

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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

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CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	513	Concerning Reincarnation	520
Telepathy a Scientific Fact	514	'The Voice of the Spirit'	521
The Press and Spiritualists	516	The Origin of Suggestion	521
Notes from Foreign Reviews	517	The Spiritual Fellowship Colony	522
A Good Confession	518	Christian Scientists	522
The Proper Use of Mediums	519	Spiritualism in Glasgow	524
Spiritualists' National Federation 520			

NOTES BY THE WAY.

If anything could make it plain to us that we have nothing to hope for from the frigid and rigid ecclesiasticism of our day, the Archbishop of Canterbury's 'Visitation Addresses' would suffice. With cast-iron grip, he tries to press us back to the finalities of what he calls 'revelation'; and there he bids us stay:—no more to be known, no more to be hoped for, no more to be sought. All our confidences concerning 'The communion of saints' are mere 'imagination.' What the Bible tells us is all there is to know, and 'we have no right to lift the veil.'

What is this but a slavish surrender of the present to the past—a sacrifice of the living to the dead? The Archbishop talks like a schoolmaster about lifting the veil. But what is lifting the veil? We hold that lifting the veil is simply the natural result of knowledge and inquiry: and we also hold that God has made us for this very thing. In every department of human life we are lifting the veil. He who forbids it, fights against God. Or, at all events, he is an obscurantist or a mere priest. There was a time when the Archbishop knew that.

'The Humanitarian' contains a curiously original Paper on 'The Joys and Sorrows of the Atom.' Its author, G. E. Bailey, holds that the old barriers between the organic and the inorganic are 'wiped out.' The atoms 'seem instinct with a desire for life, and the inorganic ever show a tendency to run into the organic.' His conclusion is as enlightening as it is eloquent:—

There is but one indivisible and absolute Omniscience and Intelligence, and this thrills through every atom of the whole Cosmos. The elixir of life lurks in every mineral, as well as in every flower and animal throughout the universe. It is the ultimate essence of everything on its way to higher evolution. The true explanation is then only to be found in the dynamics of spirit; that spirit which is not substance, but is the law of substance; not force, but the revealer of force; not life, but which makes life exist; not thought, but the consciousness of thought; the sole and single source of power. When we attain to the conception of a living material universe, animated by spirit, the mystery of Nature is solved. The Cosmos is not as some would have it, a vast machine wound up and set in motion with the certainty that it will run down; it simply changes from one form to another; ever evolving into higher forms on higher planes. The force that originated and impelled, sustains and is the Divine Spirit, which

'Lives through all life, extends through all extent, Spreads undivided, operates unspent.'

The law of birth, growth, death, of endless destruction and perpetual renewal, is everywhere seen working throughout the Cosmos, in nebulae, in sun, and in world, as in rock, in herb, and in man, all of which are but passing phases in the endless circulation of the universe, in that perpetual new birth we call Nature.

This may be called the poet's view, but it is forced upon us as also the highest generalisation of modern science.

'The Blackpool Herald,' for October 4th, contains a most careful, serious and instructive Article on 'What is Spiritualism? The belief explained.' We could wish for nothing better. In fact, this Article would make one of the very best tracts on the subject. The writer does not profess to give his own view, but, standing slightly outside, he intelligently and impartially states the Spiritualist's case, not as an advocate but as a serious observer. This, of course, gives it a special value, and we should much like to see it in print, for circulation as a four-page tract.

'The Church Gazette' is highly entertaining, with strong currents of sense beneath the ripples of its delicate humour. The following is an indication of both its humour and its sense:—

A correspondent mentions that, some time ago, a clergyman was asked to preach at the parish church he attends. The gentleman did preach, and in the course of doing so he told the congregation that a good deal of their worship was a sham and a make-believe. For instance, that they were quite willing to set the Psalms to music and to sing them over and over, without even thinking what many passages meant; that each Sunday they glibly professed belief in the 'Communion of Saints' without the least idea of what that belief implied, and so on.

Would you believe it (he goes on), we all knew this was true, and just because it was, it gave us all great offence, though I see now that we were in the wrong! Yet the vicar's fiat went forth, and from that day to this the clergyman in question has been excluded from that pulpit, though he often has helped them in other ways. But he is barred just because what he said was true.

We have before us many 'lions in the way.' One is the always abiding Mrs. Grundy,—a fine old specimen of the stately but ever rampant lion, or lioness, of 'Society,' as mysterious but as potent as the great god, or goddess, Fashion. With her, it is bad form to take the soul too seriously; or to take anything (except head structures and the dressmaker) too seriously. With her we can do nothing but wait.

Then there is the tremendous self-regarding force which teaches men and women to 'take care of number one,' and devote all their energy and interest to business, reputation, ease, pleasure and, in general, getting the most out of life. Those who are drifted on by this force may be formally and conventionally religious, but they never come to close grips with what lies at the very heart of it.

There is a darker form standing in our path—darker, but in a way less substantial; a form represented by Mr. Grant Allen, for instance, who, with the curiously narrow arrogance of those who cover their Atheism with the cloak of Anthropology, dismiss God and Immortality as inventions, not of man consummated, but of man only when emerging. From this point of view of narrow arrogance, Mr. Grant Allen says: 'We know'—mark the arrogance—'we know that consciousness ceases altogether at death, when the brain no longer functions, and that the possibility of its further continuance is absolutely cut off by the fact of decomposition.' How does Mr. Grant Allen know that the brain is the master, and not a mere instrument?

and that the climax of Evolution, in the production of thought, should end in the slush of the dead grey matter of the brain? He does *not* know it: he *cannot* know it. It is only an arbitrary inference, and a very narrow inference, too. We have evidently still much to do.

TELEPATHY A SCIENTIFIC FACT.

BY CHARLES BRODIE PATTERSON.

(From the current number of 'Mind'.)

Passing through a small town in Scotland, containing a population of about twelve hundred, and perhaps a scattered population of some three hundred more, we noticed three Presbyterian churches. These churches hold practically the same opinions, and worship God in about the same way, though they represent different sections of the Presbyterians.

We could not help thinking how entirely these Christians misrepresented the founder of Christianity, and how their testimony was precisely the reverse of his. His whole spirit and teaching suggested union and a brotherhood; and these churches every hour preached disunion and division. What a beautiful symbol it would be if all the people of such a place could meet together for worship, as a testimony of their abiding oneness with each other and with God, the Father of them all! That would indeed be a symbol of what we hope will come—and of what we profess to believe *will* come—when they shall gather from the East and the West, from the North and the South, and sit down together in the Kingdom of Heaven.

If ever the Religion of the spirit shall prevail here upon earth, every dividing wall, except such as is made inevitable by distance and physical necessity, will disappear.

Mr. D. L. Moody, most of the time, makes it very hard for us to agree with him: but, when he drops divinity and talks of life and character and enterprise, we want to shake hands with him. This, for example, is really fine:—

Enthusiasm means 'in God'; and I can't understand how any man can realise his standing before God and not be on fire three hundred and sixty-five days in the year. Any man who goes into business and doesn't throw his heart into it doesn't succeed. Now, why not go into the Lord's work as earnestly as into athletics?

Even our London Spiritualists might take that home, and profit by it.

MR. GEORGE REDWAY'S NEW BOOKS.

In Mr. Redway's autumn list we find the following announcements, which we think will interest our readers.

He is about to send to the printer a collection of 'Psychical Essays,' by Miss X.; a volume on the Kabbala by Mr. Arthur E. Waite; and a work by Mr. Godfrey Leland ('Hans Breitmann'), entitled 'Have you a strong will? how to develop it by an easy method of self-hypnotism.'

Mr. Redway is the London agent for the American edition of Agrippa's complete works on Occult Philosophy, of which the first volume is now ready.

The works of Braid, 'the father of hypnotism in England,' have been collected and edited for Mr. Redway, who expects to publish the volume this autumn, together with Mr. Waite's elaborate study of Saint Martin, giving a digest of his writings. A second edition of Sepharial's New Manual of Astrology has been called for. Mr. Robert James Lees' curious book, 'Through the Mists,' is now ready, and will be followed shortly by another of the same character, entitled, 'The Sound of a Voice that is Still,' the author of which prefers to be known as 'Archie Campbell.'

Among other miscellaneous books we notice that the Rev. H. R. Haweis has written a volume on Old Violins for Mr. Redway's Collector Series, and that a posthumous volume of essays by the author of 'The Gentle Life,' is in the press.

It is an indication of the highest moral progress when nationality ceases to be the limit of sympathy, when the oppression of the remotest nation begins to appeal to us with a sense of personal injury . . . and evokes from all lands a cry as of pain and indignation for a universal wrong.—CAIRN.

Few persons that have given any intelligent attention to the subject of telepathy any longer question the fact that thought may be directly transmitted from mind to mind without a visible conductor. We may be cognisant of many phenomena, and yet be unable to define the laws that regulate and control their action. While scientists and other men of note are agreed that direct thought-transference is an established fact, yet no one has as yet been able exactly to define the law under which it takes place. Many interesting and plausible theories have been advanced, however; and, while we understand that certain conditions are necessary, yet how thought, forming itself in one mind, is psychically transferred to another mind, remains a mystery.

In this paper I will briefly note some of the conditions necessary to obtain the best results. The mind of the sender of the message should be thoroughly imbued with the thought he desires to transmit. When it absorbs his whole mind, to the exclusion of everything else, so that his thoughts become definitely centred, then with his thought-picture let him feel as if he were in the presence of the person he desires to influence. No matter what distance they may be apart, after a little will come a feeling of nearness to the person; the thought of distance will gradually disappear from the mind and the feeling of nearness increase, till finally he will feel as close to his friend as if they were both in the same room. On the part of the sender, then, clearness of vision as regards thought-pictures is especially needful—the focussing of thought, or concentration of mind: this in turn being re-enforced by the action of will.

