

# Light:

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## SPIRITUALISM AND SECULARISM.

We propose to pursue the subject of Spiritualism and Secularism a little further, and to do so in the same spirit of rational inquiry and legitimate conclusion within the limits of which we endeavoured to keep in our last week's article.

The point at which we had arrived was this:—That evidence of the same nature exists in proof of the continued individual life of man after death as is accepted by the Secularist as proof of life here, and of ordinary natural occurrences. Logically, the evidence of life on a material plane, and of life on what, for want of a better word, we must call a spiritual plane, rests on equally firm foundations.

There is one concession which may here be made to the materialist, which possibly is only a concession in words, but yet may be looked upon as important. "Spirit without matter" is a great stumbling block to many. We know so little about either spirit or matter, that we may very well admit, for the sake of argument, the possibility that the living intelligent spirit may always be intimately connected with some form of matter. Many Spiritualists would admit this as proved, in regard to some states of future life. The recent discoveries of science in reference to matter in its most subtle forms, present almost boundless possibilities; and the speculations recently quoted in our columns from Proctor's "Poetry of Astronomy," all tend in the same direction. If it would make it any easier for the Secularist to accept our views, we would admit that in all spheres of life with which we are likely to come in contact, spirit may possibly be connected with, or embodied in, some form of matter, and may live in a sphere which may in a strict sense be called material, though having very little in common with the grosser forms and qualities of such a material sphere as our own.

Our position is now this:—We are in actual intelligent communication, not only with our fellow-creatures on this earth, but with intelligent beings living an entirely different kind of life. What value and importance are we to attach to what they tell us, and how are we to judge of its truth? The only answer to this is that we must use our own faculties and our own judgment, just in the same way as we do in regard to our ordinary fellow-beings. In regard to matters of fact, we must, where possible, apply independent testimony. In regard to matters outside our own powers of observation, to theories speculative or philosophical, we must form our own conclusions, as we do in ordinary life. We must disabuse our minds of the idea that a man having died is necessarily better or wiser than he was before. A man whose ideas and knowledge have been very circumscribed in this life, is probably no more able after death to comprehend the nature of much that is familiar even to ourselves, than he was before; still less, probably, is he able to comprehend profounder matters.

It is not, however, within our present province to enter into the general question of the teaching of "Spirits," but rather to consider how the whole view and philosophy of life is affected by a recognition of the main truth of continued existence.

The Secularist's view of life is comprised in the successive generations of human beings who are born, live, and die on the earth. All the hopes, joys, and sorrows of the human race are contained within its limits. The only larger idea, the only object for which unselfishness or enthusiasm can be evoked, is the shadowy image of Humanity representing the human race as a whole. This is held up before mankind as the only object

of service or of worship. Man, as the aggregate, including the puny, weak, evil, and suffering earthly lives of so many men, women and children, is looked upon as the summit of the universe, its highest work or development. "Man" was spoken of in the lecture which we originally referred to, as "the monarch of the world"! Even if we had not the light of "Spiritualism," this would seem to us the greatest mockery imaginable, and the most miserably inadequate attempt to explain the universe that was ever attempted. Let us look at what we see around us.

Man finds himself on a globe of matter, a little sphere, one out of countless numbers pursuing their way through space in majestic order. He knows this must have been going on for ages before he inhabited it. He recognises the probability that it will be going on for ages after he has ceased to inhabit it. For science tells him that the period in the life of a planet, during which it is habitable by such a being as man, is doubtless infinitely small compared with the duration of its existence. Even on this little globe man finds himself surrounded by forces over which he has not the least control. He cannot even master the physical kingdom. Turning to moral and social problems—the mysteries of evil and sin, and of undeserved pain and suffering, are hopelessly unsolvable, from the point of view of this life only. Far less arrogant would it be for the ants of an anthill to claim the sovereignty of the earth, than for man, as the Secularist defines him, to assume the title of "monarch," and to set himself up as the highest intelligence in the universe! Even if we *knew* nothing further we should sit in such a valley of the shadow of death, patiently waiting for light and hope. Otherwise blank despair, or the alternative of a supreme malignant being, would be the only possible conclusion.

