browne, the well-known Melbourne Spiritualist, has placed in Mr. Redway's hands the MS. of a revised edition of his 'Roman Catholicism before Christ.'

The various works of Dr. Braid on Hypnotism, now exceedingly scarce, are being reprinted by Mr. Redway in a single volume. Mr. Crowe, the eminent Freemason, is writing an extensive book upon Masonic certificates, of which he has the largest collection in the world; about one hundred and fifty specimens will be reproduced to illustrate the volume, which will be issued by Mr. Redway to subscribers only. Mr. Hawkins-Simpson has placed in Mr. Redway's hands the MS. of an important work on 'Rising from the Dead, according to the Teaching of Christ,' to which many eminent theologians and men of science have contributed. 'Minetta,' the wife of a well-known astrologer, has handed to Mr. Redway for reproduction and sale a specially prepared set of 'fortune-telling' cards, which she has used with great success. Mrs. Mona Caird is to publish her Essays on the marriage question under the title of 'The Morality of Marriage.' Mrs. Chas. Heckethorn's two large volumes on the Secret Societies of all Ages and Countries is about to be issued. Mr. Redway will also issue 'The Beauties of Marie Corelli,' a little volume of extracts from the published writings of this favourite author. Mrs. Ida Ellis has completed her 'Catechism of Palmistry,' an extensive work with a large number of illustrations. Mr. Clifford Harrison, the well-known reciter, is issuing a volume of mystical essays entitled 'Notes on the Margins.' A curious book called 'Dealings with the Dead' has been translated from the French by Mrs. Whitehead, and will be prefaced by Mr. Lillie, and published by Mr. Redway.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,  
LONDON, W.C.  
SATURDAY, AUGUST 28th, 1897.

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.—'LIGHT' may be had free by post on the following terms:—Twelve months, 10s. 10d.; six months, 5s. 5d. Payments to be made in advance. To United States, 2dol. 70c.

ADVERTISEMENT CHARGES.—Five lines and under, 3s. One inch, 5s. Column, £2 2s. Page, £4. A reduction made for a series of insertions.

## Light,

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, Office of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, Office of 'LIGHT,' and not to the Editor. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, and should invariably be crossed '— & Co.'

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

### THE VISION OF GOD.

In lately considering the recognition of God by the pure in heart we purposely left, for future contemplation, two thoughts of extreme value,—How can God be seen in History? and how can we recognise Him in the sin and sorrow of the world? Of course, in all these ponderings concerning the presence and the ways of God, we can never hope, and we must never expect, to see all things clearly. It is the midge trying to comprehend the eagle, the butterfly trying to understand the man—ay! infinitely more. We must be content to study tendencies. Happy if we can see that, on the whole, 'all things work together for good,' and thankful if, with Tennyson, we can

hear at times a sentinel  
Who moves about from place to place,  
And whispers to the worlds of space,  
In the deep night, that all is well.

Besides, it is absolutely necessary, in considering these 'deep things of God,' that we should understand clearly two things,—that, for every part of the mighty process of advancement, man must pay a price, and that this payment of the price is itself a part of the process, and sometimes a part even of the blessing. The world may be regarded either as a school-house or as a battle-field, and life as but a discipline or a campaign: and both involve effort, conflict, sorrow, the payment of a price. Few good things come in any other way.

How true this is of History! No thoughtful and devout person can really doubt that, on the whole, the life of Humanity is ever a great advance. It is a kind of insane perversity which affects to see the opposite. Every nation has emerged or is emerging from brutal darkness to human light. No one can really doubt it. The miseries from which we still suffer, or the sorrows of the present stage of the process of evolution, may at times shut our eyes to the advance, but the advance goes on and is very real. Let anyone read his History of Europe for this purpose alone—to measure in even the roughest way the advance of the past thousand years. What a sense of order has developed, what regard for law, what respect for human life, what refinements of justice, what enormous additions to the means of comfort and enjoyment, what strides in knowledge and the applications of it! Price? Yes; admit it; but, in paying the price, what rare enjoyments have arrived, ay! and in the very paying of it! Just as men hunt, not for the prey, but for the excitement and even perils of the chase, so has it been with mankind on its perilous march. Why, a good half of the world's enjoyments have been the excitements and perils of the march.

And, all along, the quiet, reverent eye can see God,—not God in miracle but God in orderly unfolding, God in the slow deep process, God in the lowliest, ay, saddest, chapters of Human History: for nothing has seemed really in vain, but all things have seemed to work together for good: and, if we doubt it, it is only because we do not judge of things on the whole or because we wrongly conceive of the almightiness of God. God is not almighty in the sense that He can do everything. Whatever the laws of Nature mean, they must mean that God Himself is bound by them: and even if He wished, we must conclude that He could not upset Euclid and the moral law. Even so; we must conclude that if He wants a David, a Paul, a Socrates, a Mohammed, a Shakespeare, a Wesley, there is only one way to get them. They must be made by experience, not by magic: they could be evolved only out of a sinning, struggling and sorrowing world. But, *out of such a world, they come*; and it is the Mighty Master who so produces them. The pure in heart, and therefore the pure in vision, see this: and therefore, in Human History and in the sin and sorrow of the world, they see God.

But there remains an awful shadow which it would be well for us to illumine if we can. What of the impure,—the impure now, the finally impure, the impure who pass into the solemn unseen, lower than the beast, more ignorant because less innocent, than the child? And what of the merely frivolous, who, though not base, do not belong to the pure in heart? And here we must face the dread truth that this beatitude, 'Blessed are the pure in heart,' is only the sorrowful side of that even vaster and more sweeping law, 'Be not deceived; God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.' Yes, but that does not close the sowing at any period. It does not say that this life is the only period for sowing. If it did it could not be true; for, come what will, we must believe in the law of continuity and progress, and in that deep 'stream of tendency' which 'makes for righteousness.'