On the part of the receiver, a restful, passive state of mind seems to give the best condition for the perception of thought. I have found, after many years' experience, that the sleeping state is the best; and next to this, when the body is thoroughly relaxed, which is the sure indication of mental relaxation.

People talk glibly about 'coincidences,' and of things 'happening.' Nothing ever happens; everything, whether great or little, is caused by the action of law. We may not understand the law, but that is no reason why we should deny the effect. The universe is not governed by blind chance: law and order reign supreme. What appears to us to be disorder and lack of law, could we but discern it aright, would be seen to be an orderly succession of events. Ignorant and unobservant, bigoted, or prejudiced minds may take a different view, blinding their eyes to the light of truth; but this in no way affects the facts, which such minds are too narrow to perceive.

I wish to put on record a number of facts along this line that have come to my personal knowledge. . . . In regard to all these incidents, there are living witnesses who can prove their truth. The first I will relate is the answering in every detail of a letter that had not been actually received. I was seated at my desk, attending to correspondence, when the elevator-boy entered my office with letters for me. I recognised from whom one of them came by the handwriting on the envelope, and it came to me like a flash that I held in my hand a letter I had just answered. Calling to a friend who was sitting in my office at the time, I remarked that I wished to read to him the contents of a letter I had not yet opened.

'In the first place,' said I, 'this letter contains a post-office order for twenty dollars; it is from Mr. E.—; he says in it to stop giving treatment, as he is quite recovered from his trouble; he returns thanks to me and inquires about certain books. Now, we will open the letter'; which I did, and found that it contained the remittance and read almost exactly as I had given it. 'Now,' said I, 'we will open the letter I had already written before this was received, and which is already addressed and stamped.' I then opened it and showed my receipt to the party for twenty dollars. I read my own letter, which answered perfectly the questions asked, and said I was very glad to know he was well and that treatment need no longer be

continued. How I came to write that letter before receiving the other, and just at the time I did, is a little difficult to say. I was thoroughly convinced that I had received both the letter and the money when I was answering it; but the instant I looked at the other letter it came to me that I had previously received no such letter.

A few years ago I spent some time at the seashore, and while there had talked with a lady on the subject of thought-transference. She said she believed it possible that persons could be benefited by *present* mental treatment, but could not believe that thought could be directly transmitted from mind to mind at a distance; that what was looked upon as thought-transference was merely coincidence, and that the facts could be more easily accounted for in that way than in any other. While discussing the question, I perceived that this lady had developed many qualities of mind needful for such thought-transmission. I gave her a few suggestions, asking her to use them in an effort to awaken me out of sleep any time during the night that she might be awake. A few days later I turned to her at the breakfast-table and said, 'You awakened me this morning.' She looked surprised and asked me at what time. 'At exactly ten minutes before five,' I replied; 'you thought of the suggestions I gave you, used them, then looked at your watch, and for about two minutes you were quiet, when you turned on your other side in bed and in less than two minutes were fast asleep.' She seemed very much surprised, but said she had done exactly the things I had related and in the same order. She is now a thorough believer in thought-transference.

I was camping out some time ago with a gentleman much interested in all occult matters. We had a cot apiece in our tent, and one night, the last thing before going to sleep, I requested my companion, should he awaken any time during the night, to ask me mentally to wake up; then, turning my back toward him, I fell asleep. About three o'clock I awoke and said, 'You had better pull the clothes on, for you are very cold.' His answer was: 'How did you know that? Your back is turned to me.' Now, when my friend awakened, the first thought that had entered his mind was that of awakening me; the second was that he was cold, and that the clothes had slipped off his cot. He said that not an instant of time had elapsed between his first thought and my answer. It was just light enough for him to see that my back was toward him.

I was out walking early one morning, my mind being in an unusually restful condition. Presently it seemed to become absorbed in a number of unreal and visionary things concerning another person. The experience made such an impression on my mind that, meeting the person later in the day, I could not refrain from telling him the things that occurred to me in the morning. When I had finished relating them, he said, 'Why, that is exactly what I dreamed this morning, and I could not have told it better myself.'

One night I dreamed that a friend was calling to me for help. At first I could not see him; then it seemed as if I were looking from the ceiling down on an apartment that was perfectly familiar to me, and that the person calling for help was running around the room pursued by a man whom I knew quite as well, and who seemed to be trying to do bodily injury to the other. Another call for help came to me, and I awoke. The very vivid dream made a deep impression on my mind, because of my intimate acquaintance with both persons, who were also friends of each other. In the morning I could not refrain from writing to the person who seemed to call to me for help. I related all the circumstances that are briefly told here. I received a letter the following day, demonstrating that our letters had passed each other in transit. It related the dream just as I had experienced it, telling me that the writer had been awakened out of his sleep by the sound of his own voice calling on me for help. Scarcely a day goes by that things do not occur that prove to me the truth of telepathy; but I know of nothing in my experience quite so remarkable as the incident just related.

I am not only convinced that thought is transmitted directly from mind to mind, but that it also leaves a definite impress on material things; so that sensitive minds may get thought-impressions from visible objects about them. This would seem to upset many theories widely entertained

regarding thought-transference, and make it more difficult to account for. If thought produces an etheric vibration, by which thought-pictures are projected from the mind and transmitted by this agency, how is it that these same pictures seem to attach themselves to material things and again give their impress to the minds of men?

In this connection I will relate a few incidents, out of many of a similar nature, that have occurred to me.

Some years ago I slept in a room in which an awful crime had been committed. I had no knowledge of that fact, but had been in the room only a few minutes when my mind became seized with a fearful apprehension. Little by little the whole picture of the crime seemed to weave itself in my mind. That night was the most unrestful one I ever experienced, and on making inquiries afterward I found that everything had occurred substantially as it came to me. Some might say it was the result of the mental action of the persons then living in the house; but they were not the occupants at the time of the crime. Furthermore, I slept later in another room of the same house and received no such harrowing impression.

The clothing of a bed (sheets and pillow-cases) upon which I once slept had been sent to a Chinese laundry, of which fact I had no previous knowledge. The first night I slept upon them, after they had been returned, my dreams were filled entirely with Chinese persons and scenes. The next night the same things occurred, but to a lesser degree. I was so impressed, however, that I made inquiries of the woman in charge of the room and was told that the laundress had not called that week and that she had therefore sent the clothes to a Chinese laundry. This to many would doubtless have seemed a mere coincidence; but exactly the same thing occurred six months later under similar conditions.

I remember once sleeping in a room at a friend's house, and, being asked next morning by a member of the family how I had rested, answered that I had slept very well but had dreamed a great deal about dressmaking. I was then told that for several days previously a dressmaker had used the room for that purpose.

I once occupied a room in which a man ill with consumption had 'lived and died.' I had no knowledge whatever as to the last occupant, but both in my waking moments and while asleep I would experience the feelings and think the thoughts that one suffering from this trouble is supposed to have. I could not account for this state of mind, and concluded that it must in some way be connected with the room. Upon making inquiries I was told of the fact just recorded.

I have related only a few of my personal experiences, but I have known many other persons that have passed through similar events. In the light of these facts, we can better understand why St. Paul sent handkerchiefs and aprons to sick persons at a distance, and thus actually performed cures. The thought of man impresses everything about him, and that thought seems to live on—even when its human author has passed from this plane of existence—uplifting and benefiting other minds or producing a contrary effect.

It is not well to be superstitious concerning anything, but it is well carefully and thoughtfully to consider each and every question that presents itself to our minds, no matter what its guise may be. Only in this way can we arrive at a true understanding of life and a solution of its problems.

If we work upon marble, it will perish; if upon brass, time will efface it; if we rear temples, they will crumble into dust; but if we work upon our immortal minds—if we imbue them with principles, with the just love of God and love of our fellow-man—we engrave on those tablets something that will brighten through all eternity.—DANIEL WEBSTER.

APPARENT FAILURES.—What are all reforms, restorations, victories of truth, but protests of a minority; efforts, clogged and incomplete, of the good and brave, just enough in their own day to stop instant ruin—the appointed means to save what is to be saved, but in themselves failures! Good men work and suffer, and bad men enjoy their labours and spoil them; a step is made in advance—evil rolled back and kept in check for a while, only to return, perhaps the stronger. But thus, and thus only, is truth passed on, and the world preserved from utter corruption.—CHURCH.

THE PRESS AND SPIRITUALISTS.

By 'AN OLD CORRESPONDENT.'