But it is not so! Spiritualism comes and shews to us life and intelligence beyond the narrow world of the Secularist, enlarging the kingdom of life, as science long ago enlarged the kingdom of matter. Instead of the earth being looked upon as the centre of the physical universe, we now know it to be an insignificant member of an unnumbered family of worlds of a similar origin and nature to itself. Spiritualism in the same way shews us that earthly life is but a fragment, a fraction, that it is only one letter of an alphabet, one chapter of a book. Just as the earth is found to take its place in the solar system, and many physical phenomena explain themselves, so this earthly life takes its place as part of a larger life, giving us at once glimpses of possible solutions of otherwise inexplicable problems.

Well may the ancient preacher who looked no farther than this world, have said "all is vanity." The Positivist and Secularist ought to say so to-day, if they were as logical as he was. But to the Spiritualist—

"Larger grows the vision  
Of the new delight,  
And the Actual's prison,  
Opens to his sight."

For the "Actual" is a prison, and even a "condemned cell," and man is the prisoner, if this life is all. But when we realise that the lessons of earth may meet their reward in another life, and that the mistakes and crimes of this life may possibly be atoned for hereafter, and that suffering may be educational, our whole view of things is altered.

It is again possible to believe in Divine love and wisdom, as well as power, over-ruling all things for the final good of all. Thus we come back to the "God-Idea," the subject of the lecture which called forth these articles. If it is the case that the idea has "decayed" under the influences which have prevailed during these latter years, under no form of belief is it capable of rising to such a height of true grandeur as under the teachings and philosophy of Spiritualism. But we must return yet once more to the subject.

MR. BASTIAN has this week left England for America.

## THE CLAIMS OF OCCULTISM.\*

By M.A. (Oxon.)

It is now some years since Spiritualists were startled by the publication of two ponderous volumes by Madame Blavatsky, under the title of "Isis Unveiled." Those who mastered the diversified contents of those large and closely printed pages, upwards of twelve hundred in number, bore away a vague impression that Spiritualism had been freely handled not altogether to its advantage, and that a portentous claim had been more or less darkly set up for what was called Occultism. The book was full of material—so full that I shall probably be right in saying that no one has mastered its contents so as to fully grasp the author's plan; but the material sadly needed reducing to order, and many of the statements required elucidation, and some, perhaps, limitation. Moreover, the reader wanted a guide to pilot him through the difficulties that he encountered on every hand: and, above all, he sorely needed some more tangible hold on the history and pretensions of the mysterious Brotherhood for whom the author made such tremendous claims.

It seemed vain for any seeker after truth to attempt to enter into relations, however remote, with any adept of the Order of which Madame Blavatsky is the visible representative. All questions were met with polite or decisive refusal to submit to any examination of the pretensions made. The Brothers would receive an inquirer only after he had demonstrated his truth, honesty, and courage by an indefinitely prolonged probation. They sought no one; they promised to receive none. Meantime, they rejected no one who was persevering enough to go forward in the prescribed path of training by which alone the Divine powers of the human spirit can, they allege, be developed.

The only palpable outcome of all this elaborate effort at human enlightenment was the foundation in America of the Theosophical Society, which has been the accepted though not the prescribed organisation of the Occult Brotherhood. They would utilise the Society, but they would not advise as to the methods by which it should be regulated, nor guarantee it any special aid, except in so far as to give the very guarded promise that whatever aid might at any time be vouchsafed by them to inquiring humanity would come, if at all, through that channel. It must be admitted that this was a microscopically small crumb of comfort to fall from so richly laden a table as Madame Blavatsky had depicted. But Theosophists had to be content, or, at least, silent: and so they betook themselves, some of them, to reflection.

What ground had they for belief in the existence of these Brothers, adepts who had a mastery over the secrets of nature which dwarfed the results of modern scientific research, who had gained the profoundest knowledge—"Know thyself," and could demonstrate by actual experiment the transcendent powers of the human spirit, spurning time and space, and proving the existence of Soul by the methods of exact experimental science? What ground for such claims existed outside of that on which the Theosophical Society rested?

For a long time, the answer was of the vaguest. But eventually evidence was gathered, and in this book we have Mr. Sinnett coming forward to give us the benefit of his own researches into the matter, and especially to give us his correspondence with Koot Hoomi, an adept and member of the Brotherhood, who had entered into closer relations, still, however, of a secondary nature, with him than had been vouchsafed to other men. These letters are of an extremely striking nature, and their own intrinsic value is high. This is greatly enhanced by the source from which they come, and the light they throw upon the mental attitude of these Thibetan recluses to whom the world and the things of the world are alike without interest, save in so far as they can ameliorate man's state, and teach him to develop and use his powers.

