

# Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

No. 920.—VOL. XVIII.

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## CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way .....	417	Toys (Poetry) .....	424
Salvation that Saves .....	418	On the Dismals .....	424
Brazilian Spiritism, By Professor		Nature's Divinity .....	425
Alexander .....	419	Suggestion and Mesmerism .....	426
The Happiest People in the		Unheard, Unseen, Unknown .....	427
World .....	422	Stonehenge Spiritualism .....	428
A Re-appearance .....	423	Society Work .....	428

## SPECIAL NOTICE.

The Editor has left town for a few weeks, and he therefore asks his friends and correspondents to bear in mind that—while all communications intended to be printed will have due attention—he will be unable to reply to letters of a private or personal nature during the month of August.

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

A deeply thoughtful book is M. Guyau's 'Sketch of Morality Independent of Obligation or Sanction.' It is translated from the French by Gertrude Kapteyn, and published by Watts and Co. The title has a touch of the sinister about it, but the working out of the argument is beyond reproach; and certainly the subject suggested by the title is one of urgent gravity. It must be confessed, however, that the bias of the book is non-religious, in our ordinary sense of the word 'religious'; but perhaps its value is increased by that. We want to know the worst—what would be likely to happen if we had to bid farewell to belief in God and Immortality.

M. Guyau finds the source and sanction of duty in power, not in command: 'A certain impersonal duty is created by the very power to act.' But if that is to result in good, it supposes a moral discernment and choice behind the power, or sheer devilry might result; and M. Guyau is a moderate but steadfast optimist. With him also 'all things work together for good.'

But he has no one at the helm. His concluding paragraph is a sad one:—

We stand as if upon the deck of some great vessel, whose rudder had been torn away by a wave, and whose mast had been broken by the wind. It had been lost on the sea, as our planet was in space. It went on thus at random, driven on by the storm, like a great wreck carrying people; nevertheless, it arrived at its destination. Perhaps our planet, perhaps humanity, will also arrive at an unknown goal, which it will have created for itself. No hand directs us, no eye looks out for us. The rudder has long since been broken—or, rather, there never was one; it has to be made. This is a great task, and it is our task.

It is a curious illustration. The great vessel, whose rudder has been torn away, whose mast has been broken, and whose fate it is to be 'lost,' yet nevertheless arrives at its destination, could be no common ship; or someone with wondrous skill and power must be on board. So of this planet and the human race. Some call the pilot 'Evolution,' some 'Jehovah,' some 'The Father.' It will hurt no one to call it 'Nature' or 'Humanity.' But let us refrain from the monstrous verdict, 'No hand, no eye.'

Do we say enough about children?—how to treat them, how to discipline them, how to be just to them, how to lead them, how to love them? Looking over one of George Dawson's charming, because most human, addresses lately, we found this:—

The teaching of little children should be so surrounded, so curved, so lost in love, so made glorious with imagination, that the hidden commandment shall drop into the soul, and grow up into righteousness, and root itself finally into the severities and realities of life. You cannot act Moses well, so do not have a little Sinai in your house when teaching religion. When the little children were brought to Christ, the 'disciples would have driven them away, but he said, 'Suffer them to come unto me,' and he took them in his arms and blessed them. We do not take anything into our arms to scold it. I have never beheld a man or a woman take a child into their arms when they were going to scold it. No, they must stand at the foot of the mount. Threats, anger, wrath, Sinai, lightnings, the 'thou shalt's' of Moses, and other things of the olden time shall pass away from the Christian when he deals with children, when he thinks of his Master's words and gestures—'He took them up in his arms and blessed them,' and upon the debts of patience, the debts of gentleness, the debts of forbearance, due from a father to his child.

We are, unfortunately, well used to the quotation of Scripture for every sort of opinion, and regret to find that reincarnationists are adding to our museum of curiosities of quotation. 'Immortality' says:—

In a recent lecture by the Swami Abhayananda before the Adwaita congregation of Chicago, the following quotation from Paul's letters to the Romans (vii. 9-11) was made to affirm the doctrine of reincarnation: 'And I was alive apart from the law once, but, when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.' It was a rare stroke of genius, if not a gleam of illumination which made the Swami associate Paul with the school of reincarnationists. Such heresy was never before charged against him.

We should think not; and the Swami must be very hard up for a buttress if he really is trusting to this one. The quotation from Paul is perfectly clear. He is referring only to his past career as Saul. Before he truly knew the law, he was free from moral anxiety; but, when the law came in, the consciousness of sin was awakened, and, by sinning and knowing it, he became as one stricken dead. A sinner without light may be unconscious and unanxious; but a sinner against light is a suicide. But, truly, this argument from Paul's saying is on a par with the majority of arguments for reincarnation.

A very queer little book is Mary Platt Parmele's 'Ariel; or the Author's World: A metaphysical story' (New York: The Alliance Publishing Company). It turns upon the fancy that every creation of romance becomes a real creation in the Unseen, resulting in a world where Mr. Pendennis, Colonel Newcome, Frankenstein, Robert Elsmere, John Ward, Cassaubon, and probably a few million of other 'creations of genius,' have to live and make the best of it, as a community. As we say—a queer fancy.

'Mind' tells us that at the hearing of the proposed Medical Bill for Boston one of the interested old-school doctors said, 'It is impossible to cure disease in persons by



the laying-on of hands.' It may not be the duty of such a man to care for the declarations of his New Testament as for an authority, but he must admit that the hand-healer is in ancient and excellent company.

But what do these people mean by using this word 'impossible'? It is, half the time, an absurd word; and, in the mouth of a scientist, it is all the time ridiculous.

The flutter produced by the Rev. Forbes Phillips' sermon on a future life for animals is easy to understand. The 'indignant parishioner,' who wrote saying that he 'refused to share his hope of immortality with his dog and cat,' explains the whole matter. It is a case of British egotism, arrogance and masterfulness—not exactly heavenly characteristics! And it is these characteristics which account for so much in the full-blown evangelical programme which again indicates the Briton's refusal to share his heaven with heretics and heathen. We think the Briton has a good deal to learn.

Whether the village butcher's dog and cat will live beyond 'death' we do not know. It is a very open question. But we decidedly agree with Mr. Phillips when he says that he would rather meet in heaven some animals than some people he has met on earth.

A correspondent sends us this extract from 'Tit-Bits':—

HAUNTED HOUSES MADE HABITABLE.—EXORCISING  
EXTRAORDINARY.

In the canny North of England is a man who gets his living by the pursuit of a very peculiar profession. He styles himself an 'exorciser,' or 'curer of haunted houses.' He makes it his business to call on house and estate agents in various parts of the country, and inquire as to the houses of ghostly reputation they have upon their catalogues. Then, for an arranged fee, ranging from £1 to £5, according to the circumstances of the case, he undertakes to rid the premises of their visionary visitant, which function he invariably fulfils to the satisfaction of all concerned.

His methods are a mystery to all but himself, for he is engaged ejecting the phantoms from their favourite promenades. One of this gentleman's envious detractors avers that he has dealings with the powers of evil. All that is known of him in the locality where he resides is that his religious convictions are decidedly unorthodox, and that he is an enthusiastic patron of spiritualistic séances. Indeed, he will readily travel a score of miles to be present at one of these performances.

Fully aware of the stigma attaching to a haunted house, and its consequent depreciation in value, agents having such tenements upon their books are only too glad to secure the services of this extraordinary exorcist. Nearly every district in Great Britain has its haunted houses, so that business is usually brisk with this uncanny individual.

He has, however, been heard to remark that when all the historical ghosts in the kingdom are laid it will be comparatively easy to raise more by judicious converse with country folk, most of whom are incurably superstitious. He asserts that he has no fear of anything supernatural, and he will often spend successive nights alone in houses which most folk carefully avoid. At present this exorciser is earning at least £200 a year by his weird art. He says that he will confide his secret to his son, who will succeed him in his unique calling.

Our correspondent adds: 'May I ask what is the difference between this receipt of £200 a year and the fees for "fortune-telling"? Does the sixpence or shilling gained by the latter properly become more punishable in a law court than this? or does £200 a-year escape the law?' But the Bond-street 'palmist' is a better case for comparison.

To tell the truth, however, we think the 'Tit-Bits' story is a poor invention.

One writes in anxiety concerning a 'Saviour.' We are not moved to say much in reply, but we sympathise rather strongly with a late writer who made the following confession:—

I must say that a good deal of this talk about a 'Saviour' is apt to spring from want of trust and from fear. A child does not want 'saving' from its father or mother; why, then, should we want saving from our dear Father in

Heaven? No, *we want more childlike trust*; that is the main thing, and I find people are short of that, and so they worry about being saved. *Fear is at the bottom of it.* Trust God properly and fully, and you will be able to shut your eyes and smile yourself away to sleep.

Annie Hamilton Donnell has given to the world's little people two bright verses on some of their favourite little streets. They are as pretty as they are true:—

'To-morrow I'll do it,' says Bennie;  
'I will by and by,' says Seth;  
'Not now—pretty soon,' says Jennie;  
'In a minute,' says little Beth.

O dear little people, remember  
That, true as the stars in the sky,  
The little streets of 'To-morrow,'  
'Pretty-soon' and 'By-and-by,'  
Lead, one and all,  
As straight, they say,  
As the King's Highway,  
To the city of *Not at All*.

### A SALVATION THAT SAVES.

This, from the 'Faith and Hope Messenger,' deserves frequent pondering:—

Here is a mental treatment that is guaranteed to cure every ill that flesh is heir to:—

Sit for half an hour every night at nine o'clock and mentally forgive every one against whom you have any ill-will or antipathy. If you fear or are prejudiced against even an animal, mentally ask forgiveness of it and send it thoughts of love. If you have accused persons of injustice, or talked about them unkindly, or criticised them, or gossiped about them, withdraw your words by asking them in the silence to forgive you. If you have had a falling out with friends or relatives, are at law or engaged in contention with any one, write letters of forgiveness and withdraw all proceedings that will tend to prolong the separation. See everybody and everything as they really are, Pure Spirit, and send them your strongest thoughts of love. Do not go to bed any night feeling that you have an enemy in the world.

