

# Light:

A Journal devoted to the Highest Interests of Humanity, both Here and Hereafter.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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Transmission Abroad.]

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This Company is established with the immediate object of starting and sustaining a Weekly Journal entitled "LIGHT"; devoted primarily to the collecting and recording of the facts and phenomena of Spiritualism, and the exposition of the Philosophy of Life and Mind; and secondarily to the discussion of such allied topics as are now occupying the attention of men of advanced thought.

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## LIGHT:

A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE HIGHEST INTERESTS OF HUMANITY BOTH  
HERE AND HEREAFTER.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

Published every Saturday

BY THE

Eclectic Publishing Company, Limited.

There is a large class of people who believe in a world which they call "the present," and who assert that no knowledge of any other is attainable.

There is another large class of people who believe also in a world they call "the next," and who also assert that no other knowledge of it is attainable than that which has been handed down to them.

There is yet another class of people—usually known as "Spiritualists"—who believe in the existence of facts and phenomena, accessible to those who will seek for them, demonstrating the existence of another world than the present, and who believe that, on the basis of these facts, a science and a philosophy may be built up furnishing a key to the problems of Life and Mind, and uniting both these worlds in one harmonious whole.

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## THE LULL IN PHENOMENAL SPIRITUALISM.

### No. III.

#### Hints to Mediums and Investigators.

In our last issue we interrupted our argument on this subject at the point where the methods of investigation open to the public were being considered. We were occupied in an attempt to decide whether anything in the practice of public mediumship, or in the methods of investigation, could throw light on the reasons for the present lull.

We think we can see some light here. Both mediums and sitters have deeds of omission and commission to answer for. Dark circles are not so conducted as to be legitimately used for purposes of public scientific investigation, even if it be conceded that anything worthy the name is possible under such conditions. A medium who is wise should not permit himself to be placed in a position where compromising results may ensue. He should not expose himself to the risk of obsession by a power which he cannot measure, and which is so equivocal in its manifestations. He should not place himself, bound hand and foot, at the mercy of that power—of those unprogressed intelligences—by giving them the very conditions of darkness and an unharmonised circle, which will enable them to work with most vigour. He should insist that he himself should be so placed, so clearly visible, that it may at any rate be manifest that what is done is not his doing. If there be, as is freely alleged, persons who have taken advantage of the general interest in Spiritualism to simulate phenomena, and so to get some share in the golden harvest, he should insist that it be made certain that he is not one of them; for, otherwise, he will assuredly get some of the obloquy caused by their deeds. If he must sit in a promiscuous circle, and become the recipient of its inharmonious influences, he should at least minimise the possible results by insisting that darkness shall not add power to the unseen forces, and bring uncertainty to those who are under such circumstances strangely called the observers. If he sit in darkness at all, it should be among experienced Spiritualists who know and trust him, and who will understand failures, and appreciate what an uninstructed person would misconstrue. With such members dark circles are full of instruction—to the public we fear they are but too frequently occasions of bewilderment.

"It is so difficult to do all this." Yes—very. We have got into a vicious method, and it is very hard to get out of it. We hope, almost without hope, that repeated warnings will lead experienced Spiritualists to join in a general protest against the perpetuation of conditions which have been proved over and over again to lend themselves so disastrously to deception. Until we face this matter directly, brushing away resolutely all side issues, we shall not escape the results which we deplore. We believe this vicious method of investigation to be one prominent cause of the lull which we lament. It is found that observation, worthy of the name, is impossible under the conditions favoured in public circles; and those who desire to lay a sound foundation soon abandon the attempt to lay it in that particular way. The public circle becomes, therefore, the haunt of the casual observer whom curiosity attracts, or of the enthusiast who needs no evidence to confirm his own convictions.

And here we come upon another of the causes that we are

tracing out. We are compelled to believe that the fair name of Spiritualism has suffered not a little at the hands of unreasoning friends and adherents, whose enthusiasm has led them to publish to a scoffing world records that will not stand the test of simple logical analysis, and to make claims which, were it possible to demonstrate their truth, should be reserved for the esoteric circle of instructed and experienced Spiritualists, but which, as propounded to a sceptical audience in the language of heated enthusiasm, with an utter disregard too often of exact and precise statement, can only be viewed with astonishment and regret. We are all too sadly familiar with the loosely-worded statement, the warm and enthusiastic description, replete with glowing words that half hide the exaggerated and hyperbolic thought that is born of imagination rather than of reason, and is concerned more with the heart than with the head. We know the very phraseology, the studied scorn, or perhaps we should rather say, the impulsive dislike of calm and cool statement—for there is little study in the matter. We are familiar with the usual platitudes, and know how little effect they can have on those whose minds are not already prepared to accept any imaginative description in lieu of proven fact.

We do not pretend for one moment to say that such records do not represent the mind of the recorder. Very frequently they are the outburst of excitement caused by an affectionate interview between an emotional person and a loved friend long, perhaps, mourned as lost. The language used may, to such a person, seem cold compared with the blest reality. But it is forgotten that this language is to be submitted to adverse criticism by an unemotional and sceptical public. Either the record should not be published at all, or it should be so stated as to stand the ordinary test of reasonable criticism. It may well be that it is too sacred to the writer to be thus dissected and analysed. It were well, then, that it be kept from the world, enshrined in the heart, to be produced only for the greater confirmation of already existent faith, or for the consolation of some sufferer who is like circumstanced. Such records belong to the sphere of the affections, and are not to be put into calm and calculated language such as an uninstructed inquirer has a right to demand.

A prolonged course of such reading has a most prejudicial effect on the ordinary mind. The inquirer begins to fear that emotion is the normal condition of the Spiritualist. He is fed on honey till he longs for a little wholesome bread. He reads the loosest statements of what, if true, are to him most portentous facts. These are forced upon him in such marvellous profusion that he finds himself wondering whether a few would have disagreed with his mental digestion so completely as this heaped up mass. Great names jostle one another, till he is driven to speculate whether the writer be not the favoured recipient of wisdom from the majority of the world's dead sages. He is relieved from the necessity for any prolonged speculation on this head by finding that the sages combine to talk what, in less august mouths, he would have no difficulty in describing as nonsense. But where do the names come from, and how come they into such grotesque companionship?

We will illustrate our meaning from a communication in the *New York World* of February 5th, which is much to the point. In so doing we take what comes first to hand, and do not desire to imply that the sample is more worthy of remark than many others that we might select. The journal in which it appears is a secular one, not devoted to the instruction of Spiritualists, and, therefore, the contents must come before sceptical and adverse minds. This, at the outset, is noteworthy. The heading reads, "The Wisdom of the Ghosts. *Æschylus*, *Euripides*, *Martin Luther*, *Genghis Khan*, and *Bacon*, in correspondence with *H. Kiddle*." The half column that follows purports to be an account of various sittings held by *Mr. Kiddle*, ex-superintendent of the *New York Public Schools*, with *Jesse Shepard*, a trance medium; and a very remarkable narrative it

is. "Mr. Shakspeare's Ghost" gives an exhaustive "review of the literature of Germany, France, and England during the last century." Bacon returns to commend his shorter essays at the expense of the "Novum Organum," which he very properly considers "too heavy for general reading." An anonymous Chinese philosopher and Confucius himself discuss the future of the United States, and, in view of the Chinese labour question, their views should be interesting. Bishop Butler deals with the Lourdes and Knock apparitions. Æschylus and Euripides discuss the Drama. Genghis Khan has something (we hope it is instructive) to say about the mixed question of Russian politics. Semiramis describes Babylon. Hermes Trismegistus reveals the mysteries of ancient Egypt; and Democritus takes a pessimistic view of things which is met and answered by De Quincey!

Now, the *World* is, of course, laughing, and small wonder. But there is no pretence that these great names were not brought in; there is no denial that the account is so far a representation, though an unfavourable one, of what took place. Mr. Kiddle himself is a man of intelligence and education, and is a not unfair type, though a pronounced one, of many Spiritualists. What, we ask in dismay, must be the effect of such pretensions, so put forward, on the average intelligent inquirer? The answer must be left to the imagination. No language at our command could even begin to do justice to it.