Another fruitful subject of questioning among those who leaned to theosophical study was as to the nature of these occult powers. It was impossible to construct from "Isis Unveiled" any exact scheme, supported by adequate testimony, or by sufficient evidence from any proper source, of what was actually claimed for the adept. Madame Blavatsky herself, though making no pretension to having attained the full development of those whose representative she was, possessed certain occult powers that seemed to the Spiritualist strangely like those of mediumship. This, however, she disclaimed with much indignation. A medium, she explained, was but a poor creature, a sort of conduit through which any foul stream might be conveyed, a gas-pipe by

means of which gas of a very low power of illumination reached this earth. And much pains was taken to shew that the water was very foul, and that the gas was derived from a source that if at all Spiritual was such as we, who craved true illumination, should by no means be content with. It is impossible to deny that the condition of public Spiritualism in America, at the time when these strictures were passed upon it, was such as to warrant grave censure. It had become sullied in the minds of observers, who viewed it from without, and who were not acquainted with its redeeming features, by association with impurity and fraud. The mistake was to assume that this was the complexion of Spiritualism in itself, and not of Spiritualism as depraved by adventitious causes. This, however, was assumed. If we desired true light, then we were told that we must crush out mediumship, close the doors through which the mere Spiritual loafer came to perplex and ruin us, and seek for the true adepts who alone could safely pilot us in our search. These, it was explained, had by no means given up the right of entrance to their Spiritual house to any chance Spirit that might take a fancy to enter. They held the key, and kept intruders out, while, by unaided powers of their own, they performed wonders before which medial phenomena paled. This was the only method of safety; and these powers, inherent in all men, though susceptible of development only in the purest, and then with difficulty, were the only means by which the adept worked.

Some Theosophists demonstrated by practical experiment that there is a foundation of truth in these pretensions. I am not aware whether any has found himself able to separate quite conclusively between his own unaided efforts and those in which external Spirit has had a share. There is, however, one very noteworthy fact which gives a clue to the difference between the methods of the Spiritualist and the Occultist. The medium is a passive recipient of Spirit-influence. The adept is an active, energising, conscious creator of results which he knowingly produces, and of which evidence exists and can be sifted. Spiritualists have been slow to accept this account of what they are familiar with in another shape. Theosophists have been equally slow to estimate the facts and theories of Spiritualism with candour and patience. Mr. Sinnett records many remarkable experiences of his own, which are well worthy of study, and which may lead those who now approach these phenomena from opposite sides to ponder whether there may not be a common ground on which they can meet. We do not know so much of the working of spirit that we can afford to pass by contemptuously any traces of its operation. Be we Spiritualists or Theosophists—odd names to ticket ourselves with!—we are all looking for evidence of the whence and whither of humanity. We want to know somewhat of the great mystery of life, and to pry a little into the no less sublime mystery of death. We are gathering day by day more evidence that is becoming bewildering in its minute perplexities. We want to get light from all sources; let us be patient, tolerant of divergent opinion, quick to recognise the tiny hold that any one soul can have on truth, and the multiform variety in which that which we call Truth is presented to man's view. Is it strange that we should see various sides of it? Can we not see that it must needs be so? Can we not wait for the final moment of reconciliation, when we shall see with clearer eye, and understand as now we cannot?

There is much in Mr. Sinnett's little book that may help those who are trying to assume this mental attitude. The philosophy that it contains is clearly stated, and affords rich material for thought. The facts recorded are set forth with scientific accuracy, and must profoundly impress the careful and candid reader. The glimpses revealed of this silent brotherhood, in its lonely home on one of the slopes of the mountains of Thibet, working to solve the mighty problem, and to confer on humanity such benefits as it can receive, are impressive enough even to the Philistine sceptic. If they should indeed be flashes of a greater truth, now only dimly revealed, the importance of such revelation is not to be measured in words.

Be this, however, as it may—and there are many points on which light is necessary before a decisive opinion can be pronounced—there is no doubt whatever that the philosophy contained in Mr. Sinnett's book is similar to that which the great students of Theosophy in ages past have arrived at. It is a mere piece of nineteenth century arrogance to pooh-pooh it as unworthy of attention by those on whom has flashed the dazzling light of the Spirit circle. The facts recorded are at least as scientifically conclusive as any recorded as having happened in a

\* "The Occult World." By A. P. Sinnett. (Trübner.)



dark séance, or under the ordinary conditions of Spiritualistic investigation. The letters of Koot Hoomi are fruitful of suggestion, and will repay careful study on their own merits. The whole book contains only 172 pages, and will not, therefore, unduly tax the reader's patience. If any instructed Spiritualist will read it, and can say that there is nothing in it that adds to his knowledge, he will at least have the satisfaction of having read both sides of the question, and that should present itself to all candid thinkers as a paramount and imperative duty.