During a long, busy, and very varied life it has been my lot to come into contact with almost every class of professional man; and journalists not a few have been among my intimates; yet during all that time I have only met with one (and he was a very cosmopolitan individual) with whom I could discuss the deep problems of psychology and the *pros* and *cons* as to 'proof positive of immortality.' This gentleman owed his 'conversion' to a remarkable *séance* he had had with Miss Lottie Fowler, then in the zenith of her powers. He went to interview her 'professionally,' and came away a firm believer in the reality of the spirit-world, and the possibility of communication between the two spheres. Another young friend of mine, who was also starting on his career as a journalist nearly thirty years ago, and who possessed some psychic power, was also the first person to introduce to my notice what I would call that remarkable phase of psychic 'demonstration' known as 'materialisation,' by giving me full details of two wonderful *séances* he had with Miss Fairlamb, better known now as Mrs. Mellon. In those days (about 1869 or 1870) I was merely a student of the literature of Spiritualism, and for nearly twenty years thereafter had no practical acquaintance with its phenomena. Speaking generally, therefore, and with a very full knowledge of many journals and journalists extending over thirty-five years, my assured conviction is that of all men capable of forming a calm and dispassionate opinion on occultism, the 'newspaper man' is the last person one ought to expect to be able to do so; simply because he has neither the time, the inclination, nor the mind, to examine into its many perplexing problems, and hence in his judgment it is always 'bosh,' 'delusion,' or 'fraud.' Take for instance the 'Reviewer' in a London or provincial newspaper, and his mode of dealing with any book on occultism or psychic problems. What are his special qualifications for the task of giving a *fair* estimate of the events narrated or the opinions expressed in the books? Simply this, that from long practice he has acquired the faculty of condensing into as few sentences as possible the gist of the volumes he is reviewing, and putting into five or six columns of the daily journal, on its 'literary day' (usually once a week), notices of twenty, thirty, or even forty different volumes handed to him for reviewing purposes. The smarter he can write, and (on occasion) 'scareify' and abuse a volume or a writer that does not take his fancy, the better his work goes down with his employers and the public. He has, I am pretty sure, never in his life read through a single book on the history or phenomena of Spiritualism, or never sat at a 'proper *séance*,' while a sensitive is to him a creature utterly unknown. So that his whole life and daily avocation render him peculiarly unfitted to deal with the subject. As for the editor, or sub-editor, as the case may be, what is his daily life? A continuous 'rush,' a 'getting up' of subjects on which to write leading articles on social, political, or other subjects, which are dashed off rapidly, printed, read, and forgotten by the morning readers of the journal in forty-eight hours or less. Such men have no time for calm study of serious problems of psychology; their multifarious duties and the many avenues daily emerging, compel them to rapid thinking and writing. If, as is sometimes the case, a newspaper reporter in search of 'copy' does obtain an opportunity, under, it may be, the most adverse conditions, of taking part in what is denominated a '*séance*,' attended by a crowd of 'all sorts and conditions of men' and women, most of whom are probably in the condition of a mixed audience awaiting the beginning of an entertainment, and who are in effect simply saying to themselves, 'Roll up the curtain and let the performance begin,'—any phenomena witnessed at such meetings usually enables the newspaper man (if he has been there) to poke fun at the whole affair, and make up the necessary amusing 'copy' to fill a corner of the paper; the more ridicule and contempt he can throw on the gathering, the better it will go down with the bulk of the readers of the journal. A journalist, in my opinion, has day by day too 'many irons in the fire' to fix

his mind calmly and dispassionately on anything beyond what he can 'see and handle' or give a 'reasonable account of.'

Mr. Stead's case is one which points an excellent moral. Because he took the pains and systematically and calmly set about investigating the phenomena of Spiritualism, and had the courage of his convictions, and communicated to the world the results achieved, he has been the mark for many sneering 'scribblers' and journalists, not possessing a tenth part of his capacity and vigour, in London and elsewhere, for the past five years. It probably doesn't harm him in the least, but there are the results all the same.

Besides, one has to keep in view that a journalist must make his paper 'pay,' and there is 'no money in Spiritualism,' only assurance that there is another world; as to which the agnostic and the uninterested of the day say, 'Well, there may be another place; time enough for us to see what it is like when we get there; meantime we shan't bother about it, but look after the present.' As for your steady orthodox Churchmen, they all believe 'in a sort of way' in immortality and Heaven, because their clergyman, in as delightfully vague a way as possible, tells them there is a place called by that name. But then, there are countless earnest, thirsting souls who would almost give their life to have 'proof positive of immortality,' but know nothing of Spiritualism, or are deterred by the attitude of the Press from touching the subject. These are the people we want to get at, and cannot, just because they know nothing of our spiritual Press and literature. And so the controversy goes on, and we poor Spiritualists have to keep our testimony to ourselves and possess our souls with the hope that 'Truth is great and will prevail' in the end, although it may not be in our time.

Summing up these few discursive observations, I say deliberately that not until an honest and fair-minded journalist makes psychology his study, by reading its literature, examining its phenomena, and sitting under the best possible conditions, will he be able to grasp the tremendous fact which all true Spiritualists exult in having realised, that after the change we call death the human spirit lives on in an ethereal or spiritual body, and is able under certain delicate conditions to manifest its continued sentient existence in the beyond to those who calmly and reverently on this side seek to get news of those who have passed on. The path is very thorny, and in my judgment is made more so by the existence of so many mixed and promiscuous circles, where such varied elements go to produce failure and sometimes imposture. For years I have abjured the mixed circle, and confined myself to my own family and a few very dear and select friends like-minded; with this result, that the manifestations are in every respect convincing and satisfactory.

We Spiritualists certainly owe the Press a pretty heavy grudge for the manner in which, for half a century, it has derided us; and when the tide does turn, probably little of the credit will be given to the many noble pioneers of the spiritual movement; but if we possess ourselves in patience the 'harvest is bound to come.' Already the walls of prejudice are breaking down under the stern logic of facts and the cumulative evidence adduced; and who can tell but what, by the beginning of the new century, even the British Press may be driven to confess that after all there is 'something in Spiritualism'?

It is no disgrace not to be able to do everything; but to undertake, or pretend to do, what you are not made for, is not only shameful, but extremely troublesome and vexatious.—PLUTARCH.

FORCE and matter are originally identical; they are only two different modes of one and the same cause or substance called Life, and which is itself an attribute or function of the supreme Cause of all existence. Modern discoveries go to prove the unity or identity of matter and energy. Recent researches in chemistry, and comparisons made between the chemical, musical, and colour scales, seem to indicate that the cause of the difference between the heterogeneous single bodies is not caused by an essential difference of the substances of which they are composed, but only a difference in the number of their atomic vibrations.—FRANZ HARTMANN, M.D.

NOTES FROM FOREIGN REVIEWS.

ANOTHER PLEA FOR MATERIALISM.

Materialism has found another skilful apologist in the person of Dr. Edwige Benigni, who publishes in 'Nova Lux' an elaborate and learned study, entitled—not so paradoxically as it would at first appear—'Spiritual Materialism.' So far, only the first part of the essay has run through several numbers of this first-rate Review, but it is quite easy to distinguish the broad lines upon which the writer's design is boldly traced and conscientiously worked out, and these we can but sketch roughly for our readers, as no mere summary would do justice to such a remarkable and fascinating work.

We have long been considering that materialists and Spiritualists, using the terms in no restricted sense, but as describing those who adhere to certain definite systems of thought, stand towards each other somewhat in the position—if we may use such an illustration—of two individuals who, in the dark, are grasping each one end of the very same stick, each heaping abuse and contempt upon the other, and likely to look uncommonly foolish when at last, in their unconscious tug-of-war game, their hands meet in the middle, and they discover that they were, from opposite directions, making for the same point. And now Dr. Benigni shows clearly that if the vast majority of spiritually-disposed persons, individually or collectively, look upon materialism as 'the common enemy,' and ascribe to the word an opprobrious meaning which it in no way deserves, it is merely owing to a widely-prevalent confusion of ideas. 'Science' and 'scientists' are unfortunately used as interchangeable terms, and the former is most erroneously made accountable for the failings of the latter. The study of things material is somehow supposed to be the exact antithesis of the study of things spiritual, while in reality the one should not dispense with the other. And it is the regrettable dualism involved in those popular misconceptions that Dr. Benigni seeks to combat, by establishing the validity and rationality of scientific monism. This he does by no mere intellectual argumentation, and from a purely personal point of view; but through a careful, straightforward and exhaustive exposition of the results which can be and have actually been obtained in the various branches of natural science by the inductive method of thought alone admitted in scientific research; and no demonstration could be more powerfully convincing than his well-ordered synthetic review of 'materialistic' labours.

The general assertion that positive science and its modes of procedure are not adapted to prove the continuity of conscious and individual life beyond the grave is, he thinks, to say the least of it, an entirely gratuitous assumption. It is, on the contrary, probable that the experimental methods and the system of logical induction which have brought about such marvellous and rapid developments in the knowledge of natural forces, will also be found fully sufficient and satisfactory where psychical phenomena are concerned.

Again, we know of no force as dissociated from its vehicle, *matter*, and if we bear in mind the working of two great laws, namely, the indestructibility of matter and the conservation of energy, we see that both are very literally *eternal*. If 'Spirit' be the supreme form of energy manifested through all forms of matter, it cannot escape the general laws of Nature; therefore materialism and Spiritualism must walk hand in hand as sister-sciences, and not part company as two irreconcilable antagonists.

Nor can it be argued that natural science rejects the God-idea, and the ignorant prejudice which saw in the principle of Evolution the complete exclusion of a Creator has long given place to clearer and saner notions. The sum of scientific knowledge goes, on the contrary, to prove that 'the whole plan of Nature rests upon a *unity of substance and of action*'; that all known manifestations of energy and all forms of matter are but, even as Oriental philosophy has it, endless differentiations of the first great *One*; also, that the consequent correlativeness found between these various modes of substance and of action has given rise to, so to say, two series of phenomena—in short, the visible and the invisible; and that there is no manifestation cognisable

through our senses which is not in correspondence with a fact of unseen nature. Here it is evident, Dr. Benigni, having started from the standpoint of positive science, lands himself inevitably and quite logically in full occultism, as the editor of 'Nova Lux,' Dr. Giovanni Hoffmann, remarks in a short note, and presents nothing less than the truth of the astral plane.

We shall look forward with the greatest interest to the continuation of this valuable contribution from so competent an authority.

PSYCHICAL RESEARCH IN NAPLES.

We read in the 'Mondo Secreto' that a 'Society for Psychical Research' will shortly be formed in Naples, for the main purpose of creating a convenient and much-needed meeting-centre for Spiritualists, Theosophists, occultists, &c. By this it will be seen that the utmost tolerance is to prevail in the admission of members, and that serious investigators will be welcome, whatever may be the school of thought they represent. Lectures will be delivered from time to time, and hopes are directed towards the foundation of an adequate library. Experimental work, especially as regards the testing of mediums, will be much encouraged, and the 'Mondo Secreto' will be the organ chosen for the publication of the proceedings.