We have indicated some of the causes which, in our opinion, have combined to bring about the lull in phenomenal Spiritualism. To them must be added the too frequent mention of the subject in the courts of law. Most unfortunately, what are called scandals have been rife, and the public, antecedently prejudiced, has drawn conclusions unfavourable to the cause of Spiritualism. We do not now dwell on this further than to say that this state of things is inevitable, and that it very largely depends on ourselves whether it is a permanent injury or a disguised blessing. Mediums will be misjudged so long as prejudice is arrayed against them, and so long as they give it such a handle. If they be only true to themselves, and to the faith that they profess, then what is temporary injury will give a sure impetus to truth. We do not remember any case of the public prosecution of a Spiritualist which has not given fresh stimulus to inquiry. The prosecution of Slade did more to publish the facts of Spiritualism than any combined efforts of Spiritualists with which we are acquainted. It depends solely on the character of the questions involved, and of the evidence produced, whether any given prosecution—and there will be plenty to select from—be a blot on the cause, or a widespread advertisement of it. So long as they are in process these various prosecutions are deterrent. It is a question of the inherent nature of the facts involved whether that deterrent character be permanent, or transient only, to be succeeded by a revulsion of feeling and largely increased interest.

### THE LAWS OF SPIRIT COMMUNION.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Kindly send me the future numbers of "LIGHT." I am glad such a periodical is out. The only defect I notice in it is the apparent lack of perception that the laws of spiritual phenomena are regulated accurately by subjective conditions, mental, emotional, and moral, of the sitters. I sympathise neither with the Guild of the Holy Spirit on the one hand, nor with undevotional séances on the other. I am a powerful medium myself, and have studied it rigorously under exceptional personal circumstances, and I am convinced that Law rules it all, not accident. Give the proper conditions and the highest phenomena will immediately come. But just as science made no progress till the inductive method was attained, so Spiritualism—the laws of spirit-life—lie in harmony of intellect, moral life, and emotions, with sound bodily health. Devotional séances, apart from intellectual and moral culture, are as insipid as undevotional séances are. So far, I am compelled to say, you do not seem to me to be really working out the right method. Still for all that I am glad to see the elements such as your paper supplies. I am thankful, therefore, for "LIGHT," and trust it will circulate well.

Yours truly,

T. W. G.

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### SERJEANT COX'S "MECHANISM OF MAN."

Address delivered by Mr. Frank Podmore B.A. (Oxon), before the British National Association of Spiritualists, Monday, March 21st.

In 1873 and 1874 there was published "A Popular Introduction to the Study of Psychology," by Serjeant Cox. This work may be viewed in two aspects. By Spiritualists it has been generally looked upon as an attempt to explain on a scientific basis certain facts which had hitherto been either entirely discredited, or else referred, without question of means, or instruments, or conditions, to the agency of spiritual beings. There are plenty found to chronicle, and a few even in some sort to classify these phenomena. There are theories enough of the unscientific, or what may be called mystico-scientific kind—such as A. J. Davis' "Nature's Divine Revelations"—to account for them. There are even scattered hints of scientific analogies or supposed analogies, in previous and contemporary writers, indicating a wish to assimilate them with all that we already know, and so to make "the bounds of knowledge wider yet." But of elaborate and consistent attempt, by means of pure science, and at worst, of scientific conjecture, to bring within the region of what can be proved and demonstrated and explained these abnormal phenomena, other than this of Serjeant Cox, there is none. And if on this account only, the book must be allowed to be well worthy of note. If it can be approved, or, at least, not disapproved, much has been gained. And if we should find, on careful examination, that the theories put forth as those of science, or at least, in harmony with science, are, in great part, not scientific at all; and that such as are so are quite incompetent to solve any but the least part of the problem with which they deal—leaving the question, indeed, just *in statu quo*—it may still be said that the position of the Spiritualist is no worse off than before; it were unjust for the sake of a weak advocate to damn a good cause.

But this was not the point of view most strongly dwelt on by the author himself. In the preface to his first volume he boldly announces himself as about to set the science of psychology on a new basis, and to enter into the lists and do battle on behalf of the theologians, who cannot help themselves, against the scientific Materialists, who seem all too likely, at present, to gain the day. And throughout the book it is to be noted that he consistently poses as the champion of religion; as professing to prove against the Materialists the existence of a soul in man. And whatever concessions, as of "material mind" and such-like, he may make to them, he views them always as concessions, at the price of which he may more firmly establish his own position, as above stated, to the confusion of his adversaries, thus defeated with the weapons forged by themselves. And at the end of the second volume he boasts that, by means of the facts and arguments which he has adduced, "we are enabled to arrive at some definite conception of that which the Materialists reject as being inconceivable—an Immortal Soul—an Omniscient and Omnipresent God."

Let us hasten to examine into the nature of the theory which is to reconcile these two definitely contrasted views of the universe—that of the Materialist and that of the Theologian. In his views of the human body Mr. Cox goes so far with the Materialists as to admit of automatism up to a certain point. Where he definitely, and where he only conjecturally joins issue with them it is difficult, from the unscientific vagueness of his language, to determine. But he is, apparently, simply endeavouring to give expression to the vulgar theory—if a tissue of unreconciled contradictions, never fairly brought face to face, can be called a theory—that whilst the body is a self-acting machine in most actions, certain others are initiated by an external entity, the Mind, and controlled by another entity, the Will. At all events, he admits the physiological hypothesis—that the brain, in certain bodily states, is capable of thinking without the accompaniment of consciousness; and that the act of thinking so performed is as purely a mechanical, or chemical, or physiological process as is the peristaltic action of the stomach, or the secretion of bile by the liver. He also speaks of Mind as that part of the intelligence "which is strictly material—which is so visibly and palpably a part of the organisation that it grows, declines, and is extinguished with the body." (p. 156.) Again, he says (p. 162): "Intelligence is not a visible or tangible entity; it is not a structure, it is only a function. Precisely as digestion is a function of the stomach, intelligence is a function of the brain." So far he might be a follower of Condillac or the Encyclopedists.



But later on (p. 291), whilst "admitting mind to be a product of the material structure, or even, if the Scientists please, a condition of organisation," he contends that "*there is in us something other than Life and Mind, which exists distinct and apart from them*, closely allied with them, but not identical; bound to them by conditions as yet imperfectly understood because insufficiently explored; living with them, but not dying with them; to which the Mind is as the servant, and the Body as the garment; a distinct definite existence that passes away and lives as an individual being when the body dies, the brain decays, and the mind ceases." And this something it is which he calls the Soul, or Spirit—for he expressly declares that the terms are identical, or differ only as species from genus, the former being used specially of man's soul. Of his precise views on the nature of this Soul, or Spirit, his words leave no room for doubt. They are strikingly similar to certain other views put forward a year or two later in a work called "The Unseen Universe."

The accomplished physicists, Messrs. Balfour-Stewart and Tait, who are well-known to be the authors of that book, find themselves as perplexed as Serjeant Cox by the Materialism of the present day. They discern, however, a ray of light in Sir W. Thomson's theory of vortex atoms. According to this view the ultimate particles—what we call atoms—of matter, are simply eddies of definite size in a perfect fluid. Now, the fluid being perfect, the eddies, once formed, can neither be enlarged, nor diminished, nor destroyed, but remain for ever unalterable. Now, what hinders us from supposing that there may be other and smaller vortices in the same perfect fluid, which may constitute, say, the ether? And we may, if we please, go on to suppose that within the body which we see, compounded of larger vortex atoms, there may be another body, answering to it point for point, but invisible, being compounded of smaller vortices, and within that another, and so on. And this inner body, during lifetime, may be supposed responsive to every tremor and movement of the outer body; so that we have a double brain and a double life experience, and, above all, a two-fold record of that experience. And when this outer combination of vortices falls to pieces, and the man, as we call it, dies, there may be another body, like the first, but finer and more delicate, to fall back upon; and this body will now constitute the man, and will retain memory and consciousness, all stored up in an ethereal, instead of, as heretofore, a material cerebrum, of his previous life history, and will be, in fact, just the same individual as before, with the proper complement of limbs, and, if we like it, digestive apparatus. Have we not here, then, all that we can want of Immortal Soul: Spirit of God, and Heaven, provable or actually proved realities?