### BOHME AND SWEDENBORG.

(Continued from page 187.)

To become more spiritualised is the usual ambition of earnest-minded people, for the only mode of being with which earthly experience has made us familiar is so corrupt and infirm that we have naturally supposed that to be perfect a human being must become pure Spirit (not quite knowing what we mean by that); but, at all events, not trammelled by bodily limits. I suspect this is as great a mistake as it would be to think the perfectness of circulation of blood secure if once it had no veins and arteries to run in. "There must," says Böhme, "be an attraction and inclosing, out of which the manifestation appeareth." (*"Threefold Life."* Chap. 1, par. 33.) The error lies in our ignorance of Spiritual substance, as to which Böhme is so precise that I must again use his words, "As there is a nature and substance in the outward world, so also in the inward Spiritual world there is a nature and substance which is Spiritual." (*"Treatise on Regeneration."* Chap. 2, par. 34.) And once to apprehend this is, I think, to be quit of one of the commonest hindrances to belief in the Incarnation of the Divine Man. If manhood is conditional upon the corrupt matter of mortal flesh and blood, no wonder the taking of our flesh upon Him by the Son of God is denied as incredible; but if our flesh and blood is, as I believe, the rough and gross monstrosity of the original humanity, "the angelical image, viz., the substance which came from the inward Spiritual world"—(*J. Böhme's "Regeneration."* Chap. 2, par. 62.) it need not outrage reason, or reverence for Deity, to suppose that the Perfect Man clothed Himself in our prison garment when He came to deliver us from our bondage, and shew us the only means of escape.

Dr. J. Garth Wilkinson, in his admirable "Life of Swedenborg," remarks very cogently:—"If God can be *inspirituate* surely He can also be incarnate, for Spirit is more bodily than flesh"—(*Footnote to p. 133*)—an expression which only Swedenborg's greatest successor can duly explain. According to Mr. T. Lake Harris our imperfection as Spirits is most proved by our defective corporeity, by the very imperfect organisation of our inner man. But it is impossible to convey his meaning accurately without his own words. He speaks in one of his discourses of "the gradual re-construction of the human body from centres to circumferences. Now, when with internal and Spiritual eye you look at the human hand, you discover that although there is the actual form of a hand, yet, as you penetrate more deeply into the structure it becomes more rudimentary, more incomplete, for all men on earth having been born in disorder, those disorders are perpetuated and embodied in the finer and invisible structures of the flesh, even when they do not crop out to the surface, as in cases of malformation and idiocy." . . . "There are, so to speak, vast organic spaces left unfilled between the body and the Spirit. The difference between man organic, as he is on earth in his unredeemed bodily condition, and man as he should be on earth in his redeemed bodily condition, is almost like the difference between the statue and the human form. The cunning artist carves the marble image; it stands erect in the appearance of the man, but the human likeness is only on the outside. So with us, the human likeness is principally upon the outside, but the internal structures, the internal divine forms of the faculties are mere hints and suggestions left imperfect, left unfilled, and where they are striving to be filled out, at best partial manifestations of creative form and power. Christ alone as to His visible organisation, in the last stages of His stay on earth, exhibits what an organic man is."\*

\* "The Redeemed Body." In quoting these words of Mr. Harris, I am, it is evident, begging the question that the Spirit forms its own body (subject, of course, to conditions more or less advantageous in the process, over which the individual Spirit has no control). When I can for an instant entertain the idea that the husk of a chestnut produced the nut within, I shall be ready to weigh the arguments of a materialist. Materialists, finding mental or spiritual deficiency where there is corresponding organic defect, conclude that the organisation originates faculty, whereas the imperfection of organic life, unless superinduced by external injury, proves to me defective spiritual power. A door or a window may be found wanting in a house because it is blocked up by some catastrophe, but it is far more likely that the builder omitted to make one,