Be careful not to think a single thought or say a word that will offend. Be patient, loving and kind, under all circumstances. You can do this if you are faithful to the Silent Hour, because there you will be helped to overcome the selfishness of the carnal sense.

There is an immutable law lying back of this. God is Love, and love is manifest as life. God is thus manifest in and through all His creations, and if we do aught to cut off the love of any person we are cutting off the love of God, hence the life that flows through all. When we, by withdrawing from our fellows in any way, cut the cords of love that bind us together as men and women, we at the same time sever the arteries and veins through which the Universal Life flows. We then find ourselves mere bundles of strained nerves, trembling and shaking with fear and weakness, and finally dying for lack of God's love. But the omnipresent Spirit ever seeks to flow into and stimulate us in every faculty. We must, however, by our words and acts, acknowledge this all-powerful Presence as the moving factor, because we each have inherent free will which welcomes or rejects all things—God even not being excepted.

Self-condemnation is also a great error and leads to dire results. If you have accused yourself of ignorance, foolishness, fear, sickness, anxiety, poverty, anger, jealousy, stinginess, ambition or weakness, or if you are melancholy and indulge in the 'blues,' ask forgiveness for each, of the loving Father, in whose perfect image and likeness you spiritually are. Say often to this holy Omnipresence:

'I do now sacrifice these human limitations unto Thee, O Father. I am obedient unto the law of my being, and I know that in Thee I am brave and true, energetic and wise, pure and perfect, strong, rich and courageous. Thou art my almighty resource and I do trust Thee utterly!'

NEW YORK, U.S.A.—'LIGHT' may be obtained from Messrs Brentano, 31, Union-square.



# BRAZILIAN SPIRITISM, AND BRAZILIAN EVIDENCE FOR PSYCHIC PHENOMENA.

By PROFESSOR A. ALEXANDER, RIO DE JANEIRO.

*Written for the International Congress held in London, June  
18th to 24th, 1898.*

In a paper sent in 1893 to the Psychical Science Congress of Chicago a short account was given of the progress of Spiritism in Brazil. It was therein stated that about 1855 or 1856 some knowledge of the movement started by the Rochester knockings had already reached Rio de Janeiro, and that a few Brazilians of high social position had then begun to experiment among themselves. Their séances, however, seem to have been held in strict privacy and probably influenced only those who were privileged to attend them. The foundations of popular Spiritism were laid by other and bolder men. In Bahia a certain Dr. Telles de Menezes is said to have been an active missionary of the nascent cause, while, in the capital, a literary man of considerable merit, Dr. Mello Moraes, openly avowed his belief in the possibility of communication with a spiritual world. It was, perhaps, indirectly due to the attitude assumed by the latter that in the early seventies the first Spiritist societies of Rio sprang into existence. With organisation, the conversions to Kardecism became more and more numerous; a centre called 'The Federation' was created to meet the wants of inquirers and to give a uniform direction to the propaganda; at the same time newspapers advocating the new doctrines were published both in Bahia and Rio de Janeiro.

Since these earlier times, the movement has spread with ever increasing rapidity, and Spiritism is now planted in most of the principal towns of Brazil. From information kindly furnished by the secretary of 'The Federation,' it appears that there are throughout the Republic fifty-six public societies, besides which it is certain that both in the capital and the States many regular meetings for the purpose of séances are held by private individuals who are not directly in touch with the centre. It is roughly conjectured that the number of professing Brazilian Spiritists reaches ten thousand or eleven thousand. The recruits for this small but active army are principally drawn from the less educated classes; they are all, without exception, disciples of M. Rivaille, and their peculiar set of opinions is now adequately represented by nine periodicals, three of which are published in Rio de Janeiro. In varying degrees these papers treat of the religious and dogmatic aspect of their special subject; the critical spirit is conspicuous by its absence; there are too many cuttings from the 'Revue Spirite' and 'The Banner of Light,' and too little notice is taken of the cases that occur in our midst. The matter that fills their columns seems, however, to be that which is most acceptable to the generality of the readers.

Outside the regular frequenters of séances exists a yet wider circle of those who accept the main points of the spiritist teachings, but take no active interest in the movement of propaganda; and beyond these lies an outer zone of the curious—the *dilettanti*—whose ideas have been picked up in conversations with believing friends, in odd paragraphs of the daily papers, or in some casual book of spiritistic literature. Here may be included a group of educated Brazilians whose attention has been attracted to Parisian Occultism rather than to Spiritism. French theories find a ready acceptance in Brazil, while English and American developments remain almost unknown.

To gauge public opinion, the question, 'Do you believe in Spiritism?' was put to three hundred and thirty-six persons among public employés, professional men, journalists, teachers and others. The replies obtained fall under four headings, 'Yes,' 'No,' 'There is something in it,' and '?'. The note of interrogation admitted among the answers means that the individual who writes it has formed no opinion whatever on the subject. To avoid an undue proportion of the 'Yeses,' the rule

was established that no person whose manner of thinking was previously known to the inquirer should be allowed to reply. This rule, however, was not strictly observed in the case of the lists left in the hands of assistant collectors, so that the figures obtained must be considered as too favourable.

At first sight, indeed, the result of this census is surprising, the lists of signatures giving the following totals:—

'Yes.'	'Something in it.'	'?'	'No.'
111	96	61	68

If the first two answers be classed as affirmative, and the last two as negative, it will be found that the ratio of the former to the latter is in decimal numbers 1.60, which gives a proportion of one hundred and sixty Brazilians who believe in, or gravitate towards Spiritism, for one hundred who either ignore or deny it. But one of the lists, left at the National Printing Office, and not directly looked after by the chief collector, obtained fifty-three signatures from Government printers and engravers, the majority of whom, as the probable result of their contact with Kardecist propagandists during working hours, had become Spiritists, and were by no means representative of general opinion. Their answers must, therefore, be eliminated from the above totals. This deduction made, we have the figures:—

'Yes.'	'Something in it.'	'?'	'No.'
77	81	59	66

which gives a ratio of 1.26 for the affirmative answers. A further deduction of .06 may be safely allowed for any remaining undue preponderance of the 'Yeses,' which leaves us, in round numbers, one hundred and twenty against one hundred as the proportion of the middle class Brazilians of Rio de Janeiro who are favourably disposed towards the spiritist doctrine or interested in spiritistic phenomena.

The same deduction being made, the lists show that, for every one hundred of the negative, the affirmative replies are, among public employés, one hundred and twenty-eight; among professional men, one hundred and fifty-four; among journalists, eighty-three; and among other classes, one hundred and twenty-four. The ratio here obtained for professional men is based on an insufficient number of signatures, and is in all probability much too high.

With regard to the ages of the persons interrogated, it is found—the totals first gained being admitted—that of those under thirty-one, one hundred and ninety-seven against one hundred reply affirmatively; the favourably-disposed between thirty-one and fifty are one hundred and eighty-seven; and those of fifty-one and upwards one hundred and forty, against one hundred. It is perhaps, significant that the largest percentage of favourable replies would thus be presented by the young.

In the eyes of the Brazilian faithful, Allan Kardec is the real founder of Modern Spiritism. The philosophy of his books furnishes for them a complete and satisfactory explanation of the procedure of Providence and the evolution of the human soul. We return as actors upon the scene time after time, until earthly experience has been fulfilled and earthly defects have been eliminated. We are then allowed to pass to some more advanced planet, where another series of lives awaits us under better and happier conditions. And thus, from incarnation to incarnation and from world to world, we traverse the ages in our progress towards perfection. This dogma, it must be recollected, is the keynote of Kardecist Spiritism. The believer consoles himself under hardships and misfortunes with the persuasion that he is expiating forgotten sins and paying in kind debts contracted in some previous existence.

Although Brazilian Kardecism is very orthodox, it is deeply tinged by native characteristics and religious tendencies. Our South American Spiritists are more emotional than critical. In accepting the new doctrine, they do not always reject their own superstitions. The great majority of them were Roman Catholics before they were Spiritists, and thus it happens that saints are often supposed to act as their spiritual directors and to favour them with direct communications. At their meetings a gravely religious tone prevails—prayers are offered to the assembled spirits of the good; to the Virgin Mary; to the presiding spirit guide. Nevertheless the Kardecists assume towards the Church that fostered



them a decidedly militant attitude, which is sufficiently noticeable in their publications. This animosity may be partly attributable to the fact that here, as elsewhere, the priests condemn Spiritism as diabolical.\* If there are no pulpits in Brazilian séance-rooms, there are at least preachers; for at the meetings a great part of the time is consumed in the reading and exposition of chapters from such works as 'The Book of Spirits' and 'The Book of the Medium.' The phenomena which are afterwards induced are almost exclusively confined to trance utterances and automatic writing. Through these, encouragement, warning, or advice is received from the 'protector' of the circle, and then begins what is here called 'the work of charity'—'spirits' are brought by the 'guides' to be educated, to be told that they have already passed through death, and to be freed from the delusion that they are still among material surroundings. The personalities presented by the trance mediums may fall into ten or twelve characteristic types, which recur, with slight variations, time and time again. There is the materialist, who comes back with his stock arguments against the existence of the soul; there is the self-murderer, who is still suffering from the subjective agonies of a violent death. Sometimes the manifestation is that of a coarse or flippant personage who calls the sitters hard names, or indulges in street-boy witticisms; sometimes it is that of the vindictive obsessor, who expresses a desire to kill and carry off the medium. Occasionally the somnambule is supposed to be the mouth-piece of a priest or friar, whose knowledge of Latin seems to have been left behind with other worldly vanities. The saint, the apostle, Allan Kardec, the archangel Ishmael, who presides over the destinies of Brazil, leave their high spheres to paraphrase the familiar teachings of the Sacred Writ and to interpret them according to the doctrines of reincarnation and fluids.† It may be added that in conversing with these trance personages an inflated style of address is adopted; verbs and pronouns are used in the second person plural, the effect being similar to that which would be produced by the employment of 'ye' or 'thou' in English.