Commenting upon this announcement, the 'Revista di Studi Psichici' adopts a somewhat discouraging attitude, expressing but little confidence in the success of this scheme, and throwing doubt upon the advisability of associating, for the purpose of psychical research, persons who hold on the subject most diverse and sometimes contradictory opinions. Such a society was founded a few years ago in Turin, where the 'Revista' is edited, and just maintains its footing without being able to boast of any great influence or practical usefulness. In Milan, also, the formation of a 'Society for Psychical Research' was attempted by such capable and well-known men as Brofferio, Schiapparelli, Finzi, Ermacora, &c., who, in spite of their earnest efforts, met with failure. Is it, then, likely that a society in Naples will be favoured with a better fate?

The 'Revista,' referring eulogistically to the London Society for Psychical Research, shows that owing to a notable difference of circumstances, no Italian association can hope to work on the same lines with any amount of efficiency, or even with a fair chance of continued existence. Financial difficulties, the danger of falling unawares into the hands of speculators, also the impossibility of forming a council of really influential men, are stated to be serious obstacles to the realisation of such a project.

As regards the co-operation of occultists with Spiritists and the character of the proceedings likely to result, the 'Revista' indulges in a few mild jests which, to our thinking, are not in the best of taste. We may not be quite competent to judge how far the above-mentioned prognostications are justified; but, speaking generally, it seems that any efforts towards organised activities ought to meet with approval and outspoken good-will.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

'The Coming Light,' for October. San Francisco, Cal., U.S.A.: 6210, Farrell-street. Price 10c.

'Immortality,' No. 2. Chicago, Ill., U.S.A.: 3960, Langley-avenue. Price 25c.

'The Lyceum Banner,' for October. London: J. J. Morse, 26, Osnaaburgh-street, N. W. Price 1d.

'Poems of Two Worlds.' By REGINALD B. SPAN. London: Digby, Long, & Co., 18, Bouverie-street, Fleet-street, E.C. Price 3s. 6d. net.

'The Ethical Movement Defined,' 'The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper,' 'The Lord's Prayer,' 'The Ten Commandments,' 'The Sermon on the Mount,' 'What think ye of Christ?' A Series of Ethical Lectures, by STANTON COIT, Ph.D. London: The Ethical World Publishing Co., Limited, 17, Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, E.C. Price 2d. each lecture.

If the expression of the heart was always worn on the face we should not know some of our best friends, or at least, not regard them as such.

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A GOOD CONFESSION.

We are glad to see 'Third Edition' on the covers of the 'National Review,' and we would fain hope that Mr. F. W. H. Myers' stirring article on 'Some Fresh Facts Indicating Man's Survival of Death' accounts for it. But, be that as it may, we are exceedingly pleased to see this most helpful contribution to the ammunition that will be specially useful at this stage of the campaign. If, as has been lately said, there are few delights like the adventurer's joy, Mr. Myers ought indeed to be a happy man. But, happy or unhappy, he may be sure of this, that he is doing work of surpassing value, and that his work will be long remembered.

The Article before us has three characteristics. It is evidently the outcome of sound knowledge; it is strongly affirmative; and it is touched with a profound emotion we have not associated with Mr. Myers' work on this subject. We should be delighted to see it in a separate and cheap form, for book-stall circulation.

As might be expected, this study of 'fresh facts' turns upon Dr. Hodgson's Report concerning Mrs. Piper, whose, apparently, will be apostolic honours, in bringing Psychical Researchers to a knowledge of the truth; and, indeed, we cannot too strongly commend to all, that Part XXXIII. of the 'Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research.' It is likely to become canonical. We have already referred to it and quoted from it, but it is a mine which might be industriously worked by even the keenest expounders and critics. For the moment, however, we prefer to dwell upon Mr. Myers' own remarks, and especially upon his own emphatic and even ardent confessions.

He does not hesitate to say, for instance, that the facts set forth in Dr. Hodgson's Report 'offer the best evidence yet given to the world that the soul or individuality of man survives the death of his body'; and, still more plainly, he says at the start: 'The thesis which I maintain is that the spirits of departed persons can, under certain difficult and obscure conditions, speak and write through the organisms of persons still living on earth.'

The spiritual hypothesis, says Mr. Myers, is encumbered with two difficulties; first, the difficulty connected with tolerating the 'barbarous' notion of possession by spirits; and second, the 'difficulty of supposing that utterances so marred by mistake, forgetfulness, confusion,—so intermixed with what seem mere dreamlike fancies from the medium's own mind,—do really proceed from our friends in a state of existence which we desire to hold as higher than our own.' But he regards these difficulties as confirmations, and he gives this reason: 'I should have expected knowledge of a future world to come, if at all, through some use made by disembodied spirits of living

organisms; and I should have felt sure that, if such communications came, they would at first, at any rate, be extremely confused and imperfect.' Reference is then made to Dr. Hodgson's valuable suggestions as to this important point, largely accounting for the puzzling imperfections and confusions of many communications from the unseen people.

But all is not confused. Much, very much, has been perfectly clear. It is in the highest degree unreasonable to expect that in the attempt to 'link flesh with spirit,' 'in the opening to man, from his prisoning planet, a first glimpse into cosmic things,' all shall be clear from the first; but the clearness does come. 'On certain occasions,' says Mr. Myers, 'there has been no stumble or stammer—when some experienced communicator has poured out an intimate message under strong emotion.' So with the automatic or passive writing. 'The vague scrawling changes its character. It becomes veridical; it begins to convey a knowledge of actual facts of which the automatist has no previous information; it indicates some subliminal activity of his own, or some telepathic access to an external mind.'

We are specially interested in noting that Mr. Myers wisely concentrates attention on the vital point,—the indications of intelligence. In this sense, he speaks of the 'controlled automatism of Mrs. Piper,' and frankly says; 'In Mrs. Piper's case, the message comes, as I hold, from a disembodied personality, using her brain and hand for the time.' Going farther afield, and referring generally to the 'Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research,' with their records of 'apparitions, intimations, messages of the departing and the departed' (phraseology well worth remembering), Mr. Myers holds that these have actually proved 'the persistence of the spirit's life as a structural law of the universe,' and that 'between the spiritual and the material worlds an avenue of communication does in fact exist.'

But the end is not yet. The strong probability is that the 'avenue of communication' will tend to become a highway, that the earthly man will develop (or may we say *reconvert*?) senses which will fit him for normal and unbroken communion with the spirit people on that highway, making that familiar and welcome which is now too often startling and forbidding. Hence we rejoice in the presence of so many hopeful signs of the times, full of promise for us as the days go by. But, whatever the future may have in store for us, we defy the world to pass by on the other side. It simply cannot do it. Our facts are impregnable, and concerning them we are content to echo the confident challenge of Mr. Myers: 'They are, at any rate, occurrences which neither psychologist nor theologian can safely ignore. They may be unwelcome to some students, perplexing to all; yet, until they are fairly faced, further discussions on man's nature and destiny may be ingenious, may be edifying, but cannot be thoroughly scientific.'

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

A meeting of Members, Associates, and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance will be held in the French Drawing Room, St. James's Hall (entrance from Piccadilly), at 7 for 7.30 p.m., on Friday, November 4th, when 'Tien,' speaking through Mr. J. J. Morse, will answer questions from the audience. Friends wishing for 'Tien's' help towards the solution of problems which may have occurred to them will do well to come prepared with their questions already written.

In accordance with Rule XV. of the Articles of Association, the subscriptions of Members and Associates elected after October 1st will be taken as for the remainder of the present year and the whole of 1899.

THE PROPER USE OF MEDIUMS.

BY MR. GEORGE SPRIGGS, EAST MELBOURNE.

The following from the pen of one of our most gifted mediums was written for the International Congress held in London, June 18-24, 1898.

The subject on which I have undertaken to express my views, the Proper Use of Mediums, I consider to be one of the most important, and at the same time the most difficult, in connection with Modern Spiritualism. I shall not pretend for one moment to cover the ground, but if I can only induce careful thought to be directed to the question by some who are better qualified to deal with it than myself, I shall be satisfied. It is an important subject, because without mediums our grand cause would soon drift away, and come to naught. It is a difficult subject, because of the complexity of the mental and spiritual conditions that are required to obtain satisfactory phenomena. We have not, I think, fully understood these conditions, and during the last few years our mediums seem to a large extent to have drifted away. Mediums have often been used for altogether unfit and improper work. I know, in my experience, of many people who go to mediums solely to consult them about gold mines, or coal mines, and all kinds of business purposes, and who often get misled; and quite right too, I think, if they have no more sense.

Mediums ought to be used for spiritual purposes, and before this can be done as it should be, we must classify our mediums and mediumship and put the subject into scientific order. This, I think, investigators ought to demand. There ought to be a small work in which the different phases of mediumship are explained, and the proper use and scope and limit of each phase clearly set forth and defined.

I sincerely hope the day is past when Spiritualists could think that the more ignorant the medium the more marvellous the manifestations. Mediums, before they can take their proper stand in this world, must educate themselves, and they will thereby become better and more worthy instruments for the spiritual world. How many unfortunate mediums have been ruined through having to sit in unsuitable circles. In all our gatherings for social intercourse we are most particular whom we admit. Why not so in those more important gatherings where we assemble to meet and hold intercourse with our spirit friends? For my own part I would do away with all sittings for foretelling the future or for business purposes. I wish, however, to be clearly understood here; I mean that we should not use the spirit-world for these purposes. If a medium possesses clairvoyant powers, and he or she can depend on them, that is quite a different thing.

We ought to raise the tone of our mediums, and use them for spiritual purposes. Our circles are too worldly. They ought to have more of the religious element in them. Religion I look upon as the cement that binds us together, and unless we cultivate it, and practise it in our circles, they will become like a house made up of loose stones just thrown together,—cold, and draughty, and inartistic.