Now, the received idea as to St. Paul's words, "the redemption of the body," is that of a postponed hope; of one that cannot be realised until we have first put off mortality, and awaited the general Resurrection. I have no doubt we must wait till then for the fullest glorification of the redeemed body, but I am thankful to our contemporary Seer for making me understand that the redemption of the body, the structural "*new creature*,"—(not only a new heart or new mind)—or, as St. Paul put it, Christ "getting a form" in us, need no more wait for death than the house or church in building waits for the scaffolding and all adjacent materials to be cleared away to be in process of formation. Our mortal bodies are what corresponds to scaffolding and material, and just as these are unsteadily reared, or wrongly chosen, does the stone or the Spiritual structure suffer. Here again Böhme is most explicit and worth hearing. "The dead or mortal flesh belongs not to the birth of life, so that it can receive the life of the light as a propriety, but the life of the light of God rises upon the dead or mortal flesh, and generates to itself from or out of the dead or mortal flesh, another heavenly and living body, which knows and understands the light. For this body is but a shell from which the new body grows, as it is with a grain of wheat in the earth." (*"Aurora."* Chap. 21, par. 74.) I submit that it would make a most important and beneficial change in the views of all Christian people if they could regard their mortal bodies in this light; the dangerous extremes of the ascetic would be as much condemned as the lowering infirmities of self-indulgence—the interests of Spirit and true body being in no sense antagonistic.

"All things," says Böhme, "are come to corporeal substance to the manifestation of God's works of wonder." (*"Threefold Life."* Chap. 5, par. 123.) That object cannot end with time.

"Spiritual corporeity," says Hahn, "is the aim of the work of God, therefore the old creation is first completed by the new" (regeneration). "The first creation was only a formation for establishing matter" (*"Die Lehre der Theosophen," Johann Michael Hahn, p. 189*); and again: "Spiritual corporeity is the aim of the new creation, which the angels shall attain by the humanity of Christ." (*Ibid, p. 87.*) I must quote this writer once more, as he so exactly gives my feeling on this subject. "Thou hast convinced me that spiritual corporeity is perfect blessedness, and harmony with perfect spirits in the perfect delights of spiritual bodies. I do not desire to resign myself to being a holy—one knows not what—an inanity. Neither is it Thy will, my God, that I should desire that." (*Ibid, p. 397.*)\* Now without real structural regeneration I see no escape from just what Hahn here deprecates.

It is a striking instance of the unconscious agreement of men whose spiritual vision takes in a widely different area that Swedenborg, who so frequently reiterates that it is a mistake of theologians to suppose the Spirit waits after death for its resurrection body, because as soon as consciousness returns after dissolution, men find themselves in bodies with all their senses,—unaware, as it would seem, of any connection between regeneration and bodily perfectness,—is yet the one to tell us that there are seven degrees of regeneration, and that only in the seventh is perfection, very few people in this life attaining to the fifth or sixth. (*"Arcana Celestia."* Chap. 1, pars. 6 to 13.)

On this point I cannot hold him to be any authority, since he advances the quite untenable opinion, positively as doctrine, that "regeneration proceeds from the external man to the internal. It is thus the angels perceive the Word." (*Ibid. Par. 64.*) If they do, I think they will be better informed when they are enabled to look into this mystery with more illumination. But as to the seven states of regeneration it is highly probable that they are the gradual stages of progress of all who "go from strength to strength" in the growth of an immortal life.

The "seventh form of nature," to use the language of Böhme, is the combined interaction of all the preceding six, duly evolved, and there brought to substance. Now this I conclude is the perfected body of regenerate Spirit, the full growth and organic development of that germ of Spiritual life which is latent in all, but inert and powerless till the will of man—man's one inviolable possession—is so touched, or turned, either by consciousness of Divine love, or by the shattering forces of contrition, that it yields to converting influences, and earnestly invokes Divine aid to subdue all internal opposition and unite it wholly and for ever to the will of God.

Cullompton, Devon.

A. J. PENNY.

\* The original text, with all its German *naïveté*, had better be given for this passage. "Du hast nur gezeigt, das Geistlichkeit vollkommene Seligkeit sei und Harmonie mit vollkommenen Geistern in Geistesleibern vollkommenes Vergnügen: ich will also nicht einem heiligen weis nicht was? wie einundding überlassen sein. Es ist auch nicht dein wille, dass, sich dass wollen solle, mein Gott."

## 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 sésances.

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.