Most Kardecists who have the faculty of automatic writing use it occasionally to obtain diagnoses and prescriptions for the sick. Some of the more successful are in great request and may in the course of a year prescribe for thousands of patients. Their services are generally gratuitous. The name and years of the sufferer are given—nothing more—and, after a moment's trembling, away goes the pencil in

a general description of such maladies as are likely, in this climate and at the special season of the year, to affect persons of the sex and age given. The remedies recommended by the pencil are nearly always homœopathic, and, being concrete aids to faith, they are frequently very efficacious. Yet in fairness it must be said that there are many cases in healing mediumship which the explanation here suggested does not cover. This phase of Spiritism presents some remarkable facts. In the hands of the mediums people have been cured whose maladies baffled the skill of the doctors, and the automatic diagnoses sometimes exceed in their accuracy the possibilities of mere chance hits or of mere inferences unconsciously drawn by the automatist. By far the greater part of the conversions to Kardecism are due to Spiritist healers.

Mention must also be made of sittings which are held for the cure of obsessions. Manias, in the opinion of the Kardecist, are caused by adverse spiritual influences; and therefore the supposed obsessing spirits are evoked by the aid of a medium, arguments being employed to induce them to desist from their persecutions. Two or three cases of recovery are alleged to have coincided with such sittings. The animosity of the persecutor is always explained as the result of offences received from his victim in previous incarnations.

Besides homœopathic prescriptions, passes are sometimes employed by the supposed possessors of healing power, but only one man has attracted general attention by his success in the so-called magnetic treatment of diseases. The latter, Dr. Edward Silva, is a British subject from Gibraltar, and resides in the town of San Paulo. If the positive declarations of patients and eye-witnesses be of any worth, it must be conceded that, together with numerous failures, various extraordinary cures have coincided with his practice. In his rooms, the present writer saw a case in which in-growing eyelashes were made to take their normal direction. He heard the account given by a well-known business man of San Paulo, Mr. Craigh, who had long suffered from an affection of the bladder, the informant declaring that a large calculus was finally extracted—by passes! Señor Manfredo Meyer, a capitalist of that town, deposed to the fact that an old and malignant sore, to which he had applied the usual remedies in vain, was completely healed by the same apparently inadequate means. Under this treatment a large sebaceous cyst entirely disappeared from the face of a negress, who was photographed three times, the first portrait showing the original state of the patient, and the other two the progress and completion of the cure. So also an internal inguinal tumour from which an Italian woman had been suffering for some months, was, according to her own statement, displaced as soon as she had recourse to Dr. Edward Silva, and in a short time suppurated and healed at the surface. Cancer, leprosy, paralysis, cases of blindness, have, according to popular testimony, yielded occasionally to these magnetic passes. Even allowing for the exaggeration and misapprehension to which such evidence is prone, much remains that calls for serious investigation. It is not easy to determine what agency is operative in the processes of such men as Schlatter, Zouave Jacob, and Dr. Edward Silva. The suave, suggestive action of passes may be readily understood in cases of nervous disorder; but suggestion can hardly explain how passes and magnetised water can be efficient in diseases of the above nature. It is just possible that among the series of ether vibrations some may exist of teletherapeutic effect and that such vibrations may be generated by specially endowed organisms. However that may be, the coincidences of cure with the practices of mediums and popular healers will some day attract more careful attention from medical men. It is safe to predict that a not far distant future will witness a more official recognition of psychical therapeutics. There will be less experimentation with drugs, and perhaps more belief in the power of the living soul over the body that it inhabits.

Now Spiritists think that they are the holders of two very important truths, inasmuch as they believe that there is evidence for real, though imperfect, communication with a spiritual world, and that, as a corollary, they themselves are destined to survive the crisis of death. This being so, it is impossible to guard too jealously against the false concep-

\* From time to time references in 'LIGHT' show that even among the Protestants of an enlightened country the personal Devil is sometimes brought forward as the explanation of spiritistic phenomena. It may be an occasional rhetorical convenience to consider evil as an abstract entity, just as Milton personified Chaos; but it is absurd to lose sight of its essential nature and make a fetish of it. As an external reality, it is no more than the invasion of the higher planes of evolution by the lower. It stands far below personality, and tends to the latter's disintegration. In the undisturbed order of nature the inorganic must be subservient to the organic, the organic to the emotional and intellectual, and the latter to the spiritual. While every gain in onward progress is good in its degree, it may be hindered or invalidated by that which is inferior to it. As evolution is the product of constant efforts to subdue to higher use the conditions of environment, it may sometimes happen that in the struggle temporary victories are gained by insurgent forces. The many instances of such insubordination furnished by the lower realms of nature may here be passed over in silence. It is sufficient to recollect that, in the case of man, the animal instincts and passions, which are useful and necessary in their proper sphere, may break loose from control and enslave and stupefy the higher intellectual functions. So also the intelligence, while it remains excellent in itself, may rebel against spiritual guidance and be applied to ends that the conscience condemns as unlawful. It is when interference takes place on these higher planes that it wears that aspect of malevolence which the sectarian Christian attributes to his personal Devil.

† A circle of pious Spiritists in this city has printed in book form the result of a study of the first three Gospels. Over the names of John the Evangelist, Ishmael, Gabriel, Allan Kardec, Paul, Mary Magdalene, &c., long communications are published, which, putting aside the question of authorship, contain much that is acceptable from the religious point of view, but little, if anything, that is original. The style seems to be the same throughout the series, and it is characteristic of the poetic temperament and exegetic knowledge of the medium. 'Saint Paul' speaks of the four Gospels as if they had all been written in Hebrew, the inadequateness of which accounts for discrepancies in the sacred narrative. 'The Hebrew language,' he says, 'is a poor one, principally in what concerns the mechanism of speech. In its grammar we find that all the substantives are without a plural. There are few adjectives; there is a complete absence of comparatives and superlatives; verbs are without the necessary desinences for the various tenses; preterits and futures are without diversity of moods. How, then, can the thoughts of our Divine Master be rendered with all clearness with these weak elements?' It is hardly necessary to say that this description of the Hebrew language is not correct.



tions so easily introduced by their own subjectivity. The liability to error is great. Preconceived ideas are largely reflected in psychic phenomena. The manifestations of séances naturally adapt themselves to the manner of thinking of the frequenters, so that even genuine messages from beyond may become distorted in their reception. And it is not only the disciple of Allan Kardec that is illuded by his shadow in the astral mist; the Theosophist may ascribe his own subjective impressions to the workings of Mahatmas; the occultist may create his own larvæ and elementals, the superstitious person may externalise the fantastic entities of his own imagination; while the materialist, in the presence of similar phenomena, may discern nothing but the morbidity of the *sujets* whom he studies. It is easy to see how mistaken views, when once admitted, will receive confirmation in subsequent experience and will by and by harden into dogmatic form.

To avoid delusions arising from this source, more discrimination is needed than that which has hitherto been shown by Brazilian Spiritists. In most cases the automatism of mediumship would seem to be quite distinct from the information which it conveys. In itself it is no certain indication of the agency which is operative, but serves merely as the vehicle for bringing messages to the surface. The communications may, of course, proceed from the automatist's subliminal self, or through verbal or mental suggestion from the minds of other sitters, or, more rarely, telepathic impacts may be received from distant living persons. Nor is there reason to suppose that physical phenomena are an exception to this rule, for personal experience has furnished to the writer some slight proof that they also may occasionally reflect our own peculiarities and echo our own erroneous conjectures. Introspection tends to show that messages from external and disembodied agents are flashed as instantaneous wholes upon the sensitive brain, which then analyses them automatically into words, visual images, or motor effects. In this process, again, the danger exists that mental associations will be started that formed no part of the original communication. It is rational, therefore, at the present stage of our knowledge to refer to causes next at hand all those manifestations that do not contain intrinsic proof of external agency. Nevertheless, the generality of the Brazilian Kardecists accept the automatism as sufficient evidence of spirit control.

It has been seen that in our Rio sittings saints and apostles sometimes append their signatures to religious common-places clothed in poetic diction. Great names are accepted without question provided they sanction the doctrines that are held to be orthodox. The friendly critic, who is pained at the thought that simple faith should be misled by a delusion, welcomes any plausible excuse that is offered for these apparent aberrations of automatism. Some explanation of the appearance of great names in automatic writing is to be found in the instructive work published by Mrs. Sara A. Underwood. The clue therein furnished may serve us here. Let us suppose, therefore, that a person by attuning himself to higher moods of mind may in sympathy draw near to spiritual spheres where such moods prevail, and that, in virtue of some occult law, typical names may then be given, which, however, would be far from indicating an individual presence or an individual source of knowledge.

Another doubt that is raised in the study of Spiritism, not only in Brazil but in other countries, is likewise capable of receiving a similarly hypothetical solution. It is quite possible that, in spite of the absence of sufficient proofs of identity, some of the trance personages of our séances-rooms are genuine. But if the individualities presented are what they claim to be, how is it that they so often reappear still surrounded, after a lapse of months and years, by the subjective horrors of scenes that preceded or accompanied their death? Or, to give concrete examples of this phase of manifestation, how is it that two lads who were shot after the revolt were still found to be commanding cannon fire, or that a lady who was accidentally burnt to death still believed herself to be surrounded by the flames? In answering this question we must bear in mind that in the case of somnambules the memory of past events is sometimes so vivid as to be mistaken for present experience, and that there is a consequent tendency on their part to act and

speak in accordance with these revived impressions. Now, through Mrs. Piper, one of the most reliable mediums of the present time, it has been declared that spirits in communication with incarnate minds also fall into an abnormal state resembling that of the somnambule. It is, therefore, quite possible that in returning to planetary conditions, their earthly memories are recalled with a vividness that lends them the appearance of actuality.