It does not appear that Mr. Cox actually derived any of his views from these gentlemen, or they from him, but the parallel is certainly a very close one. He also presents the idea of an inner body, answering, point for point, to this outer body, but made of some more subtle material. In his first volume he commonly calls its substance "atomic matter," as opposed to the molecular matter of which our visible system of things is composed. This, if he uses the word "atomic" in its scientific meaning, is nonsense. Later on, however, he prefers to speak of "refined molecular matter," or even "ethereal" substance. He compares it for fineness and rarity to the matter of which comets are composed. "The probability is," he says, "that its" [i.e. the Soul's] "substance is vastly more refined than the thinnest gas with which we are acquainted." (p. 317.) At all events, whether made of ether or vortex atoms or what not, he is quite clear that "Spirit is not, and cannot be, immaterial." For if compounded of nothing, it would be nothing; and again, it can only be conceived of as having form. And, finally, "If the soul is a refined body (and it must be that or nothing)."

This material soul, then, is supposed, by some process of correspondence or other, to grow up with the body and to perceive and gain experience with it. It permeates it, probably, in every fibre and tissue, feels every sensation, and directs every movement in each remotest limb. And it is, presumably, of the same shape as the body. Though moulded by the same laws, and developed by the same discipline, it is not invariably affected by the limits of the external body; it can at times even be separated as a distinct existence during life, and is finally set free, as a living entity, in the dissolution of the body by death.

Of direct circumstantial evidence for this theory, other than that of the phenomena of clairvoyance, &c., he has little to offer. For what external evidence he requires he relies almost wholly upon general scientific analogies, upon our ignorance of

the laws of nature, and on the limitless possibilities of being, &c. There is, however, one striking set of facts which deserves notice. He relates the observations of a certain Mr. Gillingham, of Chard, in Somersetshire. Mr. Gillingham appears to have been dissatisfied with the ordinary physiological explanation of the feeling of pain in lost limbs, viz., that, by a well-proved law, all disturbance in a nerve is referred by the sentient mind to the peripheral extremities of the nerves, which alone in a normal state are capable of excitation, and that when we feel pain in an amputated leg it is the cut extremities of the nerves which are irritated, and give rise to the sensation. Now this sufficiently accounts for most of such experiences; but how explain the fact that persons who have lost a limb sometimes feel, when they rest the stump against the wall, that the remainder—now lost in visible shape—of the limb goes through the wall, and feels cold or hot there accordingly? From such like facts is deduced the conclusion, in which Mr. Cox fully agrees, that the soul is of the same shape as the body, and does not suffer dismemberment with it.

Of the special qualities possessed by this soul, Mr. Cox is clear upon three mainly. First, it would not be subject to the attraction of gravity. This there need be no difficulty in conceding. Gravity, as far as we know it, is simply the reciprocal attraction of some 70 and more elements, or kinds of atoms, amongst themselves. There would be no unlikelihood in supposing a new species of atoms—much less a new system—which should not have entered into this confederation of mutual attraction, and so was not subject to its laws. Secondly, spirit substance would have the power of penetrating material substance. Now this, by Serjeant Cox's definition of it, is by no means so easy to conceive. It is true that the molecules of our matter are, probably, very far apart from each other. It is also true that the human body can pass through air, that water can interpenetrate a sponge, or ether (i.e., presumably, the chemical substance so-called) can flow through the porous solid of a cork. But we are forced to note what Serjeant Cox has, apparently, not noted, that the molecules of a liquid are not relatively fixed, and can be displaced from their natural order—a liquid having no molar structure—without injury to their essential character. But the soul is, *ex hypothesi*, a solid, and its particles, like those of the wall through which it is supposed to pass, are relatively fixed; and if they are displaced, what force is to ensure their coming together again in proper order? Serjeant Cox's analogies so far prove nothing; he needs to shew us an instance of a solid passing through a solid. As we have no such instance we cannot, indeed, say that our soul is unable to pass through matter, but only that he has failed to make the thing probable, or, in the strictest sense, conceivable to us. Lastly, we can cordially agree with Mr. Cox, that our psychic body will have, it is likely, more wide and infallible perceptions than those of our present state. It is abundantly evident that our present senses are, so to speak, artificially limited; and might readily be conceived as enlarged in scope, or even numerically, without subversion of our existing physiological scheme.

Finally, though discerning the radical falsity of the view that sees in consciousness and intelligence simply the result of certain motions of material particles, he finds no difficulty in his own theory that consciousness and will, and whatever there may be of spiritual faculty in man are strictly dependent on, if not actually synonymous with, certain other collocations of particles, "more refined than the thinnest gas with which we are acquainted." The one doctrine, he notes, is repugnant to the moral sense, and subversive of all man's highest aspirations; the other, by dint of adroit conjuring with "ethereal substance," "spiritual existence," and the like, may be made to prove the being of God, and our possession of an immortal soul.

(To be continued.)

A foreign correspondent writes us in regard to Madame Blavatsky:—"It is necessary to take the various statements which have appeared in print as to that lady's feats of occultism *cum grano salis*. She is no doubt possessed of what is called psychological power. Over susceptible persons she can exercise a magnetic power (so-called) similar to that possessed by a mesmerist over a sensitive subject. In addition, she is a clever adept in jugglery, or sleight of hand tricks. These constitute her stock-in-trade so far as magic is concerned." Our correspondent professes to speak from "authentic information," and thinks the truth should be known. We mention the subject, that those who have faith in Madame Blavatsky's occult powers may be induced to give us the benefit of the grounds of their convictions.

## TO CONTRIBUTORS.

Reports of the proceedings of Spiritualist Societies in as succinct a form as possible, and authenticated by the signature of a responsible officer, are solicited for insertion in "LIGHT." Members of private circles will also oblige by contributing brief records of noteworthy occurrences at their séances.

The Editor cannot undertake the return of manuscripts unless the writers expressly request it at the time of forwarding, and enclose stamps for the return postage.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

We invite special attention to the announcement, in our advertising columns, of the conversazione to be held on Thursday next in the rooms of the British National Association, and of the very excellent musical programme which has been arranged for the occasion. We trust that there will be a very large attendance.

A good case, one among many such, of the appearance of the Spirit in a distant place near the time of its severance from the body, reaches us from a source on which we place full reliance. About two years ago W. L. left England for America. Nine months since he married, and hoped to bring his wife home to see his mother, to whom he was tenderly attached. On February 4th, however, he was taken with sudden illness, which terminated fatally on the 12th, about 8 p.m. On that night, about three-quarters of an hour after the parents of W. L. had retired to rest in England, the mother heard the clear voice of her son speaking. Her husband, who also heard it, asked his wife if it was she who was speaking. Neither of them had been asleep, and she replied, "No! Keep quiet!" The voice continued, "As I cannot come to England, mother, I have come now to see you." At this time both parents believed their son to be in perfect health in America, and were daily expecting a letter to announce his return home. A note was made of this very startling occurrence, and when, a fortnight since news of the son's death arrived, it was found to correspond with the date on which the Spirit-voice had announced his presence in England. The widow said that the preparations for departure had nearly been completed, and that her husband shewed much anxiety to get to England and see his mother.

It is to be noted that in this case the voice was heard by two persons, neither of whom had been asleep and who were not in that state between waking and sleeping when imagination runs riot. These persons were not Spiritualists, and therefore are not to be held to be presumably subject to hallucinations, nor were they victims of a dominant idea, nor of any other delusion. They had no reason to believe their son to be in other than his usual health. They neither expected bad news of him, nor that any news would be conveyed in this—to them—extraordinary manner. Moreover, the young man was tenderly attached to his mother, had her in his mind when he died, and naturally visited her in spirit when he found that he had the power to do so. The case is a good instance of those in which love supplies the motive power which causes a Spirit to present itself at or soon after death to some dear friend or relative.