The Council of the British National Association has, we observe, instructed one of its committees to consider the requisite arrangements for a Conference of Spiritualists to be held in London during the approaching autumn. This is an important step—and, if the plans are well matured and wisely directed, will lead to good results. We have no intention of assuming the responsibility of tendering advice either to the committee or to the Council. That is certainly not our province, and to presume to do so would be very probably and very properly treated as a piece of arrogant impertinence. But we shall watch the proceedings with interest, and with the hope that something will be done to infuse fresh life and vigour into the movement. Something certainly needs to be attempted in this direction. At present, it seems to us, the actual work—in London at least—is for the most part left to a few earnest and energetic friends, while others stand by and watch the result without contributing very much themselves to its realisation. On the shoulders of some, therefore, the burden presses heavily—almost too heavily to be borne; at the same time that others, whether from indifference or some other cause, the nature of which we cannot guess, do not attempt to lift the weight with so much as a little finger.

But there is not only a lack of earnestness with some who are in other respects in full accord with the workers. There is also a lamentable disunion in our ranks. We may not quarrel, but we can hardly be said to agree. Our forces are scattered. Even the workers do not all work together. We have apparently no common purpose, and certainly no common method. We lament sometimes the injustice of the law in regard to Spiritualism, and the misrepresentations of the Press. But for this the Spiritualists have themselves to blame. There is hardly a village—assuredly no important town—throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain in which there are not some recipients of our beautiful faith. Our numbers are many thousands in England alone—probably in London alone. What then could we not do if our forces were firm and united? We could exhibit a power which the Press would no longer treat with scorn—which, in fact, it would be but too glad to conciliate. Is no such union possible? Surely it would not be so very difficult to find a common bond of sympathy and a common ground of united action? If at present we are broken into many sections, would it not be well that representatives of each should be invited to meet and to try what can be done in enabling Spiritualism to present a united front to its enemies? We do not say that the B.N.A.S. should initiate the work—we simply say that it must be done by somebody.

Here is another point which may be not altogether undeserving of attention. Besides the number of Spiritualists who stand aloof from active interest in the movement—not because they are indifferent to its success, but because of little prejudices and misapprehensions in regard to the methods of work in which others are engaged—there are a considerable number who, in consequence of peculiar business and social relationships, cannot afford to make their sympathy with so unpopular a thing as Spiritualism known. They would like to do something for the diffusion of their views, but are not acquainted with any channel

through which their assistance could be rendered without the risk of their names being paraded before the public. We have no sympathy with men who are simply ashamed to avow their convictions, but there are many who would doubtless speak out if they dared, and who would dare if any good could come of their doing so. There are clergymen, for instance—as we happen to know—who are in this unfortunate position, whose ministrations are strongly tinged with Spiritualistic truths, but who would be ruined and their flocks scattered if they openly and boldly proclaimed all they have seen and heard and learned, as to the proofs of another life which come of the demonstrated possibility of Spirit communion. Can nothing be done to utilise the convictions of such men, by the provision of the requisite machinery by which they can work for the promotion of Spiritualism, quietly, secretly, but surely? Could not a few of them be asked to meet with a view to discuss the question, and to attempt a solution of the difficult position in which they find themselves so unpleasantly placed?

And now that we find ourselves venturing to offer hints for rallying some of the scattered forces of Spiritualism, we may throw out just one more suggestion. In conversation the other day with a gentleman who was formerly very prominent in the Spiritualist movement, but who has since been driven into comparative silence on the subject by force of circumstances, we were gratified to hear his testimony to the wide-spread interest in the question which he finds existent in every part of the country. But, unfortunately, it often happens that, especially in travelling, hours are spent in agreeable conversation with a stranger before it is discovered that he has a common sympathy in regard to Spiritualism, and much regret is then naturally felt that the discovery had not been reached earlier. It is a pity of course that Spiritualists do not instinctively recognise one another as such at first sight. But they do not; and yet one cannot but be sorry that it is so. Why should we not have a sort of Freemasonry in Spiritualism, with the requisite means of revealing ourselves at will to any initiated brother? We have no secrets, it is true. Our faith is open to all who care to accept it. But still it is pleasant to know our friends when we meet them, and to exchange thoughts and feelings by which we may be cheered and encouraged in the work to which our hands are set. What is to hinder this? and why should not so desirable an end be realised? It will be, some day, we do not doubt; and the sooner the better. Who will undertake the necessary labour for its accomplishment?

## THE VALUE OF PRAYER.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In "LIGHT" of last week Mr. Beattie described the photophone as an instrument which conveys *thought* by means of light.

This is surely an error, as the only photophone I have heard of or seen conveys, *not* thought, but speech or sound along a ray of light.

A mesmerist once explained to me his method of conveying thought to a distance, and influencing sensitives by a process analogous to the photophone.