In the majority of those who accept Spiritism, the character is modified for good. There are, of course, a few black sheep among the Kardecists; there are megalomaniacs and cranks; there are mediums who lead unspiritual lives and who suffer degradation in consequence; there are those who talk like evangelists at sittings, and who in the outside world act just like other people. But in general a higher sense of responsibility springs up with the conviction that there is a life beyond. Unselfishness in social relations, resignation under trouble, and compassion for the unfortunate, are the qualities more especially developed by the new belief. The Kardecist is mindful of the poor and often takes part in organisations for their relief. Thus in Nietheroy, on the eastern side of the Bay of Rio, a charitable society exists which, although it is not nominally under the auspices of Spiritism, owes its life and vigour to its Spiritist members. The *Associação Charitas*, as it is called, has been widely useful in a way that merits special mention. The funds are principally obtained from families who put into a money-box what remains over from their daily household expenses. Considerable sums are thus collected monthly, these being immediately applied to the succour of deserving cases. To widows and orphans, to the aged and infirm, to the shamefaced poor who are unaccustomed to beg, help is afforded in various ways and in such a manner as to make the recipients feel that there is nothing derogatory in accepting this assistance from friends. The names of those who have been relieved are kept secret, and, if they are pensioners, they figure on the books of the Association as numbers only. By the treasurer, Senhor Souza Lobo, the ordinarily accepted idea of charity is rejected with indignation. He maintains with Mr. Bellamy that every man has a right to live, and that, therefore, the liberality that patronises is both insolent and foolish. The fundamental law of the Association recommends 'that the practice of charity be in accordance with the teachings of Christ.'

Even outside the ranks of Spiritists, the influence of a renewed and rationalised belief in immortality is, perhaps, perceptible. The Catholic, who crosses himself at the bare mention of psychic phenomena, is driven by them to greater spirituality in the bosom of his own Church. Men of the world, who look upon popular Kardecism with contempt, are rendered uneasy by the evidence for survival after death that reaches them from more scientific quarters. The very materialists are beginning to realise that they are not on the side of the greatest enlightenment. The Positivism of Auguste Comte, which immediately after the proclamation of the Republic seemed to have substituted Roman Catholicism as the religion of the State, has within the last few years receded rapidly and is again dwindling down to the position of an insignificant sect. Although all the disorders through which Brazil has recently passed cannot be laid at its door, it is to be recorded that with its predominance has coincided the day of social dissolution, selfish ambition, civil strife, and vindictive cruelty. Brazil offers an object-lesson to the world—a lesson which will be complete when broader views of man's destiny bring with them a juster perception of his responsibilities.

(To be continued.)

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### THE HAPPIEST PEOPLE IN THE WORLD.

Perhaps we ought to say—The people who *ought* to be the happiest people in the world. That would then be unquestionably true of all good Spiritualists. Why should they be? Why should they not? They have every reason to be supremely happy. They have, indeed, 'the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.'

Where shall we begin? Take life's perspective. If Spiritualists understand their case, and live up to it, they suffer less from illusions and false estimates than others. We know that the world reverses this proposition, and asserts that we live in illusions. The poor foolish world never made a greater mistake. It is the world that suffers from illusions. Look at its mad race for money, its greedy grasping of so-called 'honours,' its feverish excitements over recognition, and the amazingly foolish whirl of fashionable society. Think of the eagerness for what it calls 'pleasure,' its inability to be left alone, its emphasis upon the ornaments, tinsel and gilt gingerbread of life. Its perspective is all wrong. It scrambles for the casket and neglects the jewel.

The instructed Spiritualist, at least, *knows* better. His perspective is right. The near things are known as near; the distant as distant. The small things are recognised as small; the great things as great. Amid the struggles, the harassments and the vexations of life, he knows that the main thing is the self, not what is attributed to the self, nor what the world says of the self or does to the self. It is the Spiritualist who has the best reason for knowing that 'the things which are seen are temporal,' while 'the things that are not seen are eternal.' Is not that like 'the shelter of a great rock in a weary land'?

Because of this, and in addition to it, the wise Spiritualist has the key to many of the sorrows and defects of life—ay! to many of its sins. He knows that the spirit is on pilgrimage, and that many of our seeming miseries are incident to the march on, and inseparable from it, just as the cross of Christ was inseparable from the Christ. He knows that even sin is mainly defect, deficiency, discipline—that the sinner is only working out his salvation. He has here all that seems and is so impressive in Theosophy—and more. He knows that there is no escape from character, no dodging of conduct, no avoiding the pay-days of Fate. But he knows that all this is as it should be, and

that there is nothing arbitrary in it. He sees quite clearly that Fate means Unfolding, and that 'all things are working together for good.' He knows that there is no chance, and that there will be no accidents. He understands that the hells are, when necessary, avenues or seas that can lead to the heavens.

Hence, the Spiritualist is the clearest, the happiest, the most far-reaching Evolutionist: and, for him, Evolution offers infinite possibilities and hopes. For him, God, who is 'Spirit,' is within, behind and above Evolution. In fact, for the Spiritualist, Evolution reveals God and God's method, while the Materialist is always in danger of letting Evolution oust God. Hence it is the Spiritualist who not only believes in but sees the reason for confiding in the boundless and unending hope. The Spiritualist has a perfect answer to the old-world theologian with his gospel of cruelty on the part of God, and despair on the part of man. The old theologian sang:—

May not the sovereign Lord on high  
Dispense His favours as He will:—  
Choose some to live, while others die,  
And yet be just and gracious still?

The Spiritualist, with the help of Evolution, can see the utter hollowness and falsity of that. He understands the old legend of St. Theresa's dream, in which she saw a woman carrying a flaming torch in one hand and a pitecher filled with water in the other. Theresa, wondering at the woman, asked her whither she went with these things. The woman said, 'I go to burn up Heaven and to quench Hell, that men may learn to love God for Himself alone.' That woman is Spiritualism: and the meaning of it is that God and His blessed and eternal laws have to be trusted, without wretched fear on the one hand, and mean bargaining on the other.

So then, with us, the last word everywhere is Hope, and Hope based on Law, Harmony, Wisdom, Onwardness. Beyond all the clashings and surgings of life, we see order, not discord; intention, not accident; good, not evil; love, not callousness; life, not death. Ought we not to be the happiest people in the world?

That brings us to a consideration which, by itself, might suffice. When people ask: 'But what, then, is the use of Spiritualism?' we never cease to wonder at the obvious foolishness of the question. We can quite understand people doubting about the evidence, and being unconvinced about the validity of the Spiritualist's case, but we do not at all understand the question: 'And what of it, if it is true?' Is it not manifest that, if true, it demonstrates life beyond the veil? It may not demonstrate the continued existence of particular persons beyond the veil: but, if true, it proves the existence there of living beings with intelligence and with very curious capacities for acting upon matter: and surely it is something of very great consequence indeed to get *that* proved: for if there are living and intelligent beings at all in the Unseen, and near us, we are at least half way to proving that the so-called 'dead' have persisted beyond the unrobing of the body, and that what these spirit people say of themselves may possibly be true. It is not only, as we have said, foolish, it is monstrous, in the presence of this consideration, to ask: 'And what is the use of Spiritualism?' Why, if it did nothing more than lay down one telegraphic or telephonic wire between the unseen and the seen, whoever they may be at the other end, it would be the consummate achievement of all the ages, and might be the bestower of a greater consolation and help than ever emanated from all the creeds that were ever preached or penned.

It is the Spiritualist who can say consciously, what the dying Stonewall Jackson said in delirium: 'Let us cross the river, and rest under the shade of the trees.'



## A REAPPEARANCE.

We have received the following from an old correspondent:—

In the summer of 1890 there was published in 'LIGHT' the following message, which was automatically written by a young lady, a relative of mine, who is clairvoyant, and who is occasionally controlled to write messages automatically, purporting to come from people who have gone to the other side. The message was as follows:—

'Grace Wilson married George Cashel, Esquire, Ireland, died 1835.

Jane Wilson died unmarried, 1835.

Margaret Wilson married John Ferrier, Esq., W.S., Edinburgh, died 1831.

John Wilson married Miss Jane Penny, died 1854.

Andrew Wilson married Miss Aitken, died 1812.

Elizabeth Wilson married Sir John McNeill, G.C.B.

All relatives to me, John Wilson, late Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh. I liked Mrs. Gordon, who erected a monument in memory of me. Will you care to write, when I will come back again?

Mrs. Gordon was my daughter.'

The young lady medium in question brought the message to me, and inquired if I knew anything of this person (John Wilson) who appeared to be the writer of it, and I replied in the affirmative, at the same time informing her I would endeavour to verify the details and dates given. I had partly succeeded in doing so, after great labour and research, when it occurred to me that the 'Mrs. Gordon' here referred to had written a life of her father, who was better known by his literary cognomen of 'Christopher North,' a leading contributor to 'Blackwood's Magazine,' and one of the most notable of the brilliant galaxy of young Scottish Tory litterateurs of the earlier part of this century. This volume had been published in 1860, and had been read by me, with great interest, about 1861, shortly after it came out; but its very existence had long passed from my memory until I read the message in question. After a good deal of trouble and inquiry, I was able to 'unearth' a copy of it in a library with which a friend of mine has been connected, as a subscriber, for many years, and who procured for me the two volumes for perusal. What was my surprise to find in Chapter I. of the first volume, at p. 3, the following footnote relative to the Wilson family of six sons and four daughters, including Professor Wilson himself (number four of the list):—

1. Grace Wilson married George Cashel, Esq., Ireland, died 1835.

2. Jane Wilson died unmarried 1835.

3. Margaret Wilson married John Ferrier, Esq., W.S., Edinburgh, died 1831.

4. John Wilson married Miss Jane Penny, died 1854.

5. Andrew Wilson married Miss Aitken, Glasgow, died 1812.

6. Henrietta Wilson died young.

7. William Wilson died in infancy.

8. Robert Sym Wilson married Miss Eliza Penny.

9. Elizabeth Wilson married Sir John McNeill, G.C.B.

10. James Wilson married Miss Isabella Keith, Edinburgh, died 1856.

It will be observed that the automatically written message omits four names of the Wilson family contained in the footnote in Mrs. Gordon's *Life of Wilson*, viz., '(6) Henrietta died young, (7) William Wilson died in infancy, (8) Robert Sym Wilson married Miss Eliza Penny, and (10) James Wilson married Miss Isabella Keith, Edinburgh,' so that in the spirit message the family tree was, to that extent, incomplete. As regards the other portion of this message, a perusal of the biography and other inquiries proved the following parts of it to be correct: 1. Professor Wilson died in 1854. 2. He married Miss Jane Penny, of Liverpool, in 1810, and she pre-deceased him in 1841. 3. Professor Wilson was interred in the Dean Cemetery, Edinburgh. 4. His daughter, Mrs. Gordon, was wife of the Sheriff of Midlothian, and wrote his biography. She was his favourite daughter, and there seemed little doubt that she erected the monument to his memory in the Dean Cemetery, Edinburgh, which, however, only gives

name, profession, and date of his birth and death. The spirit message was, therefore, most singularly verified. At the time the message was automatically written in 1890, I inquired of my young lady medium if she ever heard of Professor Wilson, and her reply was emphatically in the negative, which is not to be wondered at, as she was not born till very many years after his demise. I showed her the Professor's portrait in the front of Vol. I.; but she informed me she had never seen any person like him. The handwriting of the message bore no resemblance to that of Professor Wilson, which was reproduced in the form of his signature below the portrait in question.