Another interesting case of direct intervention came quite recently under our own knowledge. A domestic servant, Mary, shared with her two sisters the duty of maintaining her old parents, who were very poor. They managed to contribute their share in rotation, each taking a month. It was not Mary's month, and she had no reason to think that her sisters had failed to do their part. Nevertheless, she went to bed one night during the severe weather and dreamed that her parents were in such distress that they would be obliged to sell their blankets to

get firing. She repeated the dream to her mistress in the morning, and, by her advice, got a P.O.O. for a small amount and sent it. The letter of acknowledgment expressed great relief at the timely supply, for they would otherwise have been compelled to sell their blankets to get coal.

What does this mean? Coincidence? Such explanation makes larger demands on our faith than any other mode of accounting for what would be clear as noonday to us were we not so hampered by a heritage of materialistic thought. Our fathers have eaten so many sour grapes that our teeth are sadly set on edge. The world of Spirits is "about our path and about our bed, spying out all our ways." In dreams and visions of the night, by appearances, by voices of warning and encouragement, these unseen friends guide and guard us; and we return our thanks by ignoring their presence and explaining away their very existence. Such is the fashion of this wise age, though none that has preceded it has been foolish enough to ignore what is palpable to the man whose eyes are open, and who can see further than the end of his nose. Let us hope that an age may soon dawn when the children will be wiser than their fathers, and recur to an ancient and venerable belief thus beautifully expressed by one of our most melodious poets:—

"Is there love  
In heavenly spirits to these creatures base,  
That may compassion of their evils move?  
There is,—else much more wretched were the case  
Of men than beasts; but oh! the exceeding grace  
Of Highest God, that loves His creatures so,  
And all His works with mercy doth embrace—  
That blessed angels He sends to and fro  
To serve to wicked man, to serve His wicked foe.

How oft do they their silver bowers leave  
To come to succour us that succour want!  
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave  
The flitting skies, like flying pursuivants,  
Against foul fiends to aid us militant!"

Omitting the theology—for we have learned at least not to call man God's wicked foe—the belief is noble and true that Spirits guard and keep those who will lend an ear to them, and are the ministers of mercy and blessing to many who little reckon of their care.

In memoriam, Mother Shipton! One by one the idols fall. We did think that we had a true prophetess in this old lady, whose alleged vaticinations are combining with planetary conjunctions and other causes to vex this world. She and the Great Pyramid seemed, metaphorically, to rest on the same broad basis. A reference to *Notes and Queries* (Series 4, Vol. XI., p. 355) will dissipate the faith that any of our readers may have in the mythical old seeress. Her prophecies turn out to be the work of a Mr. Hindley, of Brighton, who owns the soft impeachment. Such shocks to faith are hard to bear. We wish the verifications could be done away with as easily as the bogus prophecy. But, alas! whether Mother Shipton prophesied or not, the world is in a terrible state, and evil crowds on evil till one hardly knows what new horror may startle us. The assassination of the Czar is the latest; who knows what may come next? The air is full of anticipation of distress, and it seems as if malign influences of some kind or other were having it all their own way.

The Cuckoo is responsible for the statement that the Princess Dolgorouki is a seeress of great power. It is alleged that she saw clairvoyantly the assassination of the Czar, and when the news arrived at the Winter Palace, was found praying for his soul before the Holy Image in her private room. She was informed that she must leave St. Petersburg at once, and cried out "I am going; but give me the marriage ring." On being told that it was shattered by the explosion, she whispered, fainting, "Then it was all true," and was removed in a half unconscious state to her sledge. "But," adds our contemporary, "Russian ladies, from the late Czarina downwards,—to say nothing of Russian gentlemen—are all more or less Spiritualists; and the stories of their extraordinary beliefs would delight all true disciples of the mystical creed of Animal Magnetism." That is a rare touch, "the mystical creed of Animal Magnetism!" We shall hear of the mystical creed of Unconscious Cerebration next! But anything to get out of the plain truth. "Spirits is the last thing that I will give in to."

A popular preacher recently suggested that some people had as much need to repent of their religion as they had to repent of their sins.



## SPIRITUALISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

*The following important letter has been addressed by the Rev. Dr. Maurice Davies to the Archbishop of Canterbury:—*

TO THE MOST REVEREND THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,  
PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND.

MY LORD ARCHBISHOP,

I venture to hope that no further apology will be necessary for my addressing your Grace, when I state that the object of my doing so is the recognised inclusion within the National Church of many persons whose orthodoxy is now unduly suspected. I allude to those persons who are, perhaps not very happily, termed Spiritualists, but who may, I think, be roughly described as believing that the Pentecostal powers still remain with the Church, and that Christ's promises, made during the great Forty Days, are yet being literally fulfilled in our midst.

I have no means of arriving at the actual number of those who hold the opinions comprised under the generic name of Spiritualism. In America they are said to number some millions. In England they are much more numerous than is generally suspected. Neither do I claim any representative position amongst them. I only speak for myself, as a clergyman of the Church of England, and for those members of the Established Church who think with me, and some of whom will privately append their signatures to this letter in order to give it additional weight with your Grace. But I have special means of knowing that the number of those who hold the doctrines of so-called Spiritualism while remaining staunch members of the Church of England, is very large and constantly increasing. This letter—to adopt a phraseology which recent events have rendered familiar—is designed to embody a plea and a plan for the toleration of these persons within the pale of the Church of England.

It may, I know, be urged that there is no necessity for the formal acknowledgment of such persons within that pale, since no formal sentence of exclusion has been pronounced against them. I am, of course, aware of this; but I need not inform your Grace that there is something even worse than that overt ban of excommunication which our Church is too wise and too dignified to wield as a casual weapon of assault. There is that tacit assumption on the part of those who bear office in the Church and of those good men and women who constitute the congregation of the faithful, that these doctrines must be heretical; and such a foregone conclusion, which we know to be unjust, is far more hurtful to us than any anathema that could possibly be fulminated.

As an instance of the *a priori* method adopted in speaking of Spiritualism, I may mention the proceedings of the Church Congress Committee held in the vestry of St. Saviour's Church, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and reported in the *Times* newspaper of March 21st. The Bishop of Durham was in the chair, and it was proposed to consider, as one branch of the work of the Congress, "the relations of the Church to deviations from Christianity," those deviations being specified as (a) Infidelity, (b) Secularism, (c) Spiritualism. I am quite sure that so enlightened a prelate as Bishop Lightfoot would be the last to do a studied act of injustice; but I need scarcely say that, however skilful may be the apologist who speaks for Christian Spiritualism at the Congress, he would come heavily handicapped by finding his subject set down in *limine* as a "deviation" from Christianity. Indeed it is difficult to see how a Christian Spiritualist could feel justified in speaking under such circumstances. I only mention this to shew how widespread is the prejudice against which it is my present object to protest.

Let me speak for one moment personally. I have now for thirty years next Trinity Sunday been an ordained minister of the Church of England, and for twenty-five out of those thirty years I have been an investigator into what is called Spiritualism, though it was only after long delay and diligent use of all the powers I could bring to bear on the question that I at length yielded my tardy and almost reluctant assent. Since doing so I have continually been asked: "Is it possible that you, as a clergyman of the Church of England, can believe in such an unchristian doctrine as Spiritualism?" I have known it to be whispered that I am a "dangerous man" because I have pleaded guilty to such belief. I know how cruelly unjust is the imputation of disloyalty in my own case, and therefore I can sympathise with those who writhe under a

sense of such injustice. Will you bear with me, my Lord, if I tell you how this subject first came to me as an endorsement of the cardinal article of my religious belief; and how, as the conviction grew, it has gone on strengthening, instead of weakening, each clause in that Christian creed which, as God's minister in the Church of England, it has been for so many years my privilege to defend and to promulgate?