He said that by directing his will towards the person to be communicated with, he thus sent a ray of magnetism to that person and along this ray he conveyed his thoughts. This was a striking explanation, and it was given before we heard of the photophone.

In "LIGHT" March 5th, I drew attention to the idea that thought, by producing vibrations in the brain, may thus, through like vibration of the ethereal medium, influence other brains.

Will-power can be thus exercised, but Will-power and prayer are not always the same or of like effect, as Mr. Beattie seems to suppose.

I have had repeated demonstrations in my own experience of Will-power failing to relieve pains, which pains have been immediately relieved on my humbly asking, in mental prayer, that they might be relieved.

June 18th.

G.W., M.D.

MR. F. O. MATTHEWS calls the particular attention of Metropolitan Spiritualists to the celebration he is organising at Ladbroke Hall, on Sunday, July 3rd, on the anniversary of his release from imprisonment. A mediums' meeting will be held in the morning, a conference in the afternoon, and a public meeting at night.



## SPIRITUALISM—A HELP TO A BETTER LIFE.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have just returned from the Discussion Meeting at the Great Russell-street Rooms, greatly impressed by the earnest and conscientious address of Mr. FitzGerald, who, in my opinion, deserves the heartiest thanks, I will not say of Spiritualists only, but of all investigators, for the honesty, thoroughness, and calm good sense of his remarks. I keenly regret that time did not permit a fuller discussion, but am strongly of opinion that good seed such as was sown will not be unfruitful in the days to come.

I can hardly call myself a Spiritualist, nor truthfully can I say that I am not one. I have given the closest attention to the subject for about eight years, and taken every opportunity of studying the evidence for and against, but never obtruding the matter on the notice of others. For some time past, however, I have been inclined to the belief that, go where I will, meet whom I may, by some influence outside themselves people are impelled to speak to me, and inquire of me concerning Spiritualism; all the more anxiously at times when I tell them the amount of time my investigation has lasted and the grounds on which I rest such knowledge or conviction as I have attained to.

I think I have met with every form of treatment,—derision, harshness, injustice, opposition, incredulity, and all the other thousand and one shades of individual opinion and criticism, but invariably with the result that sooner or later each and all have made the admission—"If Spiritualism really is what you represent it as being, it is not a question of liking or inclination, it is a duty to investigate it."

Few, I imagine, can have a more varied circle of acquaintance than for some years past has been mine; embracing widely different sections of society, belief, characteristics, and attainments, yet from each of these classes, at one time and another, I have received individual testimony that Spiritualism as it is, or perhaps I should rather say, as I understand it to be, is not only deserving, but demands attention.

I don't know whether the arguments I use are good in themselves; I only know they have weight with those to whom I use them.

People tell me frequently of the constant exposures of mediums, but when I remind them that a truth has often been led up to by most imperfect means, that in stamping out falsity, truth is made manifest, they usually listen, and inquire further.

Why is darkness a necessary condition at physical sésances? I have been asked, and in reply have said:—"Why is a similar condition necessary in photography? I can't tell you, but photographers know it is, and when I get my portraits I don't feel disposed to question the mode of production; the result satisfies me that the object sought has been attained. The preliminary stages may have been irksome. I may have thought so much attention to insignificant trifles during the sitting unnecessary, but the operator has assured me it was essential to success; I have credited him with full knowledge of his business, and the portrait proves he was right, and repays me for my trouble."

Spirits can, and, I believe, have explained the reason why for certain results they require darkness. For me, it is enough that it is required. I accept the fact and am grateful if results clear and tangible follow my acceptance of it.

I was once considerably reviled by a very able musician, *chef d'orchestre*, who had heard a medium lecture under Spirit influence, and knowing I was interested in Spiritualism, attacked me forthwith in no mild manner on the wickedness, stupidity, diabolical nature of the whole thing, finishing with the statement that if he had his way all who believed, or sought to inquire into the matter, should be put in prison, and kept on prison fare till they were sane enough to know better.