In pondering the impurity which prevents the vision of God, we must bear in mind two things;—that much of the impurity of the world is purity in the course of production, the effort of a defiled stream to run itself clear, or of a diseased part to exude the foulness that promotes or follows disease; and that much impurity is innocent of evil in the sense of guilt. There are stages of moral growth that may be offensive to us but that may be most interesting and beautiful to the eyes of angels: and if we ask, 'Why does not the almighty spare the struggler all this beclouding and impurity?' we can only fall back on what we have already said,—that perhaps He cannot, and that perhaps only by such a process can He create a personal, conscious, discriminating, willing and happy child. This may be the best way of making man 'a living soul.' Then, there are forms or stages of impurity that are innocent of evil in the sense of guilt. This is true of most children, and of those 'children of a larger growth' who crowd our great towns, multitudes of whom never have a real chance here. Then there are others, again, who live a merely butterfly existence, who have never faced the deep moral distinctions, and are as little to blame for it, in a way, as the creatures to whom we liken them. But their loss is very real; their lessons must all be learnt: their discipline will not be escaped. The Theosophist tells us that these must return, to learn in fresh lives what they have missed. We do not think so. There are wise teachers and there will be vast opportunities on the other side. 'In my father's house are many homes,' said the wise Jesus. Why not Infirmaries, Reformatories, Industrial Schools, Colleges, Workshops?

But one thing is certain, that whether for the seen or the unseen, the purer the vision and the heart the more we shall discern purpose and progress in all forms of life, and the more plainly shall we everywhere see God.

## THE MYSTERIES OF MEDIUMSHIP.

## THE READ FAMILY.

BY MR. BRIAN HODGSON.

In submitting to your readers a brief summary of a very successful series of séances for partial materialisation, I shall endeavour to produce evidence such as may cause honest students to vary their attitude on the subject, as expressed in recent discussions. Hitherto the critic has turned his search-light upon the mediums with an exacting pertinacity that has thrust the majority of these gifted persons out of the movement altogether. It is my experience that the *conductor* of the séance has a greater responsibility than the medium in the procuring of satisfactory results, and that, when inquiry is necessary, it should be directed upon the conduct and environment primarily. However, it is not so much my object to express opinions as to narrate facts, and the following statement is capable of verification by any inquirer who will go to personal trouble.

The indispensable person of the three whom I deem to be in a measure necessary to permanent success, is Miss Edith Read, through whom physical manifestations were apparent at a very early age; direct slate writing, drawing and other phenomena taking place around her before she could handle a pen intelligently. The parents often watched their two little mites in converse with the spirits with slates covered by the table cloth, each using endearing terms to get these invisibles to 'do mine the best.' Mrs. Read has been especially careful in watching over the development of her daughter's powers and never allows her to sit

except in her own presence. Miss Nelly Read is also in some way associated with the results, and being clairvoyant can unravel matters when they are knotted. The family have constantly been environed by the physical, clairvoyant, and inspirational manifestations, receiving practical advice at all times, and on rare occasions material assistance. Illness does not enter into their calculations, and the guidance given has ever served as a buffer for trouble, of which they have had a salutary share, but which has not sapped the spring of brightness and happy good nature with which they meet their many friends and inquirers.

I was introduced to their séance some three years ago by the courtesy of Mr. A. J. Smyth, of the Birmingham Spiritualist Union, and have since then taken parties of friends at intervals until the last nine months, when, with the approbation of the committee of the Spiritualist Evidence Society, I organised the series of public séances now under review. These were held fortnightly, but became so much in demand that they were held weekly after Christmas. During this period I have kept an anxious but firm hand upon the arrangements, having the able support of Mr. J. C. Lawman and Mr. C. Burton in times of need.

The society's object was not so much original investigation or pioneer work as to shew to an average common-sense mind the impregnable nature of the Spiritualists' case even upon the solid basis of sense perception, or pure physics. The method of the séances was the same from the first to the last, though the degree of power of the manifestations varied with the quality, number, and general nature of the sitters.

The arrangement was as follows: The assembled inquirers were disposed in two 'circles.' The inner sat round a heavy table accommodating ten on three sides. This circle was drawn from the permanent sitters. Miss Edith Read sat at the right hand pole, Mrs. Read sitting next to her, and

Mr. Lawman at the other pole, with Miss Nelly Read next to him. These were regular sitters throughout. The rest were selected from visitors who had attended four or five times in the outer circle (often still sceptical), or Spiritualists well known to us as such. The outer circle consisted of any inquirers who had been deemed eligible (and none have yet been excluded). In both circles the sexes were alternated as far as possible, and a predominance of ladies was found to be best. I remained in the outer circle, keeping an eye on the movements and an ear on the comments of all, and directed matters. Occasionally Mr. Lawman would be influenced to re-arrange the outer circle, and would generally state the nature or the conditions and probable impediments. The inquirers were latterly required to sign a declaration (1) that they would not experiment without the conductor's permission; (2) would not grasp spirit hands without spirit permission; (3) would record in the society's journal any objection to the conditions for the time being enforced, and hold the society philosophically responsible only for the position then taken up. Throughout the series no single objection or murmur of disapproval has been in evidence, though over a

hundred persons have received proof of extra-material intelligence.

The articles used were: A bell with a luminous disc round the cup; a small banjo, a concertina, a luminous tape, and latterly a musical box. All these were painted with luminous paint in such a manner as to be clearly visible whenever moved.

The two circles having been formed, a brief account of what was likely to happen was given to the strangers. The lights were turned low but with sufficient left to show the outline of all present, and white clothes clearly. Throughout the séance the essential sitter, Miss Edith Read, sat outside the

cabinet and retained full consciousness. The first manifestation was given in this light in the form of a curtain movement, which, however, was hardly evidence to the outer circle. The bell was then handed in and was rung vigorously up and down, but not in view. The banjo was placed over the edge of the table with one end inside the cabinet, the stem being visible to all when the members of the outer circle stood up. It was taken into the cabinet slowly, and after a pause of some fifteen seconds was audibly placed on the floor. Sometimes it was brought up again, the stem being exhibited through the opening. After discordant strumming the musical-box was set going by the sitters, and the bell played vigorously in time with it, as if 'conducting.' All this time every person in the room could see every other, at least in outline. A hymn or song was sometimes called for, and the bell rang to it. The gas-light was then put out by request of the raps, and a luminous card, well charged with magnesium light, was then placed face upwards between Miss Read and Mr. Lawman, the former placing her fingers upon it and keeping them there during the following manifestations. The surface area of this card is about three square feet. Sometimes a wait of five to ten minutes was necessary at this stage, and a hymn or solo was occasionally called for by the spirits. A white gauze-like drapery would then ascend just inside the aperture, descend again, and reappear two or three times. Next a beautifully formed hand, with draped or lace cuff, would wave up and down rapidly and withdraw. This could be clearly seen by all the inner circle, but not by the outer. It would then come out, remain longer, snap its fingers loudly, and again withdraw. The conditions were at this stage regarded as at their best. The members of the outer circle were called up one by one and allowed to stretch over Mr. Lawman's shoulder (between him and his next neighbour), and place hand with palm downward on the card. They could see



MISS E. READ.