No further message, written or verbal, came from this source (the Professor) through the medium, or to myself, at any of the numerous sances I have attended with her and many other mediums during the intervening years; and the name of Professor Wilson, or 'Christopher North,' had almost passed from our recollection, when, after the lapse of eight years, a very curious incident occurred to the medium. About the beginning of August, when living in Edinburgh, and just before paying a visit to the English Lake district, where her relatives had taken a house for August and September, she tells me she was walking in one of the main thoroughfares of the new town doing some shopping. All of a sudden an elderly-looking man of commanding appearance came by her side, whom she at once, she said, recognised as a denizen of the other sphere. He addressed her, and asked her to come with him into an adjoining street, as he wished to show her something. She reluctantly complied with his request, and going into a short and select-looking street adjoining, which she observed was called Gloucester-place, he pointed to a house on the north side thereof, and said, 'This is where I lived.' On going closer to the building she observed a small stone medallion bearing the following inscription, of which a copy has been furnished to me:—

'In this house  
CHRISTOPHER NORTH LIVED,  
1826—1854.'

Her ghostly visitor then said: 'That inscription relates to me. I am Christopher North.' The young lady, when I next saw her, related this incident to me, and put to me the pertinent question, 'Who was Christopher North? Did you ever hear of such a person?' As she appeared in utter ignorance of the life history or existence of Professor Wilson, and had apparently quite forgotten the message written by him through her eight years ago, I had to recall the incidents of that date to her recollection, and to explain that 'Christopher North' was Professor Wilson's literary *nom de plume*, both as a contributor to 'Blackwood' and also as one of the 'leading lights' of that brilliant period of Scottish literary activity. The medium also informed me that this ghostly 'visitor' said to her he was sorry she was going to the Keswick section of the Lakes, and that she should have persuaded her friends to have gone to Windermere, where he (Wilson) had often lived and had a house near the Lake. On procuring a copy of that well-known book, 'Jenkinson's Guide to the English Lakes,' I find it contains at p. 2 the following note: 'Elleray, formerly the residence of Professor Wilson (Christopher North), is a few hundred yards from the station. The old house has been pulled down and replaced by a more modern structure,' so that the statement made to the young lady by her visitor 'from the other side' was perfectly correct. Nothing else passed (she informed me) and the visitor disappeared almost as suddenly as he came.

Now this is a remarkable, and I might almost say an incredible, story of 'reappearance,' after a period of eight years from the date of the first message. And yet in my mind no doubt exists that the story told to me is true. The only point wanting to complete the chain of identity is that the lady has not yet identified the portrait of the Professor. She is now resident in Lancashire; but as I expect to meet with her in the course of the autumn, it will be my endeavour to procure the volume which was shown to her in July, 1890, and which, as has been mentioned, contains his portrait. Should this test be successful, and should she be able to recognise it under proper conditions, it will, in my judgment, make the chain of evidence complete. Meantime, and pending this final test, the narrative now sent appears



to afford another proof of the reality of clairvoyance, automatic writing, and spirit return.

The suggestion may be made that the young medium copied the first message from Mrs. Gordon's Life, but to me that is simply impossible of belief, as the book was written many years before she was born, and, besides, she is absolutely truthful and reliable. But, to put it even on a lower ground, I say, if she had (for no conceivable purpose) copied the foot-note in Vol. I., she would surely not have omitted four names and added facts of which she was certainly quite unaware. As for the 'reappearance' occurring some weeks ago, how can one explain it save, perhaps, on the theory that she, being in Edinburgh, where Wilson died, and also on her way to the Lake district, where he had a house, the late Professor was afforded another opportunity of coming 'athwart her inner vision,' and thus giving two more proofs of his identity, viz., the inscription on his former dwelling-place in the Scottish metropolis, and also a reference to his country residence in the part of the district to which she was bound. Of course, this is all theory and not good evidence, but in my judgment there are some grounds for holding that this may have been the inducing cause of this reappearance of the Professor.

In the event of the portrait being identified or the reverse at a later stage, all the facts will be duly forwarded to the Editor of 'LIGHT' for publication.

#### TOYS.

We have occasionally seen the following touching little poem in print, but we doubt whether it is known as well as it ought to be. As a work of art it is perfect. Its broken and halting lines convey the right feeling as well as the right thought: and yet, in reading it, it is well-nigh impossible to think of it as a work of art: we think only of the father's memories, and sorrow, and salvation. It is signed, M. P. L.

#### THE TOYS.

My little son, who looked from thoughtful eyes,  
And moved and spoke in quiet, grown-up wise,  
Having my law the seventh time disobeyed,  
I struck him, and dismissed,  
With hard words and unkind,—  
His mother, who was patient, being dead.  
Then, fearing lest his grief should hinder sleep,  
I visited his bed;  
But found him slumbering deep,  
With darkened eyelids, and their lashes yet  
From his late sobbing wet.  
And I, with moan,  
Kissing away his tears, left others of my own;  
For, on a table drawn beside his head,  
He had put, within his reach,  
A box of counters and a red-veined stone,  
A piece of glass, abraded by the beach,  
And six or seven shells,  
A bottle with blue-bells,  
And two French copper coins, ranged there with careful art,  
To comfort his sad heart.  
So, when that night I prayed  
To God, I wept and said:  
Ah! when at last we lie with tranced breath,  
Not vexing Thee in death,  
And Thou rememberest of what toys  
We made our joys,  
How weakly understood  
Thy great commanded good,  
Then, fatherly, not less  
Than I whom Thou hast moulded from the clay,  
Thou'lt leave thy wrath, and say:  
'I will be sorry for their childishness.'

#### COLONEL INGERSOLL ON THE DISMALS.

There is altogether too much gloom about most sick chambers. People tiptoe in and about, and wear long faces, and act generally in a way that would make even a well man sick, and is bound to make a sick man worse. I believe many a man has been hurried across the dark river by this horrible, soul-depressing treatment who might have become well and strong and useful, if he had had more sunshine and fresh air in his room, or the odour of flowers to offset the smell of the drugs, and smiling, hopeful countenances about, instead of woe-begone visages, whose every glance betokens the loss of hope, and the belief in the speedy dissolution of the pain-racked patient.

I had a friend once, named Haley, a royal good fellow, of whom I thought a great deal. On one occasion I received word that my old friend was dying, and wanted to see me, so I went over to his house. I met his wife, and she had a face as long as the moral law, and ten times more uncomfortable. Well, I went in to see Haley, and there he lay, counting the moments, in a bitter fear that each would be the last. I don't know what particular disease he was troubled with, but either that or the medicine had turned him a vivid saffron colour. 'Haley,' I said, 'I'll be hanged if I want to die with such a complexion as that. You would be in a pretty plight to go mooning about the other world looking like a Chinaman.' I went on for a few minutes, when the poor fellow began to enter into the spirit of the subject himself, and I showed him his face in a looking-glass, and that brought a smile. Then I turned to his weeping wife, and told her to cheer up, that Haley was not going to die; that he was good for twenty years to come.

'The trouble with your husband is that he is scared to death,' I said. 'You all come in looking so downcast and sorrowful that you give him the impression that he is done for, and take away all his courage to fight against his sickness.'

Well, the result of all this was that Haley commenced to mend, and time and again since then he has said that my visit saved his life.

On another occasion there was a major in the army whom I knew very well. He was taken ill, and believed he was going to die. I believed he was simply homesick, or something of that sort. Well, I wrote his obituary, and went to see him in his tent.

'Major,' said I, 'you are so sure of dying that I have written your obituary, and want to read it to you.' He protested, but I went on with the reading, and detailed every pleasant incident of his life. Before I finished, a smile flitted across his face. After the obituary, I read him a story of something supposed to have taken place a year after his funeral. It was a description of his widow's second marriage. There were a good many more people at the wedding than there were at the funeral. Well, this treatment had the effect to change the current of the major's thoughts. It broke up his hallucinations, and he recovered, and did good service during the war, and lived a happy life for years after.

Then there was a man from our town named Marcy. He got it into his head that he was going to die. At that time no one was allowed to leave the army for a visit to the North, except on sick leave, or occasionally to accompany the remains of a dead comrade. I saw Marcy, and said to him: 'Now, Marcy, you say you are going to die. If that is so, I don't suppose a few days one way or the other will make much difference to you. I want to go home for a day or two about the 15th, but cannot get a leave of absence. Now, if you want to do me a very great favour, and will quit this life, say on the 12th, I can get my coveted leave of absence to take you home—see!' But I knew my man, and he didn't die. He got very angry instead, and recovered, but he declares to this day that it was my proposition that brought him back his old stubbornness, and gave him grit to fight for his life. He always did object to being made a mere convenience of.

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The Subscription to 'LIGHT' is 10s. 10d. per annum, post free to any part of the world.

'SPIRIT TEACHINGS.'—We invite the attention of our readers to the new edition of 'Spirit Teachings,' through the late Wm. Stainton Moses, M.A. (Oxon.), just published by the London Spiritualist Alliance, and announced in our advertising columns. It is issued at a cheaper price than any previous edition, namely, 3s. 6d. net (postage 4d. extra). After a time, as the stock decreases, the price will probably be raised.



## NATURE'S DIVINITY.

There is hardly a theologian in the world, and probably there is not one actual infidel, who can be found to acquiesce in the sublime doctrine of the Divinity of Nature. My friend, the late J. E. Smith, author of 'The Divine Drama of History and Civilisation,' would have accounted for this fact by his peculiar conviction that both those who are called 'infidels' and those who call themselves 'believers' are *alike* infidels. 'God has included them *all* in unbelief,' and He will have mercy upon all.