When first this matter came to me in the year 1856, and startled me out of that quiet self-complacency which made me laugh at what I did not comprehend, it came thus. I asked what the power was that communicated, and was told that the Spirits of the departed had the power given them. I asked for what purpose, keeping my written question concealed from all but myself; and the answer given to me was—*It may make men believe in God.*

And this is what I find, as a fact, it has done. I have seen men—young men especially—who would be sobered and chastened by nothing else, sobered and chastened by this.

Shall I be deemed presumptuous if I ask your Grace to entertain for one moment the idea that possibly this may be the method by which faith and reason shall become fused and blended? This, as I need not say—and as your own recent archiepiscopal charges so thoroughly recognised—is a time when, whether we will or not, the appeal does, with the large majority of men, lie to sight and sense, even in matters which we class in the category of the supernatural. What if this so-called Spiritualism be a concession to such an appeal? What if the word faith be destined to take a new and nobler meaning than it commonly bears: and if even this humble platform on which I take my stand be the stepping-stone to higher things?

There is one thing, at all events, certain, that Atheism cannot co-exist with those opinions classed together under the name of Spiritualism. One source of present danger, therefore, would be eliminated if this belief spread. Possibly that may be its *cui bono*. It may not be meant for the mass of humanity, but for the stout unbeliever who will give in to nothing short of tangible evidence—for the Thomas rather than for the Nathanael of the hour. It would still have a wide mission-field, even if we limited its area thus. Just as I have known young men arrested by a revelation which they found adapted to meet their requirements, so have I in the course of my protracted investigations met with men of eminence (it would be invidious to mention names) who from blank Materialism have passed to belief in God and immortality by means of a system thus curiously fitted to meet them on their own ground and to rank theology among the inductive sciences. Literally it did, in the words of my initial communication, *make men believe in God.*

But then the question naturally occurs: Did it make Christians of them? I do not mean, did it make holy, self-denying saints of them, because we know that the fullest Christianity is apt to lie dormant in that respect. But did they believe the second clause in the Apostles' creed when they had grasped the first? Did they believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Redeemer of mankind? Did it, in fact, make anything more than Theists or Unitarians out of those who before were Atheists or Materialists?

That some minds after accepting one stage of truth should halt before passing on to others and even seem to be arrested permanently in the preliminary stage, is only, perhaps, natural. But I have seen many and many an instance where the new-born faith went from unbelief *per saltum*, not to mere theistic belief or acceptance of historical Christianity, but to full recognition of Christ's Divine nature. I know I may venture, without asking his permission, to quote the case of my venerable friend, Mr. Samuel Carter Hall, as one in point, and I can assure your Grace that he by no means stands alone. Some years ago I was astonished beyond measure when a literary man, whose doubts had lingered long by him, came up to me in Fleet-street, and amid the noise and din of that great thoroughfare, thanked God that he had been brought through Spiritualism to accept the doctrine of the Atonement. Can we, my Lord, afford to depreciate an instrumentality which accomplishes such a result, even though we feel we should prefer to work with other machinery?

It is, however, when we come to that crucial doctrine of Christianity—the Resurrection to Eternal Life—that the special force of these opinions becomes evident; and that their orthodoxy is above suspicion. I need not remind your Grace that in this respect the faith of many Christians is distressingly vague and that such vagueness reacts on religious life and tends to

deadened Christian effort. People cling to a superstitious notion that death will effect some thorough change in the inner being and that he who dies a sinner may rise up an angel. The Spiritualist gives the full force to that expressive word "character." He believes that the stamp graven in during life will be found on the spiritual body and its immortal tenant after death. He believes in the Intermediate State and clings to the doctrine of Eternal Hope.

With regard to the Holy Catholic Church, too, he is willing to accept that definition contained in Article XIX., which says: "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance." Two other clauses of his creed come in here with special force, too. He believes in the Holy Ghost. He believes so thoroughly in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost that he cannot bring himself to concede that the miraculous gifts then bestowed have grown effete with time. He believes that the promises made by Christ between His Resurrection and Ascension are in force still, just as they were in Apostolic times. It is only men's faith that makes those gifts latent. In this respect I would quote a few words from a valued friend of my own, formerly a beneficed clergyman of the Church of England but now in the Roman Communion. Certainly his words have no less relevance because addressed to the Roman as well as to the Anglican Church. He asks: "Where is the bishop who now reminds the missionaries whom he sends forth of their title to such miraculous powers? Where are the Christians who believe in them except as things of the past? Why have they ceased to be a part of the inheritance of the saints? Why is the Church so mundane in its aspect, so eager to disown its essential prerogatives, so cankered by a profound scepticism, so zealous for rigid dogma, yet so careless withal of signs and wonders which are the evidence and the cause of faith? Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day and for ever; and if His ministers relied on Him now as they did of old they would speak with tongues, and cast out evil spirits, and disease and pain would fly before them."\* It is surely not without pertinence that the canons of our Church of England contain a proviso that no clergyman shall exorcise without special licence from his Bishop.

The Communion of Saints too, another great doctrine held too loosely by ordinary Christians, is held in its fulness by the Spiritualist. He has no heathen idea of annihilation in death, even as others who have no hope. He believes that by God's mercy communion of the most intimate kind is still possible. Who like him, then, can say with reference to those who are not lost but gone before, "Oh death where is thy sting, O grave where is thy victory?"

Passing from the fundamental clauses of the Creed to those church ordinances and minor details in the sphere of which orthodoxy is mostly held to lie, I venture to claim, your Grace, that there are no such loyal adherents of the Church represented by your Grace as those whose ecclesiastical principles are leavened with Spiritualism. Though of necessity they lean largely to symbolism, and own the force of an ornate cultus, yet their principles or practice have no tendency to soar above or sink below the level of sober Anglicanism; and this is no small boast to be able to make in these disputatious days.

One word of caution I may dare to insert without disrespect. It is that your Grace should not be misled by the assertion that Spiritualism is simply co-extensive with table-turning, rapping, &c. Those phenomena arrested attention at first; but the practised Spiritualist no more thinks of recurring to them than the advanced student thinks of perpetually repeating his alphabet. I am not, however, defending the system against those who assail its dignity. My wish is to assert its orthodoxy and its compatibility with loyalty to the Church of England. It seems strange that one should have to dwell so strongly on this, seeing that the profession of Swedenborgianism (a mere form of Spiritualism) has not been thought to bar orthodoxy. One of the curates of the late Archdeacon Sinclair held office at the same time in the Swedenborgian body and in the parish church of Kensington, and several professed Swedenborgians have retained their preferments in our Established Church.

I could go more into detail, and should be glad to do so, but I feel that my communication has already exceeded the limits of a letter. I have no desire to drag your Grace into a corre-

spondence on this subject. All I am anxious to do is to vindicate my own position and the position of those who sympathise with me. *Liberavi animam meam.* Feeling as I do that there is not a single doctrine of the Church to which I was ordained which is not vitalised by the light thrown upon it from this new set of facts, I cannot, of course, feel it consistent with my ordination vows to abstain from the exercise of my ministry. My one wish is to devote myself to what I must always deem my life-work; but while these opinions are held heretical, I can only wait and hope for the time when things shall be made clear. For the present our gatherings are like the "propheysings" of the old Reformers—nay, we sometimes think they are not altogether unlike the meetings of the disciples in the upper room, in expectation of Him who was not absent, though their eyes were holden that they could not see Him until He unveiled their senses. I am careful so to arrange my days and hours of private worship that they shall not interfere with attendance at church. I make our services, in fact, as I feel the opinions they represent should be, namely, supplementary to, not substitutes for, the regular ordinances of the Church.

Members of other communions, no doubt, feel the doctrines of which I have spoken to be equally efficacious in certifying their position in the body to which they belong. Writing as a clergyman of the Church of England to the chief ruler of our Anglican communion, I have only been anxious to establish my own relation to that communion. I am so conscious of my own attachment to the Church of which I have been for all these years a minister, and so desirous to certify the compatibility of a belief in Spiritualism with such attachment, that I shall ask permission to send a copy of this letter to the Bishops and prominent clergy of the Established Church, and also further to trouble your Grace by forwarding, in a few days, a list of some few members of the Church of England who agree with me in the main as to the opinions I have expressed above.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord Archbishop,

Your faithful servant,

CHARLES MAURICE DAVIES, D.D.