*From a photograph*

MRS. READ.

*[by Tippetts, Aston, Birmingham.]*

the outline of Miss Edith Read's hand, and the spirit hand thrust forth occasionally. The spirits were asked to touch the inquirer, and almost invariably did so, though a certain type were touched very gingerly, others receiving a hearty grip from hands they said were sometimes large, sometimes small; and in some cases they recognised the characteristic grip of a friend, as when the deformed three-fingered hand of an old acquaintance greeted a visitor. I have seen this hand clearly at a special private séance, but was not allowed to touch it, nor would it touch me. The baby hand of a deceased child also touched both its parents, who came in a highly sceptical spirit. At a special séance I inserted my face between the two that this little hand caressed; but, with all my importunity, it would not touch me, presumably because it could not. This and many other facts have humbled me to a state of mind that is somewhat impatient of the dogmatism of the critics who so freely lay down the law as to what should and what should not be done by the guides.

After this liberal grasping and touching, with occasional direct writing of brief messages and initials by the hands, on paper placed on the card in full view of the particular inquirer seeking the manifestation, I usually asked for the *experimentum crucis* which we now obtain regularly. Inquirers are invited one by one, especially the new comers, to stand between Mr. Lawman and his neighbour, stretch across the table, put one hand on both Miss Edith Read's and one on both Mrs. Read's hands; Mr. Lawman putting both his hands upon the arm holding Miss Read's two hands. All hands nearest the cabinet are thus secured, and any ingress to the cabinet is impossible owing to its position. The bell is then rung vigorously in the face of the inquirer, who can both see and hear it and note its motion. It is rung from ten to thirty seconds according to his quickness in acknowledging it. This experiment is somewhat exhausting to Mrs. Read, but can be given without harm (by spirit assent only) to from two to eight inquirers in one evening. Total darkness is necessary, except the luminous paint on the bell.

This 'bell test' usually closes the sitting, but on some occasions conditions have been good and extras have been thrown in. Twice, on the darkness being specially intensified, some fiery sparks were manifested, taking a spiral course, though not of the size and brilliance of those through Mr. Craddock.

The average attendances at this series have ranged between eight and twenty-four, and all sorts and conditions of mind have gone away either humbled or convinced. As conductor I have never flinched from following the dictates of my own mind as to what was true and what was false. Myself accepting open personal criticism as the first principle of the society, I gave an unhesitating opinion upon the drawbacks asserted to exist by any particular inquirer. Having deeply studied physics I could meet most of the honest sceptics upon their own ground. I mention these things as a matter of essential information to anyone who would successfully demonstrate these manifestations to the public, and I put these brief notes forth as evidence that the anathema of dark séances is ill directed, when aimed at the medium. Of all persons, the medium is the least competent to conduct a circle. She is in the nature of things bound to be deeply negative and passive, whilst the conductor has to control the loose mental outpourings of many diverse types, whom he must intuitively and instantly comprehend and hold in place with an iron hand. He has to do all this with a tact that will not produce any sense of acrimony or ill-feeling, and this being almost an impossibility, he is, as I cannot but regard myself, liable to be the worst 'sitter' in the room regarded as a source of manifestation.

The Spiritual Evidence Society of Birmingham has taken an independent course in reference to 'fraudulent' mediums, and so far has found them profoundly interesting and instructive.

At the private séances specially arranged for those deeply desirous of carrying their studies further very many remarkable tests are given, but as to these I have nothing to say, as the

testimony of private individuals, not open to verification, is of little use to the public at large. Neither have I as yet commenced pioneer experimentation. This cannot be conclusive until an abundance of material is at hand, a consummation that can only be arrived at by popularising the study, and by the undivided attention of those who hold that spiritual evidence should be reduced to terms of material philosophy.

I enclose a list of names of persons to whom application may be made for the verification of this report.

#### TELEPATHIC INTERCOURSE.

'H.B. (Westmoreland)' contributes the following interesting experience to the 'Christian World':—

Having so often experienced telepathic intercourse, I am a keen believer in it, and I could give a dozen or more instances in which thoughts have been transmitted to or from me over long distances, but at the same time. One such let me recount:—One evening the thought came strongly upon me to send a certain book of mine to an acquaintance in Switzerland (I was in Brighton at the time). Being a book-lover—ready, indeed, to lend but not to give my books—I resisted and dismissed the thought. The following morning it returned more

strongly than before, so worrying me with its pertinacity that at last I opened my bookcase and took down the work in question—James Hinton's 'Mystery of Pain.' I turned its leaves, saw my markings and notes, my own name in it, and impatiently replaced it among its companions. But I had no rest. *Against my own inclinations*, before the foreign post went out, I slowly made it into a parcel and addressed it to my friend in Switzerland. I must get myself another copy, I thought; there was no time to send for a new one for her and save the post. A few

days later I received a post-card running somewhat thus:—'Who told you to send me that little booklet? I know. It was God,' and she went on to say that the very evening on which the impulse came on me to send it she was wishing for the book, felt she could not buy it in Switzerland, and wondered to whom she could send in England asking to get it. I had never before, and have not since, sent her a book. What an advantage if the telepathic atmosphere could be truly cultivated and faithfully used!

#### DECEASE OF DR. LUYs.

Dr. Jules Bernard Luys, the famed French specialist in diseases of the brain, who was born in 1828, has died suddenly at Divonne-les-Bains. He was in succession attached to several Paris hospitals, to the Salpêtrière, to the Charité, and to the lunatic asylum at Ivry. In 1877 he was elected a member of the Academy of Music. He leaves some authoritative works on the brain, on the nervous system, and on hypnotism. Our esteemed correspondent, 'Quæstor Vitæ,' has kept the readers of 'LIGHT' well informed of the result of Dr. Luys' researches in hypnotism, and of his curious experiments in psychic radiations.

CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST MISSION.—A correspondent asks: 'Would any of your readers kindly inform me if the society called "The Christian Spiritualist Mission," held somewhere in Hackney some years ago, is still in existence? If so, where?'—  
OBERAU.