The belief in an Imperial Satan is the great obstacle to the reception of the belief in the universality of God's Providence. The mere Deism in vogue with a certain class of thinkers, being purely negative, melts away before the Divine truth that God pervades the universe. Shallow men, and clever men, too, of a conventional order of mind, are not disposed to listen to any innovation in the realm of thought. Charles Spurgeon and Thomas Paine (by no means profane thinkers, and apparently so far apart) would both have protested against Nature's divinity.

The atheist *ought* to be reverential in his views of Nature, —as he holds it has no author, and must, therefore, be infinite and eternal; but he is not. The vulgar Pantheist, too, who resolutely ignores the spiritual life of things, is just as much in the dark as Deist, atheist, sceptic.

The spiritual Pantheist and Universalist recognises God, not as a mere abstraction, but as an actual agent, in all good and evil. He can see the segment of truth in atheism, that there is no author of Nature. God and Nature are one; 'Nature's vast frame' being the body of God; therefore eternal.

If man possesses 'a natural and a spiritual body,' the analogy is so obvious that it is a wonder how a rational mind can reject it. Nature could not be created in the sense that something could come of nothing. But, on the other hand, how could anything come out of stupidity and the *vis inertia*?

That is the position of atheism; that unconscious matter is the origin of all things. I call that gross superstition. Materialism makes a farce of philosophy, as superstition makes a tragedy of religion. Atheism, to be logical, *must* be materialistic; and every Spiritualist must be a believer.

'But how can Nature really be divine?' asks the atheist; and he merely echoes the religionist. 'Look at the brutal creatures—the serpents and the tigers, the crocodiles and other vile reptiles, to say nothing of human cannibals and wretches abounding on the face of the globe? Look at theft, poverty, madness, disease! There can't be Providence in these things. Therefore, no God!'

The Deist says: 'Oh, God leaves Nature to itself. Evil is trivial. God could not concern Himself with our petty troubles. That is how we must account for the evils that we perceive. Therefore, in plain words, we must ascribe evil to the infinite stupidity of Nature, to the icy indifference of its author, or to a Devil who tries to defeat God.' The universal sceptic may very logically plead in such phrase.

I don't see the necessity for accepting any of these views of Deity. Nero and Caligula were necessary in the scheme of things, as tigers and mosquitoes, sharks and locusts are necessary. Get rid of the infernal creed that any being in the universe is doomed to everlasting misery, and we may recognise the doctrine of Calvin, that God predestines all things; for predestination is a truth inevitable.

'There can be no doubt,' says 'The Shepherd,' 'that Nature has some great and benevolent ends in view with crimes as well as with arts and sciences.' But shall we say that Nature is divine when a brain is organised for great crimes? Shall we say that a demon like Iago or Richard III.—as drawn by the master hand of Shakespeare—is also of Divinity? No one denies the genius of the great poet in these creations, and almost every man denies that God caused Richard's iniquity. Indeed, the atheist points to a fact such as murder and exclaims: 'You can never make me believe that a God looks on and allows it.' Why not? Christ was murdered. Christ was sent into the world to be crucified—according to religionists—and Disraeli once justified the Jews for their atrocious injustice, because (is

not this cynical scepticism?) he averred that the world would otherwise have been lost! Of course, the predestinarian must consider that God, not man, was the author of the Atonement.

For all that, the Jews, when they sent Christ to death, 'cast a pearl away richer than all his tribe':—a wise and a just being, gentle, generous, and with a miraculous spiritual perception of truth.

Nature—or, in other words, divine, conscious intelligence—is in the earthquake and in the pestilence. Nature is in every revolution. Otherwise, how is it that good is evolved from evil? Otherwise, how is it that there never was a convulsion of society but is now working beneficial results for the world? Take divinity from Nature, and you must rob the soul of Providence and of hope.

'God may exist apart from Nature,' it is rejoined. A mere quibble! There are those who tell you a stone or a table is Nature. So they might call a corn on a man's toe humanity. The universal humanity—whereof we may call Christ a representative—is God's 'beloved son.' Humanity grows in wisdom and in stature, as Christ also grew. That is the highest spiritual truth.

But evil must impede the progress of mankind. Man believes in devils and worships stocks and stones. Free-thought is raised up by God to counteract the influence of all these wretched superstitions. But freethought itself is not ordained for ever. Freethinkers have yet much to learn. They will not at present admit the mission of all religions, and thank God for Mohammed as for Spinoza.

Nature's divinity is recognised by a few devout thinkers, and perhaps unconsciously others who have not arrived at the goal of thought. When Coleridge said that all theology must depend on mastering the term 'Nature,' he prepared the way for such a work as 'The Divine Drama of History and Civilisation.' The Pantheist and Universalist who wrote it is in his grave; but, in the time to come, his memory will rise as from the dust; for he, afar off, in his calm and profound faith, could hear the voice and 'the march of the ages.'

Onward they press, in their embattled majesty, led by the unseen Captain of all. A great divine Hand led the man Jesus Christ to death; and that man is the pioneer of the Church of the Future; 'not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!' I once heard Dr. Martineau, that scholar and thinker, observe to a German philosopher, 'Christianity is the root of democracy.' Perhaps Judaism was the root, and Christianity is the trunk, of Universality. R.B.

## TELEPATHY OR SPIRIT-COMMUNION?

'The Daily Mail' prints prominently the following, from its 'Own Correspondent,' dated Rome, August 18th:—

I can vouch for the truth of the following interesting case of clairvoyance: On August 12th a young man named Livio Cibrario, belonging to one of the most ancient families of Turin, while attempting to climb the peak of Rocciamelone, in the Maritime Alps, lost his way, and on the following morning a search party found his body, terribly crushed and bruised, at the bottom of a deep crevasse.

Count Cibrario, the unfortunate young man's father, who was at Turin, and knew nothing of his son's expedition to the Rocciamelone, on the night of the accident, aroused the rest of the family, announcing with tears that Livio was dead. He had seen him distinctly, he said, blood flowing from his battered head, and had heard these words spoken in a voice of terrible anguish:—

'Father, I slipped down a precipice and broke my head, and I am dead, quite dead.'

The other members of the family tried in vain to persuade the poor Count that the ghastly vision was nothing but a nightmare, and the bereaved father continued in a state of anxiety bordering upon distraction, till the morning, when the official confirmation of the terrible accident reached him.

This case of telepathy, or whatever name may be given to similar phenomena, is considered all the more remarkable, as Count Cibrario is a very quiet, matter-of-fact person, and has never suffered from disorders of the nervous system or dabbled in Spiritism.



## SUGGESTION AND MESMERISM.

BY PROFESSOR BOIRAC.

(From the 'Revue de Psychologie.')

Mesmer attributed the phenomena he produced to the influence of the magnetic fluid drawn from the universal agent. The official commission appointed to investigate his pretensions preferred to refer them to the effect of his subject's imagination, temporarily excited and directed by the operator. Braid subsequently explained them as being produced by nervous and cerebral fatigue due to excessive tension, entailing an artificial sleep state accompanied by hallucination. Charcot affirmed that this hypnotic state could only be produced in neuropathic or hysterical subjects. This view has, however, become more or less effaced by those of the Nancy school, who, under Bernheim, have now gone the length of teaching that all such phenomena are caused by suggestion; that there is no hypnotism, there is only suggestion.

The question now resolves itself into whether these phenomena are due to suggestibility, to a subjective quality of the mind varying in degree in different subjects, or whether they are due to an objective radiation emanating from the operator and inducing an effect on the subject's nervous system analogous to that induced by a magnet on iron.

I agree with Durand de Gros, says M. Boirac, that suggestion and mesmerism are two distinct, independent agents which may replace and counterfeit each other or supplement and combine together. We may have suggestion without mesmerism or mesmerism without suggestion; a pseudo-mesmerism may also occur which really is only suggestion, and a pseudo-suggestion which is really only mesmerism; while a suggestive mesmerism or mesmeric suggestion may also be effected in which the two are indivisibly combined.

Professor Boirac gives some interesting illustrations of pseudo-magnetism effected by suggestion, in which the hand of a subject was attracted; made to rise and fall by visual suggestion, effected by the movements of the operator's hand, apart from any verbal command. Similar suggestion ceased to produce any effect after the subject had been ordered to close his eyes.

Experiments in locally induced action, made on a carefully blindfolded subject who was not thrown asleep, are then described as illustrating magnetic action in opposition with the effects of suggestion. The subject was told that action would be exerted on his right hand. The operator, however, proceeded to influence the subject's knee instead. After a few minutes the subject exclaimed that he felt nothing in his hand but did feel a tingling sensation in his knee.

The subject was then thrown into a superficial sleep, in order that suggestions might take effect, and told that his right hand would be attracted upwards. Instead of doing so, however, the operator acted magnetically on the subject's left hand, which was attracted upwards. The subject's right hand was nevertheless also raised, by the effect of the suggestion made, thus illustrating simultaneously the effects both of suggestion and of magnetism in the same subject.

The subject, still in the secondary state and blindfolded, was then told that in order to concentrate the action on one side of his body, the other would be rendered inert and insensible. Anæsthesia and paralysis duly followed this suggestion. Movements of the free side of the body were then induced by suggestion. Yet, on approaching the operator's hand towards the paralysed and insensibilised knee and foot, attraction of these was effected, in spite of the induced effects of the contrary suggestion.

These experiments demonstrate that not only may magnetism induce effects independently of suggestion, it may even contravene and annul the effects of suggestion.

Further, if suggestion can counterfeit the effects of mesmerism, so also may mesmerism mimic those of suggestion. While Nancy affirms that the old magnetisers suggested unconsciously, it may be replied, with equal fairness, that the Nancy school often apply magnetism unconsciously by using passes and contact of the hand in supplementation of suggestion. Indeed, the great inequality in the effects of suggestion, as obtained by different opera-

tors, implies that some of them, unconsciously to themselves, possess exceptional magnetic power.

That magnetic power varies in its intensity in different operators is well known. This fact distinctly appeared in the following experiments, which were made on a blindfolded subject and in absolute silence.