Formerly Curate of Kensington, and Sunday Evening Lecturer at the Parish Church, Chelsea.

Shepherd's Bush, London, W.

March 22nd, 1881.

#### "ASCETICISM."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Your correspondent, "G. F. G." (19th March), does not appear to interpret aright "T. L. N.'s" application of the terms "pure" and "impure" food. It seems apparent that he is referring to human food, not to the food of birds and beasts. Probably "G. F. G." would not deny that all manner of filth consumed by ducks and pigs is pure food to them, but what would it be to man?

It is a pretty safe assertion that the grossest of men could, if consistent effort were made, live healthy and strong upon selected grains, fruits, and vegetables, and that, too, greatly to the advantage of their moral and spiritual advancement.

"G. F. G." speaks of the "diet of the future" being pushed too far: would he kindly tell us when he thinks a "reformed" diet, without animal food, is to be commenced, and by whom?

Yours faithfully,

74, Milkwood-road, Herne Hill,

H. J. STEVENS.

22nd March, 1881.

#### RE-INCARNATION.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Allow me to recommend those of your readers who wish to understand the question of "Re-Incarnation," as presented to the "Spiritist" mind, to add to a careful, impartial perusal of Kardec's works an equally impartial reading of the communications given to "Roustaing" bearing the collective title of "Christian Spiritism" and the subordinate one of "The Four Gospels." The Gospels are herein taken verse by verse, and a spiritual commentary and explanation given. No. 55, Vol. I., gives us spiritual evolution and its correlative (outward expression), physical evolution. Miss Blackwell has promised us an English translation of this work. The French work ("Les Quatre Evangiles," par J. B. Roustaing) is to be had at the "Librairie Centrale, 34, Boulevard des Italiens," Paris, and may be procured through any bookseller at 3s. cash per volume. There are three volumes.

Bath, March 13th, 1881.

H. M.

Mrs. Fletcher's trial is expected to take place next week in the Central Criminal Court.

\*"The Forty Days; or, Christ between His Resurrection and Ascension." By John Charles Earle, B.A. — Colckmann, Langham-place.



## OBJECTIONS TO RE-INCARNATION.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have read the paper by Miss Arundale with much interest, but I cannot say that it has in any way brought a conviction to my mind that the teachings of the Re-Incarnationists are founded either on correct reasoning, sound theory, experience, or the intuitional or common sense of mankind.

It must, however, be admitted that it is a doctrine which is not only held by a large number of French Spiritualists, but has existed more or less as a philosophy or as a dream among various teachers and peoples of the earth from the earliest times.

As I believe there is always to be found a certain substratum of truth in all existing beliefs, we thus ask, Whence has arisen this belief or dream?

In answer to this question I have always held that it arose from those vague and mysterious sensations, as of a previous long-forgotten existence, which so many have experienced, on visiting new places during one's travels, or meeting individuals for the first time.

I myself have often experienced these sensations, and I have always accounted for them by supposing I may in unconscious clairvoyance or in the wanderings of the soul external to the body, in deep sleep or in dreams, have had a foreknowledge of coming events.

That these impressions cannot be the remembrances of very distant past events would seem to be proved by the fact that the individuals and places which recall these sensations are clothed or cultivated as at present, and not as they were a hundred or a thousand years previously.

This prevision, as I have said, has always been the explanation I have given to myself; and on reading Swedenborg's "Heaven and Hell" three weeks ago, I was gratified to find that this is the explanation he gives.

Now, as to Swedenborg. Surely his opinion on this subject is worthy of much acceptance. He, more than any individual in the world's history, professes to give from *experience* his knowledge of spiritual things, and he not only denies the doctrine of Re-Incarnation, but asserts that he met and conversed with nearly all his deceased acquaintances in the land of Spirits; and not only conversed with those, but with the Spirits of many historic characters in their proper personalities. If so, these Spirits had not disappeared in re-incarnations.

Miss Arundale believes that the Bible teaches the doctrine of Re-Incarnation, because Jesus said John the Baptist was Elias.

This remark by Jesus seems to me clearly analogical, and signifies only this: that as Elias was the greatest of all the old prophets, so John the Baptist was, as his analogue, the greatest of all the last prophets.

St. Paul says, "Agar [Abraham's bond-maid] was Mount Sinai in Arabia," but no Re-Incarnationist would therefore say that Agar was a re-incarnation of Mount Sinai; and Paul himself adds it is an allegory.

Jesus himself on the Cross said to the poor penitent thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

Is it conceivable that this formerly wretched but now happy man, whose whole life in Jerusalem was probably one series of errors and miseries, should voluntarily forsake that Paradise and his Divine Master in order that he might by a re-incarnation live a better and happier life than heretofore on earth?

Is it indeed conceivable that any Spirit of an *aspiring* nature should desire to come back into time, there to suffer and again perish, when he had the option of going on unto perfection in a higher life?

It is not conceivable that good Spirits should desire re-incarnation, and if it is only bad Spirits, or such as prefer human to spiritual bodies, then what a frightful injustice they commit in entering the bodies of simple and pure infants.

What right has any Spirit to commit this burglary or outrage—to rob me, as it were, of my child, in order that it might play the fantastic trick of pretending to be my child while it is, maybe, the Spirit of some rascally thief, who by his re-incarnation in my child perpetrates the foulest of all his thefts?

We know that Spirits often control human bodies, and too often, sooner or later, to the ruin of these bodies; and we know that evil Spirits obsess human bodies and produce maniacs and murderers; but we *know* nothing whatever of good Spirits appropriating the bodies of other people's children on the excuse that such children should thus be evolved into higher beings.

In Eastern magic such things are spoken of, but, if true, to me they are disorderly, unnatural, and bad.

Let us reason out one single suppositious case. Let us suppose some unhappy and unfortunate Egyptian male Spirit re-incarnates in the person of Potiphar's wife; that she re-incarnates in Aaron; that his Spirit re-incarnates in Saul, and he in Jezebel, and she again in Paris, and he in Xantippe, and she in St. Peter, and he in Calvin's wife, and she in Edward V., and he in Mary Queen of Scots, and she in Pope, and he lastly in George Eliot.

Who, I ask, in the name of wonder, is this Spirit? What is the name, sex, nationality, and appearance of the creature, and where is his identity?

Take the British National Association of Spiritualists at a Monday evening's lecture. We naturally and innocently believe that we are beholding Mrs. Desmond FitzGerald, Mr. Desmond FitzGerald, Mrs. Hallock, Mr. Podmore, Mr. Tapp, Mrs. Woodforde, Madame De Steiger, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Dawson Rogers, Mr. Shorter, and Mr. Tebb, it may be.

But we are under an entire delusion, for these are not as they seem; they are not the sons and daughters of their fathers and mothers, but are re-incarnations of Hiram, King of Tyre, Mark Antony, Goliath the Giant, George Washington, Joshua the son of Nun, Hypatia, Socrates, Louis XV., Rob Roy, Cleopatra, Julius Caesar, Grimaldi, Howard the Philanthropist, George III., and lastly the great Dr. Jenner.

But the Re-Incarnationists say, where is the justice of God if some lead lives of misery, the victims of lying and tyranny, and perish miserably, unless they have another chance of living a better and happier life on earth?

These people might with equal logic say, how unjust is God to make the North and South Polar regions all ice, whales, and white bears, while the warmer and more favoured parts of this earth are bathed in sunshine, the fields clothed in glory, and the air vocal with the song of birds.

The answer is that the Judge of all the earth will do right; that our life here is but as a speck in the ocean of eternity; and if the poor repentant thief on the Cross at once ascended to Paradise, why should we not slowly work out our own salvation in eternity?

I have conversed with many Re-Incarnationists, but with very few who believed that they were doomed to still further re-incarnations. This is surely very strange. If Re-Incarnation is the order of nature, how is it that it is suddenly come to an end with nearly all its present believers, in the years 1875-81?