A PERSECUTED SPIRITUALIST.—Mr. C. Delolme, 2, Beacon House, Hemstall-road, West Hampstead, desires to acknowledge the receipt of 1s. from 'J. R. A.,' and £2 from 'V. F. D.' on behalf of Mr. J. Hocker, to whom the money has been duly paid. The following contributions have also been received at the office of 'LIGHT': From Mrs. Wilkinson 10s., and from 'A. M. W.' £1; and the amounts have been forwarded to Mr. Delolme.

COPIES of 'LIGHT' containing the address delivered by Professor Oliver Lodge to the London Spiritualist Alliance, may still be had, 2½d. per copy, post free, from office of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

## 'THE SECRET DOCTRINE': VOLUME III.\*

The long-promised Third Volume of Madame Blavatsky's 'Secret Doctrine' is now before the public. It is not a biography of the Adepts of all ages, as at one time was whispered, but a number of Essays on Theosophy, which Mrs. Besant has strung together with as much sequence as she found possible. These Essays are for the most part thoroughly Blavatskyan—erudite, daring, full of assumptions and assertions, besprinkled with contradictions, bristling with dark sayings, and written with wonderful vigour.

Madame Blavatsky seems to have been an uncompromising enemy of Spiritualism to the end. She gravely tells her readers that the materialised forms, when not the doubles of living persons, are 'vile bundles of passions and terrestrial lusts, resurrected by and gaining consciousness only through the organism of the medium.' It is not difficult to understand why H. P. B. forbade her disciples to go to séances. Were you to tell 'a young man from the country' that Hyde Park is full of lions and tigers, you would not be very anxious for him to go there and see for himself.

Theosophists make much use of the theory of 'blinds.' If you point out to them obvious blunders or glaring contradictions in their teachings, they smilingly tell you that their teachers intended those things to be blinds to mislead the un-intuitional, or tests for those who have intuition. That is an exceedingly convenient way of getting out of difficulties, but, unfortunately, it throws doubt on all the teachings of Theosophy, for if the 'truths' of to-day are liable to become the 'blinds' of to-morrow, all is uncertain, and even the blessed Seven Principles themselves may at any moment turn out to be merely a delusion and a snare. Of course the historic method of studying religions knows nothing of 'blinds,' or for that matter of 'Manus,' or the divine regents and revelators of early man; but that matters little to the faithful Theosophist, who is taught to abhor the historical method almost as much as the experimental. In the preface to this third volume, Mrs. Besant not only warns us to look out for 'blinds,' but confesses that Madame Blavatsky actually makes mistakes! For Mrs. Besant says, in regard at least to one part of the book, 'It will be obvious to any instructed reader that she makes—possibly deliberately—many statements so confused that they are mere blinds, and other statements—probably inadvertently—that are nothing but exoteric misunderstandings of esoteric truths.' Mrs. Besant could hardly have discounted H. P. B.'s teachings more effectually; but H. P. B. herself is quite as cruel and much rougher to Mr. Sinnett.

Of all the mysteries expounded in 'Esoteric Buddhism' there are none which fills the Chela with more thrilling awe than the mysteries of 'the Second Death,' and of the 'Eighth Sphere' (a kind of theosophical hell); and there is nothing in the whole of Theosophy more consoling to the student who feels indisposed to break entirely with modern science than Mr. Sinnett's assurance that the Mahatmas accept a modified form of the Darwinian hypothesis about the descent of man. And now we learn that Mr. Sinnett's teachings in these matters are all wrong:—

Banish from your minds (says H. P. B.) all that you have hitherto read in such works as 'Esoteric Buddhism,' and thought you understood, of such hypotheses as the eighth sphere and the moon, and that man shares a common ancestor to the ape.

Madame Blavatsky's own teaching, however, is not less thrilling than Mr. Sinnett's. A man, she says, may lose his soul by 'wickedness' while still alive; and, indeed, we elbow thousands of soulless men when we walk the streets—business men who attend exclusively to their business, and never read about their souls. When the Higher Ego leaves a man, his consciousness remains in his lower Ego, which after his death is a prey to despair, and gives itself up entirely to evil, living for immense periods in the earth's sphere, and, until it is finally wiped out, suffering tortures and also inflicting them. But it is impossible here to give our readers any idea of the curious and ingenious web of theosophical theory which Madame Blavatsky weaves on this subject for the edification of her followers, and we must refer them to the book itself for detailed information about the fate of wicked Theosophists who do not

cultivate their 'Buddhi.' It is to be hoped that H. P. B.'s doctrines about the invisible universe are a little better founded than her teaching about the visible one. This is her doctrine about 'Suns and Planets':—

A comet partially cools and settles down as a sun. It then gradually attracts round it planets that are as yet unattached to any centre, and thus, in millions of years, a solar system is formed. The worn-out planet becomes a moon to the planet of another system.

Each of the Essays in the volume makes a 'Section' of the contents, and there are 51 such Sections, filling 431 pages; besides which there are 162 pages of 'Papers on the Bearing of Occult Philosophy on Life.' The Sections treat of such subjects as 'The Origin of Magic,' 'Hermetic and Kabalistic Doctrines,' 'The Duty of the True Occultist towards Religion,' 'Apollonius of Tyana,' 'The Object of the Mysteries,' and so on. The Papers deal with similar subjects, but at less length; between them they seem to cover the whole ground of Theosophy, touching it here and there to explain or accentuate the usual teachings—top-dressing the growing plant, as it were. The 'Third Volume' is undoubtedly a very interesting and exceeding curious production. For those of our readers who understand theosophic doctrines, it will certainly make Madame Blavatsky's teachings clearer; for those to whom these doctrines are mysteries, these Essays will perhaps add to the mystification.

## THE IDEALIST.

This is what a good woman says about the sometimes scorned 'Idealist.' We do not give her name. No one would know it:—

What place in the universal scale has the idealist?

Is he a dreamer of vain dreams, a believer in the intangible nothings of unbalanced minds?

Says the dull-eyed world of to-day, 'Verily, such is he.'

But what says she of the idealist of yesterday—of the far remote yesterdays, the prophecies of which have been fulfilled?

Him has she called 'teacher,' 'master,' 'discoverer,' 'saviour.'

To him she has raised the lofty monument, and to his sacred sepulchre she journeys far across hot sands and many wastes. He was of another age. The teachings for which he was stoned, the truths for which he was crucified, are to-day the living testimonies of a scorned past. The world of to-day stones the idealist of to-day. The world of yesterday did the same. 'Truth is ever on the scaffold.' While the world will tell you that the idealist is but a visionary being, the wise man will tell you that he is the truly practical one.