Ten assistants were instructed to successively perform the same experiments as M. Boirac, in the production of local insensibility, contracture, attraction, &c., by the presentation of the hand, without contact, to different parts of the subject's body. Some of these experimenters produced similar effects as M. Boirac, varying in time required, in intensity, &c. Others failed to produce any effect whatever. But when one of the successful operators took hold of the hand of one of the unsuccessful experimenters, and the latter then presented his other hand at the subject, complete phenomena followed. This effect ceased when the successful operator let go the hand of the unsuccessful one, thus demonstrating that the energy was transmitted from the first, through the second, to the subject.\*

The above experiments show that these two agents, suggestion and magnetism, which at first sight appear dissimilar in kind, may replace and also condition each other. We may therefore infer that the action of suggestion consists in a peculiar transformation of magnetism, a spontaneous or provoked auto-magnetism. We may suppose that the same agent which animates our nerves and constitutes the process of our sensor-motor system, may, when exteriorised beyond this, become the vehicle and instrument of the magnetic influence which one individual exerts upon another. Consequently the action by which my brain moves my arm is really identical with the action by which it moves another person's arm.

Suggestion, as taught by the Nancy school, is but a particular form of action of the brain and nervous system on the organism, and does not differ essentially from magnetism, consequently.

It may be hoped that the unity underlying the three processes of Braidism, suggestion, and animal magnetism may come to be discovered, as similarly we are tending to recognise the unity of nature underlying the phenomena of heat, light and electricity. The condition common to all these phenomena consists apparently in a sort of plasticity (negative responsiveness) of the nervous force, which thereby is able to submissively accept all the impressions coming either from within, as in auto-suggestion, or from without, as in suggestion, mesmerism, and telepathy, or mental suggestion. Q.V.

## SERVICE.

Lord, we would love Thee with the feet that run  
For others, and the hands stretched out to save;  
And with the faith that overcomes the grave,  
Still simply praying that 'Thy will be done,'  
And waiting as the seed awaits the sun,  
Till Thou shalt send the life and warmth we crave  
Upon our labours, daring to be brave  
In light and darkness, which to Thee are one.  
Thy strength is in our weakness perfect made,  
And Thou canst speak in us, though we be dumb.  
Beneath Thy shadow we are not afraid;  
Though hourly seeing what a little sum  
Is our endeavour, Thou wilt not upbraid  
Our poor day service till 'Thy kingdom come.'

BENJAMIN GEORGE AMBLEE.

THERE must be something beyond man in this world. Even on attaining to his highest possibilities, he is like a bird beating against his cage. There is something beyond, O deathless soul, like a sea-shell moaning for the bosom of the ocean to which you belong!—CHAPIN.

\* If the unsuccessful experimenter retains contact with the successful operator for some time, the energy accumulates in him; he becomes charged, so to say, and can accomplish phenomena of himself for a short time, when the energy becomes exhausted and he has to be recharged again. This analogy with the processes of electricity is striking, as is also illustrated in the fact that it can be transmitted from an operator, through an assistant, to a subject. M. Boirac has elsewhere illustrated that it can be transmitted from a distance through a copper wire, inducing action on the subject.



### THE UNHEARD, THE UNSEEN, THE UNKNOWN.

Looking over certain stores of choice papers, lately, we came across the following delightful study by 'E.A.' Unfortunately, there is no record of its original publication; but we believe it appeared in 'The Inquirer.' We feel impelled to give it a chance of longer life:—

Salis, the German poet, speaks of Heaven as the 'Silent Land'—and there is exceeding beauty and comfort in that conception—a place where there is no hubbub, nor screaming, nor rant, nor empty declamation, nor stupid laughter among audiences listening to malignant satire or bad wit; no 'hear, hear,' no 'loud cheers.' Most devoutly do we hope that, so far as relates to the absence of these noises, the future world is and ever will be a very 'Silent Land.' But as regards the finer utterances—the deep, sweet, pure, spiritual tones of life—it is exceedingly probable that Heaven will be by no means a silent land. As in the imagination of the devout and faithful there is the expectation of a beauty such as 'eye hath not seen,' so also is there the kindred probability of a harmony such as 'ear hath not heard.' Mere worldlings, steeped in materialism, buried in flesh, whose 'muddy vesture of decay' has imparted something of a muddy vesture also to their thoughts and fancies, may deride such activities of the imagination as mere idle dreaming; but even from their own platform of life, from the physical facts of Nature, there are many suggestions to be learned which strengthen the faith of the imaginative and hopeful. In the science of sound it is indubitably true that there are and obviously must be many vibrations which are not heard, but which, nevertheless, have a real existence, and might be heard under different conditions of atmosphere or other medium, or by listening organisms sufficiently sensitive. When spirits are finely touched they feel the fine issues.

In practical music the range of sound, though considerable, running perhaps between forty and four thousand vibrations in a second, or thereabouts, is certainly not theoretically confined within those limits. One may conceive of notes higher than the highest and lower than the lowest in our scale of song, and when the poet Shelley spoke of 'harmonising silence without a sound,' he may, perhaps, have alluded to those delicate tremblings of the finer chords of life whose vibrations, not being perceived by the outward and physical organism, are to it the same thing as silence, but a silence in which there is a movement of secret harmony. Musical effects depend upon sympathy; vibrations feeble in themselves require the reinforcement of other vibrations kindred to themselves; with these they associate, and the result is a pleasing harmony. All sounds are not necessarily harmonious one with another, particularly factitious sounds, but most natural sounds coalesce or interfuse with one another in a manner which is agreeable. When deep calls unto deep, the plash and roll and solemn sound of the waves would mingle harmoniously enough with the calling of tree unto tree, with the sighs of evening in the forest, if the forest and the sea happened to be in contiguity; and in like manner, a little flower bending its head at night, and unfolding its petals in the morning, may by that gentle motion awaken vibrations in some other flower, and send a strain of music inaudible to us over the garden or the field. It is pleasant to conceive of Nature in its passive and obedient way, and within the limitations assigned to her, as constantly singing to the Supreme, sometimes with the terrifying tones of gale and thunder, and sometimes with a voice all gentleness, quietude, and peace. It was with a thought of the harmonious sound as well as of the majestic motion that Milton calls upon Nature to praise the Almighty—

'Him praise, ye winds! that from four quarters blow,  
Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye pines.'

With the like idea and feeling, Shakespeare spoke of the stars in Heaven as singing like angels in their motion, 'quivering to the young-eyed cherubim.' In all probability, indeed, the unheard music above and around us is far sweeter than any we have yet expressed by artificial notation, and made audible by instrumental means. The reason

why the sweeter sounds of life, the voices 'gentle, soft, and low,' are so seldom heard is not that they do not exist, or that they have stopped in their travelling through the skies, but that they are overpowered by the harsh and louder sounds, and the proper way to restore the drowned and suspended harmony is to hush or take away the interfering tumult and din. Stop the hubbub, and the true music of life is heard. Hush the passions, and the gentle voice of Reason speaks. Tone down the appetites and coarse desires, and all the generous affections play their strain.

If, then, there are beautiful sounds around us unheard, we may be equally sure that there are also beautiful things unseen, beautiful truths as yet unperceived, beautiful lights of thought resting on the wide horizon, as yet beyond the compass of our mental sight, beautiful sympathies as yet unstirred. What presumption and arrogance, then, when divines or philosophers pretend (as some of them seem to pretend) that they know from the past the whole duty of man, the whole range and compass of human capacity; when dogmatists assert that they have had handed down to them the whole scheme of religious and theological truth; that all that could be known is known—all that could be revealed has been revealed, perpetuated in its original integrity through the medium of the Church; that as it was in the beginning, it is now and ever shall be, world without end! Why, all that the most studious and learned of them know (and that very often is considerably less than it seems) is but the faintest syllable of what remains to be known, or a mere skimming that touches the waves of thought at no deeper point than the edge of the foam. There are men pretending to be our masters and guides in intellectual and spiritual matters who think that all their little knowledge is necessarily wisdom; that all their social and political success in the world is evidence of their intrinsic desert and power; that advantage of position is real superiority; that their human arrangements are identical with Divine arrangements, and that their plans for ecclesiastical transfer and continuity are the same thing as Apostolical succession. At college or school the very learning they have acquired has often hindered rather than helped them; it has sometimes blocked up the mind with artificial ideas, instead of opening it to new thought, and has proved in some instances a sort of 'muddy vesture of decay,' hindering them from hearing the starry music. Not so with the humbly and truly wise; they do not mistake a tiny part for a mighty whole; they are well assured that as yet they know only a very few utterances of the Supreme wisdom, only a very few notes of the Heavenly music, only a very few indications of the Divine purposes, only a few whisperings of the Spirit's promises and the means by which they are to be realised, and that what is at present unheard, unseen, unfelt, unimagined even, immensely transcends, and probably differs greatly from, that which individual men or corporate Churches have known or pretended to know.

#### NEW PUBLICATIONS.

'The Theosophist,' for August. London agent: J. M. Watkins, 26, Charing Cross, S.W. Price 2s.

'The Coming Light,' for August. San Francisco, Cal., U.S.A.: 621, O'Farrell-street. Price 10 cents.

'Business—Pre-Natal Law.' By EVA C. HULINGS. Two pamphlets. Price 25 cents each. And 'Zaccheus Climbed a Tree.' By EVA C. HULINGS. Price 10 cents. Denver, Colorado, U.S.A.: Office of 'The Perfect Faith,' Box 1455.

'The Hope of Immortality.' An Essay incorporating the lectures delivered before the University of Cambridge upon the foundation of the Rev. John Hulse in the Michaelmas Term, 1897, and the Lent Term, 1898. By the Rev. J. E. C. Weldon, Head Master of Harrow School. London: Seeley & Co., Limited, 38, Great Russell-street, W.C. Price 6s.