Re-Incarnationists say sex is only the *accident* of organisation and that Queen Elizabeth might be on a future occasion Charles Dickens without any inconsistency.

But this assertion is contrary to all philosophy and theosophy. The male and female elements in nature are not interchangeable, but represent the eternal truths of + and — on the earth plane, to be transposed to — and + in the Spiritual sphere.

Finally, I conclude the doctrine of Re-Incarnation is a dream unsupported by one single *fact* apart from "control" or obsession, while the belief that we are individualities incapable of exchange, is the all but universal voice of the soul and is confirmed by innumerable personal witnesses from the World of Spirit; albeit, there are no doubt many Spirits, chiefly French, who amuse themselves by reflecting the delusions of the Re-Incarnationists.

G. W., M. D

## SATISFACTORY SEANCE WITH MR. BASTIAN.

Testimony of the Rev. W. Miall.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Just as I think that indifference to Spiritualism and in disposition to examine its claims are discreditable, so I feel that when extraordinary phenomena have been rather disproved and shewn to be imposture, or have been developed under circumstances which seem to render their reality indubitable, some public testimony to that effect is incumbent.

Existing circumstances in connection with the subject seem to render such course imperative. Hence these few lines.

Another motive also prompts them. A few months since it was alleged that the well-known medium Mr. Bastian had been detected in imposture. I do not think that any impartial person would fail to see that there were elements in the account of the "detection" which rendered the propriety of the application of that term extremely doubtful. Subsequent circumstances in the career of the "exposer," and previous circumstances afterwards brought to light, confirmed the doubt. Now, as I was last

evening a witness to the occurrence of phenomena through Mr. Bastian's agency, the genuineness of which is to my mind incontestable, I think it a simple piece of justice to Mr. Bastian to record the fact.

We were a circle of twelve. I am acquainted with the rooms in which we met, and thoroughly so with their customary occupants. After a dark séance, during which all manner of indication was supplied of the existence of abnormal power in the circle, the room being now lighted and Mr. Bastian being about to enter the cabinet, he unexpectedly proposed that two persons should first accompany him into another room for the purpose of searching his person. I being deemed, I presume, the most sceptical, was selected, and I named a gentleman to accompany me. Every article of Mr. Bastian's attire was minutely examined by us, and I am confident that nothing available for the purpose of trickery was possessed by him. I am equally confident that there was no such article in the cabinet, or obtained by Mr. Bastian when therein. Yet, after a space of perhaps ten minutes, the curtains were opened and some six forms appeared in succession. They were unlike to each other—some apparently male, some female—some fair, some dark. A profusion of white drapery enwrapped the persons of most of them. Two, however, were habited as men in dark clothes. One of these was pale and had a smooth face, the other was dark and had much beard. The light was sufficient to enable me to see the time by my watch; and sitting as I did the nearest to the cabinet, I was able to obtain more than a front view of the forms. The time occupied by the appearance of each was not more than a few seconds. The figures were of full length and of various heights, and on my requesting one of them to come if possible outside the cabinet it made one step forward and immediately retreated. After this we had much talk from "Johnnie." I may say that it was very good talk, and explanatory of the alleged mode of "setting up" the forms out of surrounding objects, and especially of the way in which the motion of light interferes with the stability of the forms, rendering darkness within the cabinet indispensable, and their appearance in the light of the shortest duration.

As to the explanation of these occurrences I am not able to suggest anything. I can only class them with others equally inexplicable, and with what patience I can command await the revelation of some great truth, otherwise verifiable, which should satisfactorily account for them. If that truth should be what pronounced Spiritualists allege that it is, I shall therein greatly rejoice.

I am, Sir,  
Yours very truly,  
WILLIAM MIALL.

236, Richmond-road, Hackney,  
March 17th, 1881.

#### LADBROKE HALL.

On Sunday evening last Miss Samuels, the Cardiff medium, delivered a dedicatory address on the occasion of the new platform being brought into use. The "altar piece" was handsomely decorated with scarlet, white lace, and flowers, and presented an imposing and artistic effect. A large audience completely filled the hall, and listened with much interest to the address, and to the very excellent rendering of "He shall feed His flock," Handel, by Mr. Knight Smith. At the close of the service Mr. F. O. Matthews gave his thanks to the friends and visitors, who had supported him in these meetings, and said he was confident that, as they were all lovers of truth and progress, they were doing good by keeping open a place for the discussion of such principles. Mr. Matthews' expressions were warmly endorsed by the audience.

#### CARDIFF.

At the weekly meeting, on Sunday evening last, Mr. E. Adams, a member of the Council, related some of his experiences while investigating Spiritualism strictly in his home circle, where he obtained wonderful spontaneous tests. He asked the Society to rule their lives in accordance with their knowledge, so that from each Spiritualist fireside an influence might emanate which would act favourably to the cause. Mr. Andrews afterwards spoke deprecating the pushing of Spiritualism down the throats of the public, being of opinion that the gradual development of knowledge by the education of the masses, added to the constant progress of ideas, would bring their minds up to the truths we advocate; he also strongly objected to the tendency manifested by some professed Spiritualists to depreciate the mission of Christianity, and charged the persecutions and wars engaged in by European nations to human depravity, in spite of, and not in consequence of, the moral teachings of the Christian religion.

#### DARLINGTON.

Spiritualism in this town at last presents indications of emerging from the state of inactivity that has enshrouded it since the departure of the Messrs. Hinde to America; the change of residence by other workers in the cause; and the bad times that have prevailed so long. The active members here have recently united in the formation of a "Lyceum of Psychology," with the view that by a careful study of the laws relating to

Spiritual phenomena, as exhibited in mediumship, and of the manifestations of the Spirit-circle, the best methods of developing mediums and forming circles may be determined. The friends feel confident that, proceeding with care and judgment, they will be rewarded by results of a satisfactory character. At present they receive marked phenomena through Mr. J. Archer, one of the local mediums, who sits for materialisations. Mr. A. C. Clark is the president-elect, and no doubt Spiritualism will be heard more of here in the near future than has been the case of late.

#### KEIGHLEY.

Two very excellent and eloquent addresses were delivered, on Sunday last, in the Temperance Hall, Keighley, by Mr. J. J. Morse, of London. Mr. A. D. Gray, of Bingley, occupied the chair, and, although not a Spiritualist, expressed his admiration of the lectures and of the great ability of the speaker, and also his entire satisfaction with the sentiments enunciated. In the afternoon the subject was, "Starved Souls," and in the evening, "Does Death End All?" There were large audiences at both services, who listened with evident interest to the truths set forth. We are quite sure that Mr. Morse is instrumental in effecting much good. Besides the ability which is displayed through him, his gentle and kind manners endear him to all with whom he comes in contact.—A. D. G.

#### LEICESTER.

Mr. Walter Howell has been actively engaged here of late, and his services have been a source of pleasure and benefit to the society and the cause. A complimentary séance was arranged for him on the 15th inst., and about 80 persons paid for admission, the entire proceeds being handed to Mr. Howell, as the proprietor of the Hall kindly granted the use of it free for the occasion. The questions, addresses, and different controls afforded much gratification to the company present.

On Sunday last Mr. Howell delivered two trance addresses—in the morning on "The Second Coming of Christ," and in the evening upon "What the Spirits can tell us of the state in which they live;" each subject being chosen by the audience.

#### NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE AND DISTRICT.

Spiritualism is still labouring in a sea of troubles, and from present indications the movement will have to be well piloted if it is to steer clear and safe through the rocks and shoals ahead.

The morning services at the N.S.E.S. are progressing favourably, and are well supported by those who are interested in their success. On Sunday morning, March 6th, the platform was ably filled by Messrs. Dawson, Burton, and Hare, who came forward most commendably in the unavoidable absence of Mr. Wallis. In the evening Mr. Lambelle favoured the society with another of his interesting discourses upon "Life: its Nature and Progressive Unfoldment."

On Sunday last the guides of Mrs. Westgarth delivered two impressive lectures upon "Spiritualism in relation to our Duties," which met with a hearty and sympathetic response from the audience.