It is he who sees beyond the prescribed lines of thought. It is he who, through his clear seeing, opens the door of the Possible. It is he who builds the future for the race.

The idealist has awakened to higher truths than have those about him.

His dreams are golden prophecies. To-day he may not be able to prove to his fellow men those wondrous dreams; but he believes in them, and he holds firm to his believing, until by-and-bye the thought that at first crept into his heart as a glorious hope, becomes a certainty; and with the revelation of this knowledge he faces a world of persecution. He 'holds fast to that which is good,' and his fellows call him 'infidel.'

The accepted opinions of a majority are the orthodoxy of the age.

The idealist stands with the minority; hence his infidelity. But the wheels of progression turn—if slowly—surely—and one by one, as the seasons go, the new thought finds its way into the hungry, mistaken hearts of humanity; and behold! in the circle of time the new thought has become the old thought—the infidel the orthodox; and it, in its turn, persecutes the newer thinking, forgetful of its own struggle and conquest. Here is the history of the race.

Galileo was an infidel to an accepted theory of his day, and he perished for his opinions. Columbus was an idealist who believed in an 'absurd possibility,' whose truth he lived to prove. Martin Luther was an infidel to his time's theology, and on his infidelity was founded a religion to which millions bow to-day. But new infidels arise. Have they nothing to-day worth the hearing? O! ye who have builded on an ancient infidelity, give ear to him that crieth in the wilderness; perchance he

\* 'The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis of Science, Religion, and Philosophy.' By H. P. BLAVATSKY, author of 'Isis Unveiled,' Volume III. London: Theosophical Publishing Society; Chicago, New York, Benares, Madras. 1897. 593 pp. Price 10s. net.

brings you tidings of great joy. O! ye 'practical' sons of men, have you not heard, have you not seen, that clinging to the old, blindly, is not a practical thing? It is not religion: it is merely superstition.

The idealist is the one who trusts his own soul to seek untrodden realms.

### 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.]

#### A Visit to 'Cheiro.'

SIR,—I recently paid a visit to 'Cheiro,' and I should be glad to express my sense of the value which attaches to the gift he possesses, with the hope that I may thus be of service to others. It is truly wonderful to see the operation of one's will registered by the instrument which he uses, but it is not on account of its marvellousness that either it or his gift of palmistry is to be valued. The important question for every man is, What am I to make of my life? And this strange little instrument and 'Cheiro's' gift of insight afford help in answering this question. That he recognises that in this consists their true value is evident by the direction which he gives to his disclosures.

If people treat palmistry as a frivolous amusement, they unfit themselves for benefiting by it; they have forgotten the precept, 'With all thy getting, get understanding,' but those who know that they are here, 'not so much to live, as to learn how to live,' will avail themselves of this opportunity of learning 'how to live,' with a sensible and earnest purpose and in the spirit of Browning's words:

They know, and therefore rule—I, too, will know.

For such, self-rule may spring out of the self-knowledge which they will gain.

Men who might  
Do greatly in a Universe that breaks,  
And burns, must ever *know* before they do.

Therefore let us all beware how we touch or handle any of God's universe, in ignorance and without purpose, for it truly 'burns.' But if reverently and with purpose we approach it, we shall find that it is alive with spiritual force and illuminated with wisdom, like the burning bush before which Moses took off his shoes in worship, listening for the guidance of God.

HELEN S. ALEX. DALLAS.

116, King Henry's-road, South Hampstead.

Miss G. Reynolds, of Troy, U.S.A.

SIR,—Permit me to draw the attention of your readers to the visit of Miss Reynolds to England, by testifying to her extraordinary powers as a trance and test medium. This lady is staying, at present, with Mrs. M. Stephenson, of 42, Harborne-road, Birmingham.

On my invitation she came to my house quite a stranger, and easily and without effort gave my wife and self some most convincing proofs of the truth of spirit communion.

1. She gave the name of our daughter, who had passed away, the symptoms and conditions of her last illness, with the name of the doctor who attended her, describing how she reclined in a folding chair in the room in which we were then sitting, and taking our hands with a firm grip indicated the intensity of our daughter's tenderest feelings.

2. She gave the names of a brother and son still in earth life, with the state of their minds, &c.; also that of another brother who had passed away.

3. The names of two uncles, how fond one was of music, and how he had been a member of a band, and how the other had gone to the wars.

4. Described the seat of the disease from which my mother had passed away, and gave me a characteristic message from her.

5. Stated how my wife's ancestors were farmers, and how after the death of her great-grandfather there was a dispute in reference to a large sum of money, which was associated with much jealousy and fraud.

6. Casually passing a photograph on the sideboard, she took it up, and without hesitation said, 'This is George, your son.'

The above she could have no means of knowing from an external source; but all of which was absolutely correct. Such

evidence as this should convince the most hard-headed materialist of the continuance of life after death.

Societies should not lose this opportunity of availing themselves of the excellent services of Miss Reynolds, and obtaining the best of results by offering the purest and most sympathetic conditions.

G. T.

The Rev. H. T. Sortwell.

SIR,—In 'Notes by the Way,' in 'LIGHT' for August 14th, I observe an extract from a sermon by the Rev. H. T. Sortwell, of this town, who has been drawing large audiences in the parish church for some months past by the delivery of sermons of a popular character, which are announced 'for men only, although all I have read (and they are all published in the local 'Gazette') appear to be equally suited for one sex as the other.

The Rev. H. T. Sortwell is an able man, but is one of the old school of theologians, believing in the teachings that were inculcated in his mind in childhood, illustrating the truth that 'as the twig is bent the tree's inclined,' and that early impressions are lasting. He believes in Genesis as literally interpreted—in the Creation, 6,000 years ago, in Adam and Eve, our first parents, in the 'fall,' in the flood, in the whole story, and all the rest of it. The paragraph quoted in 'LIGHT' expresses his firm conviction of the reality and proximity of the spirit-world, but the rev. gentleman does not believe in the possibility of communicating with it, as may be seen from the following passage from a sermon preached a few weeks ago, entitled 'Shall we know our friends in Heaven?'