Just as truly as every material picture the light of the sun has ever fallen upon is forever photographed somewhere upon the tablets of space, so surely is every kindly smile that ever lit the face of any pain-stricken woman, or calmed the storm in the passionate heart of man, transformed into a bit of everlasting light, that makes more radiant some section of the spiritual universe.—J. LLOYD JONES.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

## SOCIETY WORK.

## Stonehenge Spiritualism.

SIR,—Many of your readers will no doubt recollect seeing several of my letters which have appeared in 'LIGHT' at long intervals during the last two and a-half years, bearing on discoveries connected with Stonehenge (which I have identified as an ancient Royal Arch Masonic Temple, that is, a miniature representation, in stone hieroglyphics, of our earth and solar system) and its connection with modern Freemasonry and Christian cathedrals, which (cathedrals) I have also identified as solar temples, modified to suit this age of scientific discovery.

In a letter of January 23rd, 1896, it was stated that when in London, trying to obtain spirit photographs, having in 1895 obtained a fully recognised one, the photographer (Z.) informed me that there was, standing near me, a grand patriarchal form of a Druidical spirit, who intimated that he had been influencing or *impressing* me with facts connected with Stonehenge; that he had lived about 1,020 years ago, and had been one of those who had been persecuted by those in authority at that time. I could neither affirm nor deny the statement, but from what I had interpreted or discovered it seemed to have some foundation. Shortly before going to the late spiritualist Jubilee Conference, held in London last June, I made another special trip to Stonehenge and had myself photographed as a Past-Master, and also Royal Arch Freemason, clothed in full official regalia, in connection with (a) the foundation, or North East stone (the Friar's Heel); (b) the *processional* or annual sacrificing stone; (c) the altar and equinoctial stone; and (d) the equatorial or hieroglyphic stone, representing the Zodiacal mansion, house, or abode of the Sun when in Aries on March 21st, the vernal equinox. I did this in order that when my work (on 'Esoteric Science, Freemasonry and Catholicism, or the Stonehenge Mystery Solved') comes out, these photographs, and many others besides, would afford proof of my having visited the hitherto mysterious pile of curiously arranged stones at Stonehenge.

Shortly after this I went up to the Jubilee Conference, and on June 18th, thinking that I might be able to obtain a spirit-photograph of my late wife, I went to Z., the spirit-photographer. He told me, as he did the month previous, that he did not see the spirit-form of Mrs. Hutchinson, whom he knew when incarnated, but that the spirit of another lady we both knew when on earth was near me. He then said that the other spirit had vanished, and in her stead there was the Druidic priest standing by my side, and who was with me a long time before, and that if I sat for a photo he (the spirit-Druid) would try and show himself. The next day, Sunday, June 19th, I sat for two negatives, and, during the time, Z., the photographer, emphatically stated that my Stonehenge guide, the Druidic priest, was present, and that we might anticipate good results. He (Z.) was impressed to say that, owing to my having only lately been photographed as a Royal Arch Mason at Stonehenge, as already mentioned, that I had thus attracted the spirit, and, having anticipated that he might turn up, I took my Royal Arch regalia, which the spirit-form is seen pointing at in the two excellent photos.

On the next day, 20th, in my capacity of South African delegate to the Jubilee Conference, I paid my respects to the President and officers of the Spiritualist Alliance. Here I met several excellent mediums who, when under strong influence or control, confirmed what Z. had stated, and who also predicted that my Stonehenge guide would be clearly seen on the photograph. As I leave for Cape Town on Thursday, August 4th, by the ss. Gothic (New Zealand line), direct from London, I am anxious to record the fact about the spirit-form of my Stonehenge guide, and, therefore, will be glad if you can find space for this communication.

In conclusion, I will take this opportunity of wishing my many friends—readers of 'LIGHT'—*Au revoir*, hoping to return to this country before very long to bring my discoveries *re* Stonehenge, &c., before the British people.

BERTS HUTCHINSON, D.D.S., L.D.S.

Dunraven, Brighton-road, Southampton,  
August 1st, 1898.

CARDIFF SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, ST. JOHN'S HALL.—On Sunday last Mrs. M. A. Sadler conducted the meeting and gave an excellent and lucid address upon 'Death, and After.' Next Sunday, at 6.30 p.m., Mr. E. Adams.—E.A.

193, BOW-ROAD, BOW.—On Sunday last Mr. and Mrs. Weedemeyer conducted the meeting. Mr. Weedemeyer gave an excellent address, and Mrs. Weedemeyer followed with good clairvoyance. On Sunday next, Mrs. Whimp.—H.H.

EAST LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' ASSOCIATION (STRATFORD CENTRE), WORKMAN'S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—On Sunday last Mr. A. Peters delivered an address, followed by excellent clairvoyance, fourteen descriptions out of nineteen being recognised. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Butcher. Thursday, meeting as usual, at 8.15 p.m., Mr. Savage.—J.J.P.

BIRMINGHAM.—The body of Henry Rossiter Starling, the son of Henry and Annie Starling, of this town, was interred in the old cemetery on Tuesday, the 16th inst. Mrs. Houghton gave an impressive invocation and address in the chapel, and an eloquent explanatory discourse at the graveside, where a considerable number of the public had assembled.—J.W.M.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—On Sunday evening last, Mr. W. F. Edwards, of Edmonton, ably occupied our platform and gave an inspiring address on the 'Responsibility of Knowledge.' On Sunday evening next, at 6.45 p.m., Mr. John Kinsman.—H. BROOKS, Sec.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, 73, BECKLOW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last Mr. Bullen, from Canning Town, was again with us, and spoke on 'What is Spiritualism?' He exhorted everyone to seek for the higher teachings of Spiritualism, and not to be contented with phenomena only. Next Sunday, at 6.30 p.m., Mr. Davis.—M. E. CHAPLIN, Sec.

MERTHYR SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, CENTRAL HALL.—On Sunday last Mr. G. H. Bibbings paid us a welcome visit. His discourses in the afternoon and evening on 'Dead Death,' and 'Should Ghosts be Loved?' were highly appreciated. Successful clairvoyance was given by Mrs. Billing-sley.—W.M.H.

ISLINGTON SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, WELLINGTON HALL, UPPER-STREET, ISLINGTON.—On Sunday last Mr. Wallace, the pioneer medium, gave an interesting account of the rise of Spiritualism in the provinces. Mrs. Brenchley related part of an experience she had on Saturday in a private circle. Next Sunday, at 8 p.m., Mr. Palmer will give an address. Thursday, at 8 p.m., circle, for members only; medium, Mrs. Brenchley.—C. D. CATTO, Sec.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last, Mr. E. Whyte ('Evangel') kindly paid a visit to the Marylebone Association, when his address entitled 'The World's Indebtedness to Spiritualism' was attentively listened to. Next Sunday evening, at 7 o'clock, Miss Rowan Vincent will deliver an address entitled 'Spiritualists and the Equality of Opportunity.' Miss Vincent will also give clairvoyant descriptions.—L.H.

HENLEY HALL, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last we held an experience meeting which proved most interesting, and it was decided, on Mr. Adams' suggestion, to repeat it next Sunday. Experiences were given by Messrs. Stebbings, Spencer, Paris, Day, and Fielder. Mr. Boddington delivered an earnest address on the subject of 'Prayer.' Mrs. Boddington presided. The Battersea Park meeting was ably conducted by Mrs. Boddington and Mr. Adams. Thursday, at 8 p.m., developing class; Saturday, at 8 p.m., members and friends' social meeting; Sunday, at 7 p.m., experience meeting continued.—H.P.

WALSALL SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.—On Monday evening, 15th inst., an entertainment at the Spiritualist Hall, Bradford-street, was taken advantage of to make a presentation to Mr. and Mrs. J. Venables on the occasion of their silver wedding. Mr. T. Aldridge made the presentation, which consisted of a large silver tea-urn, bearing the following inscription: 'Presented to Mr. and Mrs. John Venables by the members and friends of the Walsall Spiritualist Association on the occasion of their silver wedding, in recognition of their untiring efforts on behalf of the Spiritualist cause during the last twenty years. August 3rd, 1873-1898.'

EDMONTON SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, 2, THE CRESCENT, HERTFORD-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Webb gave an instructive address on the rise and progress of Spiritualism, and was followed by excellent psychometry and clairvoyance from Mrs. Webb. In all eleven delineations were given, which were recognised. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Edwards, 'On the Duties of Spiritualists.' The son of the hon. president of the above society, who passed away on Tuesday, the 9th inst., was interred in the Edmonton Cemetery on Saturday, the 13th inst. Mr. W. Walker, trance medium, conducted the funeral service, which was largely attended.—W. KNAUS, Sec.



LONDON SPIRITUALIST CONFERENCE.—The next conference will be held in the Workman's Hall, West Ham-lane, Stratford, on Sunday, September 11th, when an open-air meeting will be held in the morning in Stratford Broadway, commencing at 11 o'clock. At 3 p.m., in the Workman's Hall, the secretary will introduce the subject, 'Future Work and Workers'; speakers, mediums, workers, and all interested in our cause are invited to be present. Tea will be provided at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, 6d. each.—M. CLEGG, Sec. of Conference.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' MISSION, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—On Sunday morning last the usual public circle was held. Many interesting questions concerning the phenomena of Spiritualism were put, and replied to in a clear and satisfactory manner. In the evening we held our meeting in the large hall, when Mr. Long, through his control 'Tim,' dealt at some length with the subject of 'Obsession and Possession.' On Sunday morning next, at 11 a.m., public circle; at 3 p.m., children's Lyceum; at 6 p.m., lending library, and sale of literature at bookstall; at 6.30 p.m., evening service in large hall, Mr. W. E. Long on 'Salvation by Life or Death.'—VERAX.

STOKE NEWINGTON SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON-ROAD, N.—On Sunday last Mr. R. Boddington's address, 'A B C of Spiritualism,' was listened to with marked attention. A friend accompanying him gave a few clairvoyant descriptions with great minuteness, the majority of which were recognised. During the evening Mr. Firth, of Edmonton, gave a piano-forte recital under inspiration. This was a new phase of spirit control to many present. Our best thanks are due to Mr. Boddington and friend, also to Mr. Firth, for their kind services. Next Sunday, clairvoyance by Mr. A. Peters; chairman, Mr. A. Glendinning; solo by Miss Jessie Dixon. A social gathering of members and friends will be held on September 14th, at 7.30 p.m.—A. CLEGG, Hon. Sec.

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