Our circles are often unsympathetic, and without any religious feeling in them. I think that a better understanding of this is required. How many poor mediums, when in the circle, have their life forces drawn out of them, while the manifestations are going on. Their souls are being sacrificed upon the altar of unbelief. No wonder they drop out of the movement, and allow their powers to decline, and cease altogether. I certainly think that every medium ought to give reasonable proof of the reality of his powers, but he should not be condemned because one sitting was a failure. The great Teacher himself could not do many mighty works, 'because of their unbelief.'

Whatever phase of mediumship we are trying to evolve, we ought never to forget the spiritual workers. Before any great work can be accomplished, I believe we shall have to institute training schools for mediums; we must teach them their own powers, and protect them, and not leave them at the mercy of undeveloped spirits. I have witnessed some pitiful cases, all through ignorance of spiritual laws. Every medium ought to study his own powers, and the action of

mind upon mind, and how to resist and control undeveloped influences. If he does this, his mediumship will become a blessing to himself and to others, bringing life and immortality to light.

I would encourage more private circles, and the avoidance of extremes. The tendency shown by some unwise Spiritualists to overstate the facts and phenomena does a medium more injury than all the scepticisms in the world.

Many Spiritualists have spoiled mediums in different ways. They should not go to a medium to have their own particular fad proved; they should go to search for truth and light, and be well content if they get a little share of these priceless gems as their reward.

The proper use of mediums and mediumship is purely for spiritual work, but unless they look after themselves, and keep on the watch tower, they will not be able to resist temptation, because evil as well as good influences impinge upon them more forcibly than upon others, and they will soon fall if they do not watch. Mediums are yet rare, and even if they were not, it would be well to regard the manifestations as but a shadow of good things to come. I would say, encourage the 'rap' and every phase of mediumship. Jesus recognised the physical and mental conditions necessary when he only took three of his trusted disciples—I mean on the Mount of Transfiguration—and took them right away from the city, and right away from its noise and tumult and confusion, away from all its lower and adverse and mixed influences.

Use mediums, I would urge, for high moral purposes, for eternal truths and spiritual light; this will help their growth. Do not develop mediums of low organisation, but always see that their social life is pure and stainless. Then, and then only, will our cause take a fresh hold, and many mediums will arise, and develop their power, and become bright lights, and useful and reliable workers in the field. Further than this, I would say, let test and trance mediums pass through a special training by competent teachers and trainers. Then a certificate should be given them, and no society should encourage a medium unless he could show a certificate of competency. In the case of physical mediums, I would have a small committee of able, earnest, and level-headed investigators formed for the purpose of investigating the phenomena thoroughly, who should keep a record of everything that occurs, both for and against, and publish their reports of the conditions and the manifestations. But the physical sésances should not be allowed to be public. I would have no physical sésances for the public, and I would never allow the public into dark sésances. Then, I believe, only the genuine medium would come forward.

Unsatisfactory physical sésances, as we all know too well, have in the past brought many a blot upon our fair cause. It is vitally necessary that we should have a new order of things. We have now fifty years of experience to look back upon, and we shall do well to consider its lessons and its warnings. How many mediums during that period have been sacrificed through imperfect and bad methods. Let us do away altogether with wonderful 'shows.' These do not constitute Spiritualism; they do not help it, but too often quite the reverse. They only ruin mediums and sitters, sooner or later, whereas sitting under proper conditions, if not too often, has no injurious effect, but quite the reverse, as mediums cannot come into contact with higher spirits without being benefited, both physically and spiritually.

What mediums and sitters want is more light, and more of the religious element; then our sésances will become a benefit and a blessing to sitters and mediums alike. Let us all work to hasten that glorious time.

Mediums, too, must be held strictly responsible for their own actions. If they do anything that is wrong, they should take the consequences. It is not right or wise that the blame should be put upon the spirit friends; yet how often have we seen this done!

To mediums, or those who aspire to be such, I would say: If you want to be really useful, find out what your powers are, and how they may best be developed. If they are but of little importance and not likely to yield much to cultivation, I would advise you not to waste your time in sésances, but instead of this try to help your suffering brothers in some other way, for which by nature and organisation you

are better adapted. There has been a good deal of useless effort in the past in sitting for results which never come, and never can come, because the mediumistic spark in the individual, if it exists at all, is too small and insignificant ever to be kindled into much of a flame. It is distressing to see people sitting time after time, under these circumstances, and having nothing but inevitable disappointment as the outcome, when they could have made themselves of real use in other ways; and I would commend this to careful consideration.

SPIRITUALISTS' NATIONAL FEDERATION.

The delegates and associates of the Federation met on Saturday and Sunday, the 8th and 9th inst., in the Hawk-head Hall, Southport, to further discuss and complete the Poll Deed, under which Spiritualists will receive full legal recognition, and be enabled to hold property in trust like any other religious body. The Executive held a meeting at four p.m. on Saturday, for the transaction of routine business, at which the following members were present: Mr. J. J. Morse (president), Mr. R. Fitton (treasurer), Mesdames Venables and Greenwood, Messrs. Johnson, Macdonald, Kitson, Chiswell, Lee, Collins, Swindlehurst (organising secretary), and W. Harrison (secretary). At a few minutes past five o'clock the secretary read the Keighley minute referring to the adjournment of the Conference held at Keighley on Saturday and Sunday, July 2nd and 3rd. The actual business of the Conference then commenced, and it soon became manifest that there was considerable divergence of opinion in the meeting, and that the chairman was not by any means on a bed of roses. However, after several alterations had been made in the draft deed, it was ultimately resolved, at an adjourned meeting on Sunday morning, on the motion of Mr. Wm. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Musgrove, 'That the poll deed as amended be accepted, and that the Executive be instructed to proceed to make it legal as soon as possible,' which, on being put to the meeting, was carried with acclamation.

Prior to the conclusion of this part of the Conference, the president announced that there were thirteen members of the Executive present, thirty-three delegates, and twenty-six associates, making a total of seventy-two.

The business being ended so far as the poll deed was concerned, it was agreed that the discussion of the rules of the Conference should stand over till 'the poll deed is accepted by the Registrar-General.'

At this point it was moved by Mr. S. S. Chiswell, seconded by Mr. R. Fitton, and supported by several members of the Conference, 'That the congratulations of the Conference be accorded to Mr. J. J. Morse for the able manner in which he has managed the business of the Conference,' to which the highly esteemed president suitably replied.

In the afternoon and evening public meetings were held in the Temperance Institute, London-street. Mr. J. J. Morse, President of the Conference, occupied the chair, and delivered admirable introductory addresses. Very effective addresses were also given by Mr. W. Johnson, Mr. Venables (Walsall), Dr. Rogerson, Mrs. Jessie Greenwood (Sowerby Bridge), Mr. Alfred Kitson, Mr. Peter Lee, Mr. Joseph Armitage, Mr. John Pemberton, and Mr. Barraclough; and clairvoyant descriptions were successfully given by Miss E. A. Smith and Mrs. Newton.

In bringing the proceedings to a close, the President observed that these were the largest meetings of Spiritualists that had ever been held at Southport, and formed an encouraging contrast to the one he spoke at, in the room on the same site, over twenty years ago, when there were only sixty persons present. He hoped many more good meetings would be held, and he had been glad to meet the Spiritualists of Southport, as well as the visitors from other towns.

Mr. J. J. Morse is to be complimented upon the excellent tact he displayed throughout the whole of the Conference, and the felicitous little speeches he made in introducing the various speakers. Mrs. S. S. Chiswell ably acted as pianist in the hymn accompaniment, and the proceedings were concluded in the usual way with hymn and benediction.

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

CONCERNING REINCARNATION.

We subjoin the translation of a communication which has reached us from the pen of M. Gabriel Delanne, who is, as our readers are aware, one of the most able of the exponents of the doctrine of 'Successive Lives':—

I read in your excellent paper of October 1st an article entitled, 'Concerning Reincarnation,' to which, as my name is mentioned therein, I should like to reply.

Your correspondent seems to be under the impression that reincarnation is simply a philosophical theory, with no basis whatever of positive fact. He imagines that it is only on the statements of Allan Kardec's spirit instructors that we found our belief in successive lives.

This was the case once, but it is so no longer to-day. Thirty years ago the spiritual evolution of the soul was taught only by disembodied spirits, and it was possible to see in the teaching only the personal theories of Allan Kardec's guides; therefore the question still remained necessarily in the domain of hypothesis. To-day, however, it is no longer so, for we have facts not a few which demonstrate successive lives.

In my paper read before the Congress, the theory is presented simply as a whole, shorn of all corroborative details, and thus deprived of much of its value. I should wish your readers to know, however, that the paper contained numerous facts, and it was these that formed the basis of my statement that the question has now passed from the region of the philosophical to that of the scientific.

The delivery of my lecture being confined to the limit of half an hour, the translator had necessarily to curtail much; but perhaps it would have been better for the clearer understanding and instruction of the hearers, had it been possible to give the facts and illustrations contained therein, which lent to the teaching of reincarnation the force of a truth proved by experience.

The fluidic body whose existence before and after death has been fully demonstrated, is the regulator of animal life during incarnation; it also retains after death all the intellectual acquisitions of earth life.

From whence has this spiritual body acquired these powers, if not in anterior lives? Not from space, for spirit has no organic life, neither drinks, eats, nor generates. Nor from other worlds, for if they are inhabited—which I do not doubt—the organisms of the thinking inhabitants must be unlike our own, in virtue of natural laws which operate in different conditions from ours. Sir William Crookes has shown, in a lecture given before the Psychical Research Society, how much the least variations in intensity, whether in regard to weight, heat, or light, would produce changes in our material bodies; and this must apply equally to other spheres than our own.

Does God create a new soul for every body that comes into the world? I cannot think so; for He would not have given us useless organs, such as the *pineal gland*, the *petuicler muscle*, which in the case of horses enables them to produce a shudder of their skin, but which, in the case of man, serves no purpose whatever; the *plantare grêle*, and others which remain as indications of our animal origin.