Call to me, thou loved one, and tell me what 'the better land' is like. Call from the ivory palaces and tell me thou art safe and that all is well. Break, break thou, cruel silence, and spare my bleeding heart. But there is no voice nor answer. Six thousand years of human existence have passed away, countless armies of the dead have set sail from the shores of time. No traveller has returned from the still land beyond. More than a hundred and fifty generations have done their work and sunk into the dust again, and still there is not a voice, there is not indeed a whisper from the grave to tell us whether these myriads are in existence still. We turn to Nature, and her voice is still on the awful question.

This is the pronouncement of a talented clergyman after half-a-century's manifestation from the spirit-world such as has never before been experienced, of which the reverend gentleman, who has undertaken the responsible office of educating the people in things spiritual, appears to be perfectly innocent, and who yet in all other matters keeps himself well up to date. One would think that he never heard of Dr. Johnson's saying—'That the dead do not appear I will not deny against the testimony of all ages and nations,' or that he did not believe his own Bible. Truly the Rev. H. T. Sortwell is an anachronism, and a dose of Spiritualism would do him good.

Eastbourne.

ROBERT COOPER.

#### 'Can Disembodied Spirits see Material Objects?'

SIR,—If not too late to offer evidence upon this subject, I shall be glad if you will permit me to state my reasons for a firm belief that spirits can and do see material objects by means of their own spiritual organs. My sister and I are in the habit of 'sitting' together at a small table twice a week for the purpose of obtaining spirit communications, and through our joint mediumship have held converse with many of our relatives and friends passed on. I select two or three instances which have relation to the subject in question. Each circumstance has occurred within the past few weeks.

Our brother (three years passed on) came to the table, and after spelling out his name, gave the following message: 'Emma (our sister) does not look well; I hope she will take care of herself.'

Our mother (five years passed on) then came, and we asked her the following questions, to which she replied by the usual 'tilts.'

'Can you see us?'—'Yes.'

'If we place any object on the table, can you see and describe it?'—'Yes.'

We then placed a white carnation on the table and asked, 'What do you see on the table?'—'A flower.'

'Yes; but what kind of flower?'—'A pink.'

Transmission of thought cannot explain this, for we were both thinking of the flower as a 'carnation.' Our mother used the old-fashioned name 'pink.'

Again, a friend (many years passed on) came, and we tried the same test. This time we laid a large white marguerite on the table, and asked : 'What flower is this?'—'*A daisy!*'

This could be no transmission of thought, for we were thinking of it as a *marguerite*.

Finally, my husband (who passed on four years ago) came. I then said to him, 'A question has been raised lately as to whether spirits can see material objects. Can you see this room plainly?'—'Yes.'

'Please answer the next questions decisively. Do you see material objects through the medium of *our* physical eyes?'—'No.' (Emphatically.)

'Do we convey the impression of them to you in any other way?'—'No.' (Emphatically.)

'You see them with your own spiritual eyes?'—'Yes.' (Emphatically.)

When we consider the immense number of those 'passed on' who never—so far as we can judge by mortal senses—give word or sign to those who are seeking and yearning for it, may we not reasonably conjecture that the gift of 'clairvoyance' is exercised also in spirit-land, and that the power of 'seeing' into this sphere from theirs is as rare with disembodied spirits as with us who are still in the flesh? E. G.

#### Conditional Immortality.

SIR,—In a footnote, p. 388, of your issue of August 14th, 'Q. V.' says : 'The most emphatic denial must be given to the theory of conditional immortality presented by Madame de Steiger and others.' It is clear from the context that 'Q. V.' fails to understand the philosophy of the theological view in question ; if he did, he would find it *impossible* to give an 'emphatic denial.' It is not a subject that interests your readers, so I will enlarge no further, except to say that I had hoped that neither he nor any other writer in 'LIGHT' could fall into the elementary error of writing such a phrase as this : 'To make him (man) eternally responsible for the shortcomings so entailed is absurd and untenable.' Who does? I did not. Also, 'Nor could one unit of self-conscious being immanent in all men be destroyed without entailing the obliteration of the Universal.' I never said, or felt inclined to say, anything so useless. 'Q. V.' must surely know that to destroy does not mean to obliterate in the sense of destruction—passing from existence—as was formerly considered by non-thinkers. It simply means a change of condition from form to chaos, which operation touches in no wise the Universal, whatever may be exactly meant by this word. Destruction, not only of one unit, but of countless units, is perpetually going on ; but the great constructing universal power is equally going on. Form is resolved into chaos, chaos into form, by no blind force ; but by none other than that which is above construction and destruction, being the essence of all.

ISABEL DE STEIGER.

#### In Reply to Madame de Steiger.

SIR,—I did not consider it necessary to answer a previous letter to mine on my letter in 'LIGHT' of July 3rd, because it flew over my head. But at length, having got a tangible reply from Madame de Steiger, I will endeavour to answer her categorical requirements. Madame de Steiger curtly asks me to give my explanation, 'First,' of the phrase I used : 'Eve lived on, to the permanent material loss to the body of her husband.' Well, I mean that, according to the Bible, he lost a rib ; and surely that was certainly 'a permanent material loss' ; but he gained a wife, because his rib did not return to his body. It marks out, too, how carefully materialising of the present day provides for the return of flesh and bones to the body of a materialising medium, every particle of them, notwithstanding the frequent pain and sickness of the poor mediums. Now that there are plenty of human creatures produced, by an alteration of means, we do not want permanent materialisations. I would call Madame de Steiger's attention, also, to the fact of the grand materialisation at Peniel, the result of which was that Jacob, the medium, 'halted upon his thigh,' because of 'a sinew that shrank' ; and this case seems expressly to prove that there was a hitch in materialisation on that occasion, which we do not hear of now among more expert spirits.

Madame de Steiger asks : 'Was Eve not created before "the coats of skin" were given?' Surely she was. Her soul

had nostrils to breathe into, doubtless long before she had to take the trials of the flesh for her improvement and refinement, probably by earth suffering. I have believed in pre-existence for the last forty years nearly, and have written on it when I found an opportunity in Spiritualist journals. Taking the flesh by carnal suffering is for the betterment of the soul, for, as Jesus says, according to the notes of the New Version : 'He that loveth his *soul* (Greek, *psuche*) shall lose it ; and he that hateth his *soul* (Greek, *psuche*) in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal' (Greek, *Zoe aionios*). As St. James says : 'Earthly, psychical (Greek, *psuchicos*), devilish.' As St. Jude says : 'Psychical (Greek, *psuchicos*), not having the spirit.' Which Greek term the translators render 'sensual,' a word with a bad meaning. Thus the Bible talks of the soul, even according to old translators.