Mr. Wallis, in his double capacity of lecturer and test-medium, has been working admirably in the North district during the last week or two. Bebside, Delaval, Shields, and other places may be congratulated on the excellent assistance rendered by his valuable services.

Miss Wood is about to enter into an engagement with some gentlemen in London for a course of test séances, which we hope will achieve their desired end, and tend to spread the facts of spiritual phenomena. We trust from the kindly feeling of our London friends that Miss Wood will meet with that sympathy and appreciation accorded to London mediums visiting the North.

A contemporary has seen fit to be offended at an honest effort on my part to detail an account of a séance about which he published last week another account. I regret that such a trifle should give displeasure, and hope in future not to offend the susceptibilities of my journalistic friend.

#### NORTHUMBRIA.

#### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- D. J.—Too late for this week's paper.  
J. G. M.—Many thanks for your list of new subscribers. We should be pleased to see others following your excellent example.  
W. E. C.—You have both expressed your views on the subject, and it is better now to let the matter drop. The insertion of your letter would only increase the unpleasant feeling which unhappily exists.  
ARCANUS sends us a prophetic "Spirit-message" which he received in December last—foretelling "a change in the Russian Government before long," and adding a warning of a war between Russia and England, which may, however, be avoided by keeping Mr. Gladstone in power—though it does not seem to the "communicating intelligence" that he will be in power long. We have no faith in such prophecies. It is a good maxim never to prophesy till you know.



## Spiritualist Societies.

Secretaries and Presidents of Societies will oblige by informing the Editor of *LIGHT* of any alterations that may from time to time be necessary in the following list:—

### METROPOLITAN.

British National Association of Spiritualists. 38, Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, London, W.C. Mr. Thos. Blyton, Secretary.  
Brixton Psychological Society. 6, Akerman Road, Brixton, London, S.W. Mr. H. E. Frances, Hon. Secretary, 22, Cowley Road, Brixton, S.W.  
Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism. 53, Sigdon Road, Dalston Lane, Hackney Downs, London, E. Mr. J. J. Morse, President.  
Goswell Hall Spiritualist Committee. 290, Goswell Road, E.C. Secretary, Mr. W. Towns, 1, Albert Terrace, Barnsbury Road, N.  
Hackney Primitive Christian Mission. 7, Ellingford Road, Mare Street, Hackney, E. Mr. O. Rhys Williams, Manager.  
Ladbroke Hall, Notting Hill, London, W. Mr. F. O. Matthews, Manager, 11, Torrington Square, W.C.  
Marylebone Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism. Quebec Hall, 25, Great Quebec-street, London, W. Mr. J. M. Dale, Hon. Secretary.  
South London Spiritual Society. Mr. J. G. Robson, Secretary, 8, Bournemouth Road, Rye Lane, Peckham, S.E.  
Spiritual Institution and Progressive Library. 15, Southampton Row, Holborn, London, W.C. Mr. James Burns, Proprietor and Manager.

### PROVINCIAL.

Ashington Spiritual Society. Mr. G. Scott, Secretary, Ashington Colliery, Northumberland.  
Batley Carr Association of Spiritualists. Mr. Joseph Armitage, Secretary.  
Birmingham Society of Spiritualists. Mr. J. Kennedy, Secretary, Oozells Street Board School, Birmingham.  
Birmingham Christian Spiritualist Society. 312, Bridge Street West. Mr. John Colley, Hon. Secretary.  
Bolton Spiritualist Association. Mr. D. Cordingley, Secretary, Bath Street, Bolton.  
Cambridge Association of Investigators into Spiritualism. 7, Fitzroy Street. Mr. James Harpley, Secretary.  
Cardiff Progressive Library of Scientific and Spiritual Literature. 157, Bute Road, Cardiff. Mr. George Sadder, Proprietor.  
Cardiff Spiritualist Society. 3, Angel Street, Cardiff. Mr. W. Paynter, Hon. Secretary, 10, Bute Crescent.  
Darlington. The Lyceum of Psychology. Mr. A. C. Clark, President. Hodge's Rooms, High Northgate.  
Durham District Association. Mr. James Dunn, Secretary, 68, Simpson Street, New Shildon.  
Excelsior Society of Spiritualists. Scotland Gate, near Morpeth. Secretary, Mr. G. Hall, Choppington Colliery.  
Gateshead Spiritual Society. Temperance Hall, High Street.  
Glasgow Association of Spiritualists. 164, Trongate Street. Mr. John McG. Monro, Secretary, 33, Daisy Street, Govanhill, Glasgow.  
Great Yarmouth Association of Investigators into Spiritualism. 3, Waterpark Terrace, Southdown Road. Mr. R. R. Dale, Secretary.  
Halifax Spiritual Institution. Peacock Yard, Union Street, Halifax. Mr. C. Appleyard, Secretary.  
Hull and East Riding of Yorkshire Association of Spiritualists for Inquirers. 2, Caroline Street, Hull.  
Keighley Lyceum. 51, Worth Terrace, Keighley. Secretary, Mr. A. Morrell, Albert Street.  
Lancashire District Committee of Spiritualists. Mr. Charles Parsons, Secretary, Hume Street, Mill, Rochdale. Mr. Johnson, Secretary, 153, Mottram Road, Hyde, near Manchester.  
Leicester Spiritualist Society. President, Mr. E. Larrad, 10, Edwyn Street. Secretary, R. Wightman, 56, Cranbourne Street, Leicester.  
Leigh Spiritualists' Association, Brown Street, Leigh, Lancashire. Mr. G. F. Turner, Secretary.  
Liverpool Psychological Society. Hon. Secretary, Mr. H. Morris, 35, Cobden-street, Everton, Liverpool.  
Lowestoft Spiritual Society. T. Dowsing, Secretary.  
Macclesfield Society of Spiritualists. Mr. S. Hayes, Hon. Secretary, 12, Bond Street West, Macclesfield.  
Manchester Association of Spiritualists. Temperance Hall, Grosvenor Street, Hulme, Manchester. Mr. Braham, Secretary, 323, Stretford Road, Manchester.  
Midland District Spiritualists' Committee. Hon. Secretary, Mr. E. W. Wallis, 13, Lake Street, Peveril Street, Nottingham.  
Millom Society of Spiritualists. Holborn Hill, Millom, Cumberland. Mr. J. E. Sharp, Secretary.  
Newcastle-on-Tyne Spiritual Evidence Society. Weirs Court, Newgate Street, Newcastle-on-Tyne. Mr. H. A. Kersey, Hon. Secretary, 4, Edlington Terrace, Newcastle-on-Tyne.  
Nottingham Association of Spiritualists. Secretary, Mr. W. Yates, 33, Lower Talbot Street.  
Oldham Society of Spiritualists. Psychological Meeting Room, 186, Union Street. Mr. T. Kershaw, Secretary, 8, High Street.  
Ossett Spiritual Institution. Ossett Green, near the G. N. R. Station. Mr. C. Hallgath, Secretary.  
Rochdale Spiritualist Society. Mr. L. Firth, Secretary, 16, Equitable Street.  
Salford Spiritualists' Society. 263, Chapel Street, Salford. Mr. J. Campion, Secretary, 33, Downing Street, Manchester.  
Sowerby Bridge Spiritualist Progressive Lyceum. Mr. W. Walker, Secretary, Lyceum Buildings, Hollins Lane, Sowerby Bridge.  
Yorkshire District Committee of Spiritualists. Hon. Secretary, Mr. C. Poole, 28, Park Street, Barker End Road, Bradford.  
Walsall Spiritual Society. 16, George Street, Walsall. Mr. Thos. Blinkhorn, Secretary.

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This JOURNAL is a fearless and independent newspaper, and aims to be entirely free from all sectarian bias. It is neutral in nothing, but expresses clear and decided views upon all questions germane to Spiritualism. It is the warm advocate of honest truth-loving Media, and in their interest, full as much as in the interest of Science, insists that the phenomena shall be manifested under such conditions as to render accuracy of observation possible, and declines credence to phenomena which cannot stand the test of careful scrutiny.

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