It is not the parents who transmit these conditions, for the fertilised cell, which is the germ of life, is replaced, by the nutrition of the foetus, more than a thousand times before birth. It is an ascertained fact that in the mother's womb we pass from the simple cellule through all the successive stages of mollusc, fish, reptile and quadruped till the human type is reached. Thus, if the fluidic body is the real model, the form on which the material body is moulded, built up, and renewed, it must have acquired that power by many earth lives passed in these forms. I explained in the untranslated portion of my lecture how I believed this to be possible, considering the proofs science has now placed before us. Thanks to these facts, a few only of which I will indicate, not to trespass on too much of your space, we can now state that this theory has a scientific basis.

Further and better, I quoted three kinds of direct proof. Firstly, the statements by men of eminence like Lamartine, Méry, the Count de R  s  , that they had recollections of a former life on earth. These affirmations have been confirmed by positive facts; that is to say, by proofs which have been

given of their correctness. I cited also the case of children whose memories of former lives were confirmed by the fact that they were able to describe and name accurately places unknown to them, also to give the names of people as formerly dwelling there, and who did, in fact, do so at the time referred to. I entered also into the question of the possibility of attributing these examples to somnambulism, or to clairvoyance, and showed how, as far as I can see, no such considerations would cover the facts of the case.

To a second class of proofs belongs the predictions made by spirits, announcing their birth in a certain family, their sex, and the principal details of their future life, all of which predictions were verified by time.

The third class of evidence is comprised in the communications by spirits who have affirmed that they remember not only one, but many lives. Clearly we must not accept these statements unchallenged, but neither must we cast them aside without examination, for we should thus, without due reason, invalidate thousands of communications from spirits who have always shown themselves truthful and on a high moral plane. But if desired, we can restrict our arguments to examples of memory and realised predictions which we think will amply satisfy the English public as to the solid basis of the belief held by the Spiritists of the Latin races.

Lastly, I recapitulate that our theory logically explains the evolution of lives, so dissimilar even in the same family; it illumines the destiny of the animal world; and is in harmony with Divine justice, which is incapable of conferring privileges on some of His children to the detriment of others. Finally, it is founded on Nature's facts, to which the final appeal must always be made, for they alone represent the truth, while philosophic reasonings are often misleading.

I have retained a most agreeable memory of my reception at the Congress, and warmly thank you for it.

Paris.

GABRIEL DELANNE.

'THE VOICE OF THE SPIRIT.'

The following has been placed in our hands as likely to interest some of our readers; but we take no responsibility for the views expressed by our correspondent:—

Spiritualists may expect a very potent addition to spiritual literature before the end of this year, when an advent of the Christ-spirit will come, we fancy, from a little expected quarter. It will be remembered that some time ago you noticed in 'LIGHT' a book called 'The Voice of the Spirit,' by Mr. Howard Swan (S. Low and Co.), being translations, in the ordinary idiomatic style of to-day, of certain books of the Bible. There are to be four of these books, the first two already published being Job and Isaiah. Mr. Swan has the theory that, at various periods of the world's history, the human mind was pressed upon by the 'divine saving power' of certain books, and as each new revelation came, the load of watching, waiting, and superstition was removed suddenly, rolled up, as it were, 'as a scroll,' leaving the mind free to uprise. The Old Testament books, therefore, do not now produce this effect of superstitious awe; but the New Testament does, and it is in releasing this spiritual pressure, so to speak, that the effect, small at first but afterwards great, may be expected. Careful investigation, it is alleged, has gone to show that the presentation in the Gospel is not intended as a historic man at all, but of a 'spirit' personified—that, namely, of Truth and Justice. When this is realised, and it is actually demonstrated that a 'spirit' can walk the earth, urge, teach, lift and save men, and give rise to this immense organisation, doubters as to the influence of impact of spirit upon matter will be definitely put to rout—those, at least, who feel at all the influence of the higher spirit. The manner in which the discovery has been made must have had its elements of mystical influence; but in the main the manner of investigation is this. In the first place it was found that the actual literary skill in the construction of the Gospel story is greater and more consciously exerted than usually supposed. The story is constructed, as seen on analysis, on

Greek models, with statement of problem, development, characterisation and *dénouement*. In the second place, all the names of persons and places bear significant meanings in the Hebrew; for instance, 'Capernaum, between Zebulun and Naphtholim,' means 'Village of Comfort in between Spiritual Intercourse and Strivings.' So for all the names of persons; Jesus of Nazareth meaning Justice of Separation or Distribution; and the first chapter of Matthew is a careful essay on the birth and development of the 'spiritual conception' of the indwelling Spirit of Truth and Justice. The translation is done into simple, straightforward, idiomatic English of force and power, and the allusions and denunciations and encouragements are all brought up to date to the end of the nineteenth century. It appears on this hypothesis that all four Gospels were written by one man (John), in different styles, to appeal to four different classes of readers. In his version Mr. Swan has written four different prefaces from these four different standpoints. The two books, Ezekiel and Matthew, are to be published by Messrs. Sampson Low and Co. on November 15th.

THE ORIGIN OF SUGGESTION.

By DR. DURAND DE GROS.

Referring to the article on 'Active and Passive States' on p. 454, Dr. Durand writes to our contributor 'Q. V.':—

'In justice to the American electro-biologists, so called, I would wish to point out that the first lines of the above article would require modification. My excellent friend Dr. Liébeault really drew his first conceptions of therapeutic suggestion from my work on "Electro-Dynamisme Vitale" (1855) and my "Cours de Braidisme" (1860). His first book on this question dates 1866. But it was not I who discovered the suggestion therapeutics I first described in my lectures in Brussels in 1853. I obtained the secret from the American electro-biologists, who initiated me into it in London in 1852, and it is really on them that the whole of the honour should devolve.

'Faria, again, was the precursor both of the electro-biologists and of Braid. My own merit in the matter pertains to the fact that I presented a new theory both of Braidism and of suggestion.

'I would desire to call attention to these main episodes in the struggle I maintained for forty years, for the triumph of the ideas now universally acknowledged, but repelled by science for a third of a century, as nonsensical.'

In his 'Cours de Braidisme' (F. Alean), he refers to Grimes of New England as the initiator of electro-biology and of verbal suggestion. Stone of Boston published a summary, in London, 1852, of a work on this subject by J. B. Dods, 'The Philosophy of Electro-Biology' (Fowler and Wells, New York). Dr. Darling propagated these ideas in England and temporarily rivalled Braid. But Braid adopted them and declared in consequence 'that he grafted a new active principle, that of the moral effect of affirmation, on to his original hypnotism.' The two systems thus became unified and the paternity thereof has been generally attributed to Braid by the scientific world. The methods and principles of Braid were very different originally, and Braidism, which has its own value, is quite distinct from suggestion.

It is of interest to observe that at the recent banquet of the Société d'Hypnologie, in Paris, the honorary secretary, Dr. Bérillon, in proposing a toast to Dr. Durand de Gros, referred to him as 'the introducer of hypnotism into France; he shared with Dr. Liébeault the honour of having forestalled his contemporaries in the studies with which they are now so familiar.'

The theories advanced by Dr. Durand de Gros in the works above referred to, and in his 'Merveilleux Scientifique,' are gradually receiving general recognition. They have been adopted by Dr. Liébeault and by Professor Boirac (vice-president of the Société d'Hypnologie), as noticed in this paper. We hope to be able to present a notice of Dr. Durand's works on a subsequent occasion.

God sleeps in the stone, breathes in the plant, moves in the animal, and wakes up to consciousness in man — SCHELLING.

A PROPER secrecy is the only mystery of able men; mystery is the only secrecy of weak and cunning men. — CHESTERFIELD.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

The 'Spiritual Fellowship' Colony.

SIR,—If the members of the above-named society have acquired or inherited sufficient means from the competitive production of wealth to render them independent of the world's profit-mongering, and are prepared by prayer and unbroken meditation to generate a psycho-dynamical force of a spiritually helpful and harmonising nature, like unto the monastic mode of collective, prayerful service, then I have nothing to say in disparagement of the effort, and some praise for the high-aimed endeavour. But if Mr. C. Smith's scheme for communal association is simply another attempt at isolated industrial self-sufficiency with a Theosophic or Deific basis, a note of warning is needed.

'Subordination of the self to the Divine Will,' as a command or direction, is too vague, crude, and visionary for the production of common harmony. Father Noyes, of America, followed some such pious plan in his celebrated communal family, enforcing the most rigid self-renunciation upon all, even to the yielding up the heart's choice in matrimonial affairs, and mating with the aged and passionless.

The late Hepworth Dixon's work on communal and socialistic fraternities in America may be consulted with profit.

Apart from praying bands, and monastic life, pure and simple, for those socially free ones who have a strong 'call' for such a life's dedication, the strivings after communal brotherhoods (in which the cost of daily subsistence must, in the main, be defrayed from capital or a pauperising fund subscribed by supporters) are nothing better than distinct stirrings of visionary impulse arising from a non-comprehension or appreciation of the general genius in the world.

Harmony is not altogether absent from the earth. To paraphrase a line from Tennyson, harmony, flowing through inharmony, exists in large measure in all Western civilisation. The weekly issue of 'LIGHT' diffuses harmony on spiritual subjects to its various readers; and apart from the family circle, there is the harmony which subsists among the attendants at chamber concerts, high-class plays, libraries, and other centres for the unifying association of men.

Communistical principles need no special pleading or microscopical object lessons in self-effacing brotherhoods. Such puny wilderness exploitings are out of date, and suggest the blighted genius order of mind for their inception.

The Concert of Europe in the affairs of Crete should teach all willing learners that the communistical school-master is abroad, and that despite the selfishness of the units in all the industrial sections, and the hard competition of commercial rivals, the God-like power of social necessities runs through the entire mental fabric, and brings a measure of peace and harmony to all.