Madame de Steiger further remarks : 'Second, why does Mr. Tomlinson say : "There is evidence based on necromancy that the Hebrews held, as a private opinion, the doctrine of the future state"?' Did I, Mr. Tomlinson, make that remark except as a quotation from Mr. Gladstone? No, I did not ; and this it pleased Madame de Steiger to ignore, because that lady knew well that the same phrase coming from Mr. Gladstone and from myself conveys very different inferences. I hardly think that is fair argument on her side ; while I endorse Mr. Gladstone's opinion in every way, though I did not originate it. But I am very glad that Mr. Gladstone should have said it. Such being the case, I think it right to re-quote the whole that I borrowed of what Mr. Gladstone did say in 'The Nineteenth Century,' for October, 1891, and which was published in my letter to 'LIGHT' of July 3rd. These are Mr. Gladstone's weighty words on that occasion, which I repeat, for they are immense comfort to Spiritualists, and show them to be on the right track :—

The great work of Sir Gardiner Wilkinson, 1837-41, made us familiar with the belief of the Egyptians, not only in a future life, but in a life of future restitution. The Persians, too, had a developed doctrine of a future state, like that of Egypt. There is evidence, based on necromancy among the people, to show that it subsisted among the Hebrews as a private opinion.

So, at any rate, we see here that Mr. Gladstone comes under the same terms of Madame de Steiger's dissatisfaction at our belief in necromancy as I do myself. That is what I desire to show, in self-defence. I am not singular, we see, in my opinion.

'Why necromancy?' asks Madame de Steiger, as a query to Mr. Gladstone's assertion, which she disguises as mine. I answer : Because it was alone by 'necromancy in private' that the Jews got any notion or intelligence of a future life, which Jehovah kept from them by every possible means, and gave it ugly names. And, indeed, in my opinion, for intelligence we cannot do better, or so well, as to go to the source. And greatly do I thank the great God of Heaven that He permits of necromancy at this very day.

'Moses, a Hierophant of the Mysteries,' Madame de Steiger adds, 'seems somewhat irrationally likened to a medium in any sense to which *we* are now accustomed.' Whom or what does Madame de Steiger designate as '*we*'? I suppose she means the Theosophists. But what has custom to do with a fact or a principle? Both remain the same through the ages. However Moses might have been during his prosperity in Egypt, he had now been forced to become the slave medium of a powerful, unscrupulous control who made him murder his brother. If he was not a medium, what else had he now become? Perhaps Madame de Steiger will tell us. A medium means a go-between, and has none of the flavour of inferiority which Madame de Steiger, who, like other modern Theosophists, owes much to mediums, would now cast upon it ; and it is capable of the highest interpretation, for it is but another name for a mediator. What better term has she to supply 'in any sense to which *she* is now accustomed'? Let us have it. The ingratitude and the *de haut en bas* of theosophical assumption Madame de Steiger marks well in her writings towards its great mother, Spiritualism, or, in another word, necromancy, to which modern Theosophists owe all their early education and much good example now, notwithstanding the Theosophists' adverse speculations and their controversies among themselves.

Madame de Steiger writes : 'Am I right in reading that Mr. Tomlinson does not hold to the doctrine of punishment to the soul after the death of the physical body? considering the soul as described by "Nephesh Cayeh" in "Living Soul" only?' My answer is : That in my belief of life and death, I have never

contemplated them in the light of 'Nephesh Cayeh' only; but I hold strong opinions that the soul suffers severely for its shortcomings, after the death of the physical body, as well as in its diverse re-incarnations; or all my readings and experiences in Spiritism and Spiritualism would be null. And how could I believe in 'saving the soul alive,' and not also believe in its punishment by death?

I would expressly affirm that I do not 'confound immortality with a future life,' a point which Madame de Steiger touches on. Indeed, I have held a controversy with an English Bishop on that subject, and my pamphlet has, to the advantage of the publishers, had a good sale, and has been monthly advertised for these eight years. It is termed 'Thoughts on Everlasting Death, with some remarks on Dr. Ryle, the Lord Bishop of Liverpool's, "Thoughts on Immortality."' My pamphlet is to be got at Southwell's, Ivy-lane, London.

WM. R. TOMLINSON, M.A.

### SOCIETY WORK.

**MERTHYR SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY.**—On Sunday evening last Mr. W. Scott (our veteran) took the platform, and read a very interesting paper on 'The Prehistoric Race of Man. Man in the Light of Ancient History. The Ultimate of Man.' A good audience.—W.M.H.

**EDMONTON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, BEECH HALL, HYDE-LANE, N.**—On Sunday evening last Mr. W. Wallace, the pioneer medium, gave an excellent discourse on 'Mediumship' to a large and attentive audience. On Sunday evening next, Mr. W. Walker, clairvoyance.—E.S.W.

**BRIGHTON.**—Mr. J. J. Vango's visit to 89, Freshfield-road, Brighton, was much enjoyed by the friends who met him. He gave good descriptions of spirit friends, in some cases giving their names and how they passed into the spirit world. Mr. Vango has promised to give a séance here the last Saturday in each month, and will be open to engagements during his stay.—J. C.

**CARDIFF PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, ST. JOHN'S HALL.**—On Sunday last Mr. W. H. Phillips, of Bridgwater, a new exponent, conducted the morning and evening services. Of this gentleman's ability as a trance speaker we cannot speak too highly. Societies would do well to remember him in their bookings, as he is rapidly coming to the front. Next Sunday, Mr. G. Harris, morning and evening.—G.S.

**BATTERSEA PARK OPEN-AIR WORK.**—The Battersea Society's speakers were assisted on Sunday by Messrs. Emms and Turner. The interest is being well maintained here. About 400 'LIGHTS' and 'Two Worlds' are distributed weekly. The rush for leaflets 'How to Investigate' at the close of our meetings proves that our work is bearing fruit. Next Sunday, at 3.30 p.m. and 6.30 p.m., near the band stand.—H.B.

**ISLINGTON SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, WELLINGTON HALL, N.**—On Sunday last Mr. Brenchley gave an address on 'The Blessing of Spiritualism.' Our late friend, Mr. Rodgers, controlled Mrs. Brenchley, wishing the Spiritualists of Islington to come forward to spread the truth abroad. Mrs. Brenchley gave convincing clairvoyance. Next Sunday, at 7.45 p.m., Mr. Wallace, the pioneer medium; Thursday, at 8 p.m., circle, for members only; medium, Mrs. Brenchley.—C. D. C.

**NORTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY 14, STROUD GREEN-ROAD, LONDON, N.**—At the open air meeting on Sunday last, Messrs. Brooks, Jones and Thompson (late of Hull) addressed a very attentive audience. At the close, a long discussion took place between Mr. Evans and Mr. Whyte ('Evangel'). At the hall in the evening, Mr. Kinsman conducted the meeting, in which various friends took part; and a trance address was given by Miss Harris. Sunday next in the Park at 11.15 a.m.; in the hall at 7 p.m.—T.B.

**EAST LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' ASSOCIATION, WORKMAN'S HALL, STRATFORD.**—On Thursday, 19th inst., Mr. Brailey delivered an address, the subject being chosen by the audience, followed by good clairvoyance. A general meeting of members was also held. On Sunday last Mr. Peters gave successful psychometry and clairvoyance; Mr. Veitch also spoke. Our Thursday meeting, at 8 p.m., should prove very useful and interesting to inquirers. Strangers are invited. Next Sunday, at 6.45 p.m., Mr. Peters will give psychometry and clairvoyance. Special notice: Next Saturday is our Lyceum outing to Loughton from Stratford, at 10.30 a.m.—WILLIAM A. RENFREE, Secretary.

**CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.**—A successful evening with Mrs. Green as speaker and medium, on Sunday last, still further encouraged the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists to continue their labours for the disseminating of the truths of Spiritualism. The address was closely listened to and appreciated by the crowded audience. "The Teachings of Spiritualism" was the theme chosen, some beautiful thoughts being couched in poetical language. The clairvoyance was very successful, only one description remaining unrecognised out of

the nine given. Next Sunday Mrs. Green will again be the speaker and medium. Doors open at 6.30 p.m., commence at 7 p.m. Solo, Miss Samuel.—L.H.

**TEMPERANCE HALL, DODDINGTON-GROVE, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.**—Last Thursday's séance was preceded by solos from Miss Thompson and Mrs. Boddington, whose tasteful rendering was fully appreciated. Mr. Peters found conditions more difficult to deal with than usual; the illustrations of clairvoyance, therefore, ceased earlier, and the remaining time was utilised by answering questions from the audience. On Sunday we had a brief address from the guides of Mrs. Barrell, followed by clairvoyance. Her most marked success was in diagnosing illness of the friends present or their relatives at home. Next Sunday, Mrs. Boddington, at 8 p.m., 'The Value of Experience.' Thursday, at 8 p.m., Mr. Peters, psychometry. No admission after 8.30 p.m.—H.B.

**85, FORTRESS-ROAD, KENTISH TOWN, N.W.**—On Sunday last Mrs. Spring and officers of the Dawn of Day Society, entertained Mrs. Rorke, their hon. sec., and about twenty friends to tea. The social meeting afterwards was well attended, the chair being taken by Mr. H. J. Colman, who presented Mrs. Rorke with a testimonial in recognition of her long and valued services. Mr. A. W. Lawson responded on behalf of Mrs. Rorke. Short suitable addresses were given by the guides of Mrs. Spring, Mr. Vango, and others. Madame Trainer presided at the organ. The above society will be glad to hear from ladies and gentlemen wishing to join developing or materialisation circles. Next quarter commences September 22nd.—M. H. POWELL, President.

**SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' MISSION, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.**—Our Sunday morning circle was a great success, and the room was full, which was very gratifying to our leader. Very interesting addresses were delivered, and as usual questions were put by a number of the audience and answered in a very satisfactory manner, a secularist among the number confessing that he had received something to think over. At our evening service we had the pleasure of listening to the guides of Mrs. Bliss, whose addresses were most instructive. Her guide 'Vigo' went among the people in the crowded hall, describing departed friends very clearly, giving also Christian and surnames in several instances, and most of the descriptions were instantly recognised. As more time than usual was occupied than is allotted to our evening service, no after circle was held. Next Sunday, at 11 a.m., public circle, doors closed at 11.15 a.m.; at 3 p.m., children's Lyceum; at 6.30 p.m., address by Mr. J. A. Butcher; at 8 p.m., members' and associates' circle. Persons wishing to join this mission as associates or members can get full particulars at the close of each service.—A. C.

**FOREST GATE (LIBERAL HALL, OPPOSITE G. E. R. STATION).**—There were large attendances again on Sunday, due greatly to the opposition, particularly that of the Rev. W. Skinner, of the Congregationalists, which was met by the challenge of the President of the East London Spiritualists' Association (Mr. Glynn Grant), supported by Mr. W. Ronald Brailey, the President of the Forest Gate centre of the Association, whose able advocacy has caused the Spiritualists' Hall to be crowded on Sunday nights, to such an extent that one or two of the leading gentlemen who attend are seriously considering the advisability of having a hall erected specially for the centre. In the open-air before the indoor service, Mr. H. Greenwood, the vice-president of the centre, and Mr. Grant spoke, and were cordially cheered, and an artistic banner bearing the words 'There is no Death' (the gift of Mr. H. Greenwood) was displayed. The successful work of Mr. Brailey at Forest Gate has led to his re-engagement for an extended period for Sunday evenings. Another very encouraging circumstance to the Forest Gate Spiritualists is the unanimous passing in the preceding week, at the general meeting of the Association, of the scheme of re-organisation.—G. G.

### NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

'Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research.' (Part XXXII.) Containing an article of 280 pp., by PROFESSOR W. F. BARRETT, on the 'So-called Divining Rod.' London: Kegan Paul, Trench and Co, Limited. Price 3s. 6d.

'The Worship of Lucifer.' A novel. By MINA SANDEMAN, author of 'The Rosy Cross, and Other Psychical Tales.' London: Digby Long & Co., 18, Bouverie-street, Fleet-street, E.C. Price 3s. 6d.

'Almost a Man,' by MARY WOOD-ALLEN, M.D., and 'Almost a Woman,' by MARY WOOD-ALLEN, M.D. London: The Wood-Allen Publishing Company, 7, Imperial-arcade, Ludgate-circus, E.C. Price 1s. each.

We have also received 'The Review of Reviews,' 'Lucifer,' 'The Prabuddha Bharata,' 'The Theosophist,' 'The Journal of Practical Metaphysics,' and 'The Mystical World.'

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