To take one's talents out of the arena of competing civilisation, and march off with one or two companions into a quiet side nook, savours somewhat of the soldier's escape from the field of battle, or exposes an egotism which transcends ability. If Shakespeare, Burns, Mozart, Beethoven, Titian, Angelo, Stephenson, Arkwright, Edison, and all great teachers, had left the active world of labour before they had accomplished any notable thing, where would the world be to-day! We have the Ten Commandments only from the mountain top, the rest has come from minds that lived and toiled amid the busy haunts of men.

97, Fleet-street, London, E.C.

J. W. MAHONY.

Christian Scientists.

SIR,—The recent report in the 'Daily Chronicle,' of an inquest on a Major Lester, who died from peritonitis after being treated by a Christian Scientist, is calculated to bring healers generally (other than the medical faculty) into disrepute. It is true that the Christian Scientist was not called in until medical treatment was found to be of no use, and further that a marked improvement was noticed during the

time the patient was under the Christian Scientist's care, but in the end the Major died and the Christian Scientist received a severe censure from the coroner. According to the evidence it seems to me highly probable that had the Christian Scientist known a little of the science of healing (as she was evidently a medium), she might have saved not only the life of the Major, but also herself from being placed in a false and very awkward position. The Christian Scientists and the Peculiar People are exactly the same as regards their methods, faith being the great factor. In the case of the Christian Scientist the individual thinks herself sufficient to perform what is necessary, while the faith healer practically holds a séance, for he calls in the elder, who lays on the hands and prays. Many cures result, such as cases of debilitated persons being strengthened, which are the easiest under the circumstances and which are largely influenced by the conditions of the sitters or the Christian Scientist.

In the case of the Major, had the operator trusted less to faith, and more to work, she might have found herself able, by using her hands in passes from the head to the feet, to entirely draw off the febrile inflammation, and by another process, by means of her hands, she would then have been able to throw into the nervous system of her patient such vital force as she could spare, with the probable result of effecting a complete cure. This information should be valuable to many who are setting up as healers, finding themselves with healing power but quite unable to understand that a scientific application is necessary, in which the hands are a primary factor, as well as a knowledge of the locality to be operated on, which is frequently remote from the part affected. Many healing mediums simply lay their hands on, and trust to their spirit guides to do the rest. Such healers, however, quickly retire after a few severe reverses, which are mainly due to not having sufficiently studied and persevered with the work. It is really astonishing how little the various healers know about the pathology of their art. The hypnotist is satisfied with suggestion, the Christian Scientist with faith in Christ, the Peculiar People with prayer and the laying on of hands, the mesmerist with passes (often indiscriminate), and the healing medium with whatsoever the impulse of the moment moves him to do. In the case of the last-named, up to a certain point the spirit guides entirely perform the work, manipulating the hands and directing the stream of vitality to the source of the disease. After a time, however, these guides leave the medium to his own resources, to investigate, and to learn from the experience he should have gained. If their efforts are wasted and the medium has not profited by such instructions, the guides leave, the power is withdrawn, and the medium becomes discredited. The great mistake many Spiritualists make is in believing that there are always spirits willing to do what they desire, because they are mediums. The greater the medium, the greater the care necessary to prevent bad spirits coming in at the open door. The danger is very clearly pointed out in 'Spirit Teachings,' where notice was given of the withdrawal of the guides because of the condition of the medium. Nothing is more common than for the healing medium, on finding himself possessed of the power, to think he can cure all diseases. To arrogantly boast of the ability to cure any disease whatever, and that instantly—as has been sometimes professed—is the greatest possible folly—as is conclusively proved as soon as put to the test; for nothing can more certainly destroy the power than such absurd pretensions. While Slater was here it was painful to hear the manner in which he would address his guide in public, which could only end in the guide's withdrawal, probably after making him look ridiculous by inciting him to do something absurd by way of an object lesson. In the case of Schlatter, the healer, reports are current here that he cured thousands by simply giving each a squeeze of the hand. I know enough about healing to doubt these reports in the majority of cases. One case of blindness was specifically reported, when, if the cases were true, there should have been a thousand.

These lines are written with a view of drawing the attention of healers to their responsibility. Work is better than faith in all cases of healing.

W. H. EDWARDS.

A Recognised Spirit-Photograph.

SIR,—In my letter in 'LIGHT' of August 27th, 1898, it was stated that whilst in London (at the spirit-photographer's Z., where I obtained a spirit-photo of my late wife's sister and father, reported in 'LIGHT' of December 14th, 1898), in June last, when representing South Africa at the Spiritualist Jubilee Conference, I again visited Z., hoping to obtain a spirit-photo of my late wife. The photographer, who possesses clairvoyant power, stated that the spirit of the late Mrs. H. was close beside me. This was not a surprise, as she had been seen near me in the same place a month previous, when up from Southampton. Both myself and the photographer had known her quite well during her lifetime, and had seen her mortal remains when they were placed in the coffin. This spirit, when on earth, had to undergo many severe trials, and on many occasions, myself and Z.—the photographer—gave her friendly and sympathetic advice, and even after the death of her mortal body, we earnestly prayed for her spiritual welfare. This fact may probably explain why she had been attracted to us. At any rate, as I had come specially for the purpose of trying to get a spirit-photo of my late wife, I stated that, although I was pleased to hear of Mrs. H.'s presence, I wanted to secure, if possible, my spirit-wife's photo. This unsympathetic state of mind, by a very subtle psychological law, seemed to send her away, for, said the photographer, she suddenly vanished, and in her place my Druidic spirit-guide appeared (and who was duly photographed, as reported in 'LIGHT' of August 27th, 1898, under the head of 'Stonehenge Spiritualism').

The day before I left London for Cape Town, per Royal Mail Steamship Gothic, on August 4th last, I went with a private (lady) medium and her friends to Z.'s place to try again, when I had my little daughter, St. Beetha, with me—who was also going out to the Cape—thinking that this child's presence would assist in attracting her mother's (my wife's) spirit.

Whilst there, three separate negatives were taken, one of which, the photographer stated, was the same spirit who had been standing by my side a week or so before.

I only had time to see him develop two of the photos, neither of which, at the time, I recognised. The proofs were subsequently forwarded to me at my present address (4, Roeland-street, Cape Town), one of which I now fully recognise as the late Mrs. H., whose spirit-form in semi-profile is most distinct, at any rate to myself, and I ought to be able to judge.

I omitted to state that on the morning of the same day that we sailed, we just had time to run up to Mr. Z. to ask him to make a rough proof of the first photograph, which I had reason to think was that of my late wife. To oblige me he did it, at 8.30 a.m., but it turned out to be a female spirit not recognised by myself or child. The others followed by next mail steamer, and when I got them, one of them turned out to be a most satisfactory and *perfect resemblance*. I am alluding to the head and face only of my friend, the late Mrs. H. By way of recording the fact, please insert this report.

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

Dated at Cape Town, Sept. 17th, 1898.

Evidences of Spiritualism.

SIR,—Strongly intrenched as Modern Spiritualism is on its philosophical and scientific sides, and unanswerable as are the evidences presented in the writings of Robert Dale Owen, Andrew J. Davis, Sir William Crookes, Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, &c., it would not be reasonable to suppose that no one can honestly, and even from the vantage ground of knowledge and intellectual ability, be a sceptic with regard to its truths and facts. There are too many persons who run a tilt against Spiritualism—as Don Quixote did against the windmills—through prejudice and ignorance, as well as from theological bigotry. These will persist in misrepresenting and misunderstanding the true *rationale* and *raison d'être* of Spiritualism. Of these I do not intend to speak. It remains a fact that there are minds so constituted as to be practically unaffected by the best evidential literature, and this after patient and intelligent perusal, as well as experience of some, if not all, of the phenomena.

There are minds which can sympathise with and appreciate such writings as 'The Debatable Land' and 'Footfalls,' &c., and are arrested by the line of argument and the powerful array of testimony—the *bona-fides* of which they do not dispute—and yet in the sequel continue in scepticism. Spiritualists can learn a great deal from non-believers of this order and cast of mind. It is well that our strongest defences should be efficiently tested; not at all, be it remembered, for the sake or on account of the defences themselves as such, but that their efficiency may win the recognition and respect of all orders and conditions of men. I can speak from personal knowledge and experience of highly-cultured, intellectual men, who in one sense, and that a profoundly spiritual one, are Spiritualists, and yet repudiate the claims of Modern Phenomenal Spiritualism. Their writings—for they are shining lights in literature—leave no foothold for materialism. Perhaps Modern Spiritualism is indebted to them in no small degree for the wider recognition and reception of their doctrines.

We can best gauge the position by taking a glance at an analogous case. Before the advent of railways, steam navigation, and electric telegraphs, there were doubtless men whose minds were deeply imbued with Bacon's philosophy, who yet held aloof from the early inventors. We can even imagine such persons aiding the persecution of these same pioneers. It was not that they had no qualification as scientific thinkers and researchers, but that they could not realise the significance, relevancy, and importance of these early essays at invention. The time was not ripe.

Modern Spiritualism would seem to be as crude and revolutionary to the class of objectors I have referred to as those early attempts at railways did to minds well equipped in other respects to appreciate scientific discovery and invention. I am fully appreciative of, and grateful for, my privileges as a believer in the facts and philosophy of Modern Spiritualism, and am a devoted student of the works of Crookes, Wallace, Dale Owen, &c., and a constant and eager reader of 'LIGHT,' and yet I can often strengthen and refresh myself by diligent perusal of the writings of men who disavow all connection with the modern phenomenal movement.

HENRY F. MARTINDALE.

Pietermaritzburg, Natal, September 17th, 1898.

Mr. Peters' Clairvoyance.

SIR,—Having repeatedly seen the advertisement of Alfred Peters, 4, Merrington-road, West Brompton, S.W., in your valuable paper, I, together with several other residents, took the opportunity of interviewing him whilst he was on a short visit to this city.

The private sittings in every case were most successful, and some of the tests were particularly remarkable. I could mention several, but space will not permit. The most extraordinary, however, was with Mr. Colborne. This gentleman has just recovered from hemorrhage and congestion of the lungs. The medium said he could see a tall dark lady standing by Mr. Colborne. Mr. Colborne, who had previously been told by other mediums that they had seen this spirit lady, asked Mr. Peters what symbol she was holding that he could recognise her by. The medium at once said, 'She has something in her hand, and it looks like a stone; she is directing attention to it by tapping it. Her name is Jane—is it Flint?' Mr. Colborne replied in the affirmative, the description being one of a spirit lady doctor of that name. In the circle there was a lady who spoke Hindustani, and as the medium was controlled by the spirit of a Brahmin priest, he went through the duties of one and spoke the language perfectly.

We one and all agree that Mr. Peters is an extraordinary medium, and we think it is a great pleasure to testify to his wonderful power.

W. T. ENGLAND.

37, High-street, Canterbury.

Madame Greck's Mediumship.

SIR,—About two years ago, to a séance with Madame Greck, I accompanied a friend of mine, a Scotch lady, who has herself a good deal of the open vision of her Highland ancestors. Had she been a man she would have been chieftain of the clan which has for its battle-cries 'Forward, Craig

Ellachie !' She had been married twice, and had a son by her first marriage, but I was then unaware that she had a stepson. She turned to me while Madame Greck was entranced, and asked, 'What question shall I put next?' So I suggested that she should ask about her son in Scotland. 'Sunshine,' one of Madame Greck's controls, soon replied in her quaint way, 'Oh ! yes, your son is here, but he is not on your side. . . . Oh ! but he died a terrible death. . . . (in a voice of agony, the medium pointing to her heart). He was struck just here. . . . I see black faces all round. . . . it is dreadful. . . . but I am to tell you now he is all right. . . . and did you see him when he came to visit you?' My friend, greatly agitated, answered yes, she had seen him, that it was all quite true. He was her second husband's son, but was much attached to her. He was in a Highland regiment, and had been killed in the Afghan War, and had come the same night to see her in London, at the house in Sloane-street where she then lived. Neither Madame Greck nor I was aware of his existence.

ALBINA MURRAY ROLLAND.

Royal Hotel, Monte Carlo.

Spiritualism in Glasgow.

SIR,—Although not of your school, may I tell your readers that the distinguished President of the Glasgow Society lectured here last Sunday with much acceptance? He referred to the challenge thrown out by the Spiritualists, and agreed with your humble servant that the question is not debatable. Many years ago the late Charles Bradlaugh put it this way: 'When a man who has taken a considerable amount of whisky says he sees a red dog. . . I do not deny that that man sees a red dog, but what I deny is that he is in a state which enables him to *sensate* accurately.' Precisely; and when an old gentleman said at a meeting the other night that he saw the body or spirit of a dead sailor, I recalled the question: Does this man *sensate* accurately? I hope, with the aid of your able President, to find out; and if I do find out, then good-bye to the school of Saladin. If the truth rests with Spiritualism, depend upon it Spiritualism will ultimately prevail, even although all the world should combine to crush it. Mr. Robertson is to lecture in Birmingham, and I say advisedly: Spiritualists of Birmingham, if you would hear a Theodore Parker and a Robert Dale Owen rolled into one, handling your philosophy as no one else could handle it, go with a Christian friend and hear Mr. Robertson, of Glasgow. J. KING (Agnostic).

110, Ingleby-drive, Glasgow.

Scottish Bazaar.

SIR,—In acknowledging the kindness of the many friends who assisted us in the work of our Bazaar, we overlooked the name of Mr. J. J. Morse. Mr. Morse came to us at great inconvenience, having to get free from another engagement, and we esteem very much his kindness and help. I trust he will pardon the oversight, as a man of his devotion to the cause should always have recognition for his arduous labours. One of our principal attractions was the Lantern Lecture, which helped many strangers to understand the story of the movement.

JAMES ROBERTSON.

MESMERISM AND HYPNOTISM.

Mr. Frank H. Randall is giving, at 17, Buckingham-gate Mansions, a course of lessons on the Philosophy and Practice of Mesmerism and Hypnotism, on Thursday evenings at 7, for 7.30, to 8.30 p.m.

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SOCIETY WORK.

MERTHYR SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, CENTRAL HALL.—We had good meetings last Sunday afternoon and evening, when Mr. W. H. Phillips (Notts) gave excellent addresses on the subjects, 'Satanic Influence,' and 'The Bible and Spiritualism,' which were highly appreciated by the audiences.—COR.

NORTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, 14, STROUP GREEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last, Mr. T. Brooks in the chair, the subject, 'Spiritual Communion' (suggested by the grand article in this week's 'LIGHT'), was dealt with by Messrs. Jones, Hewitt, Benvor, Barley, and Passglove. Sunday next, at 7 p.m.; Tuesday, at 8 p.m.; Wednesday, at 8 p.m. (members only).—J.B.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—In the regrettable absence of Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Brailey, Mr. J. Kinsman gave a reading on 'Death,' from 'Hafed Prince of Persia,' and Mr. Emms kindly gave the speech of the evening, reviewing the history of Modern Spiritualism. Next Sunday, Mr. Davis, of Canning Town, will give an address and psychometry.—J. N.

ISLINGTON SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, WELLINGTON HALL, UPPER-STREET, ISLINGTON.—On Sunday last Mr. Strong gave a reading, and Mr. Brenchley dealt with the criticisms of Professor Crookes's 'Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism'; also the rise and progress of Spiritualism. Mrs. Brenchley gave convincing clairvoyance. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., trance address, Mr. Dalley. Thursday, at 8 p.m., circle, for members only; medium, Mrs. Brenchley.—C. D. CATTO.

HENLEY HALL, HENLEY-STREET, BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—Last Sunday night, Mr. King, of the Theosophical Society, delivered a thoughtful address on 'Mediumship.' The lecturer, by the exceedingly clever manner in which he dealt with his subject, proved himself to have been a careful student of the various phenomena of Spiritualism. He disagreed entirely with the usual method of developing sensitives, and contended that 'elementals' often played an important part in the control of mediums, admitting, however, that mediumship had been the means of bringing him from agnosticism to the knowledge of life after death. A vigorous and prolonged discussion ensued. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., experience meeting.—P.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' MISSION, SURREY MASONS HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—On Sunday last we had a large attendance at our morning circle. In the evening the hall was well filled, Mr. Beel presiding. Mr. W. E. Long dealt with 'The Spirit's First Experiences at Death in the Spirit World.' The address was a fitting answer to the Archbishop of Canterbury's remarks on prayers for the dead and communion with the spirit world. Owing to the great interest taken in the subject it will, by special desire, be continued next Sunday. The after circle was well attended. Next Sunday, at 11 a.m., public circle; at 3 p.m., children's Lyceum; at 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long, 'The Spirit's First Experiences at Death,' continued; at 8 p.m., members' and associates' circle. 'LIGHT' always on sale.—VERAX.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—The untiring devotion of Mr. Everett to the cause of Spiritualism was once again evidenced at these Rooms on Sunday evening last, when, in the unavoidable absence of Miss MacCreadie, the esteemed President of the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists delivered an address which was attentively listened to and appreciated. Despite the unsettled state of the weather a numerous audience assembled, amongst whom were many members of the Marylebone Association of Spiritualists, who ever cherish an affectionate regard towards their President and who expressed their pleasure and delight at seeing Mr. Everett (who celebrates his Golden Wedding this week) once again occupying the public platform. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Miss Rowan Vincent will deliver an address and will also give some clairvoyant descriptions.—L. H.

STOKE NEWINGTON SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, BLANCHE HALL 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON-ROAD, N.—Our members' circle on Monday, the 10th inst., was conducted by Miss Findlay, who was very successful in giving psychometric tests. On Wednesday, owing to Miss MacCreadie being unavoidably absent, Mr. J. A. White came to our assistance at the last moment. Mr. White gave fifteen descriptions of spirit friends, thirteen of which were recognised, and our friend has our best thanks. Owing to Mr. John Allan's indisposition, our president gave us a most eloquent address, and Mrs. Sinclair favoured us with a solo, 'Dream Angel.' Sunday next, Mr. and Mrs. Boddington, Members' circle at 51, Bouvierie-road, on Monday, and Wednesday, at 8 p.m., at 59, Barratts-grove. We intend holding experience meetings after the Sunday services, which we trust will be helpful to many.—A. CLEGG, Hon. Sec.

SMETHWICK TOWN HALL.—Our ninth anniversary, on the 16th inst., was a decided success, thanks to Mr. G. H. Bibbings, editor of 'The Torch,' who gave two brilliant orations; to Mrs. Place, who ably seconded Mr. Bibbings with her successful clairvoyance; to Mrs. Groom, for her splendid efforts in address, impromptu poems, and clairvoyance; to Mr. Harry Rooke, for his beautifully rendered solos; to Messrs. G. E. Aldridge and Thomas Hands, for their able chairmanship; and to Mrs. Walton, Miss George, Messrs. Truran and Lynch, for musical arrangements. The platform was prettily decorated with ferns and cut flowers, and bright with the faces of senior and junior Spiritualists. Altogether Spiritualism has received a grand impetus at Smethwick.—D.F.

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THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.

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ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment. If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct sances, and what to expect. There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament and preferably of the female sex, the rest of a more positive type. Sit, positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestation. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential, and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such a trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful sance.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over, but not in contact with, it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let someone take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated, at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restriction on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer.

Lastly, try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

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