I heard him to the end. He was in the maturity of life, I but at its commencement. I hardly liked to say the words that rose to my lips, but I said them:—"Suppose a man learned on all other subjects went into your orchestra after the performance of a grand opera and looking over your score were to say, 'You tell me those irregular black marks, those dots and dashes, represent or have any connection with the glorious sounds I have listened to, the wail of agony that has made tears rise responsive in my eyes, the triumphant march that as I listened made my whole being thrill with martial ardour! why, man, you must think me a fool or a madman. You insult me when you tell me such a fable, and expect my credence.' You would be in doubt how to treat that man; you would sorrow over the blackness and depth

of his ignorance. You might try to reason with him, but finding him wrapped in the mantle of his own conceit, you would say:—"Your words are worthless; weighty as they may be on other subjects, here they are utter nothingness. You don't know, you won't learn. Stand aside and leave the way open for wiser men, and when you are willing to open your mind come again, and I will give you proof that the signs you despise not only represent the music you so much admire but are the key for unlocking a vast store, by which future ages shall have joy equal to your own." This having said, you would decline to waste your words on one who could not, or would not, understand them. You are in that man's position; I decline to waste my time with you."

So far as I am able to judge one of the greatest objections to investigators is the apparent puerility of the means employed to arrest attention; a rap, the movement of a table, a flash of light; and the names of the communicating intelligences when given oftentimes those of beings whose lives on earth, illumined by transcendent powers of intellect, have left their mark, as we believe, on all succeeding time.

But concede for a moment that these, and such as these, really are the operating powers, and take the argument thus:—

The blankness of utter materiality.

The desolation of bereaved affection.

The errors of life, consequent on misconception of its duties.

The total insufficiency of dogma or creed to guide aright.

The withering sense of constant imperfection.

The remorse for sin.

How many minds are there in our midst oppressed by constant and collective weight of these, of which one alone were burthen heavy enough for the stoutest heart to bear. I will instance no names; I will only say, granted that a being has survived the change called death, after a life of unexampled purity and culture, and finds it within the bounds of possibility to transmit such news to earth as shall remit in never so slight a degree such woes as these, where is the human soul that would count such work menial or degrading?

Granted, too, that some who have passed on have suffered for sins of omission and commission, yet find help and sympathy to lead them into purer light, with the bandage of error torn from their eyes, will they not yearn, all the more for the agony they have passed through, to save their fellow beings from any pang their experience might be the means of lessening?

Besides, how are we to know that the sound or movement to us so simple is simple as it seems? Few, save those who have gone through the work, know the severity of the training for the smallest result in any field of action. We have not to do with the how or wherefore, the why or because; let us turn our attention to proving first if these things really are; that ascertained it will be time enough later on to seek out the rest.

Once get people to see that no form of mediumship, good, bad, or indifferent, is Spiritualism, but simply one of its incidental expositions, marred often in its exercise by retarding influences, over which neither mediums, sitters, nor Spirits can exercise perfect control, and a great deal of ground is got over.

Many grumble at the time, trouble, and often weariness of the inquiry, and think they are wrong. If a thing is worth having, it is worth waiting and working for. Others say: What is the use even if it be true? The use! First prove its truth, and the responsibility of the use becomes then an individual matter. Good and bad are words of purely relative meaning, but if knowingly and wilfully any truth or knowledge be prostituted to base or belittling purposes, rest assured the wrong-doer will not escape the punishment of the contamination he spreads abroad.

I may be wrong in my belief, but I believe that if, proof of this great power once granted, it fails of being a constant help in daily, hourly life, an incentive to inmost truth and honesty of action, the recipients are at fault; it ought to bring about a spirit of universal brotherhood and sympathy, a kinship and fraternity for truth in all things, lasting through time to eternity. Out of chaos order will be evolved; out of the distrust, faith; dissension will blend into peace, discord into sweetest harmony,—each and all serving a distinct purpose in the day of their being for the progressive unfolding of Eternal Truth, which once grasped none will cavil at the tedium of the search, or the deviousness of the pathway.

June 13th, 1881.

SINCERITY.

SEVERAL lady workers in Newcastle-on-Tyne have lately successfully passed examinations in surgery, &c., in the Ladies' Ambulance Class, formed in the above town.

## SPIRITS; OR UNCONSCIOUS CEREBRATION?

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have read the letter of "Pseudo-Medium," with its remarkably illogical conclusion, that he is driven to accept the theory of unconscious cerebration. "Epsilon's" reply, though right enough so far as it goes, seems to me not to answer sufficiently so far as facts are concerned; and I take leave to offer to "Pseudo-Medium" one or two results of my early experience in Spiritualism. I sat with my wife, my sister, or some personal friend, and constantly received messages which, true or false, could not be accounted for by unconscious cerebration. Here, by the way, I feel tempted to ask whether "Pseudo-Medium" has discovered that his own mind is "unconsciously" false or lying, to account for his view that the false messages were given by unconscious cerebration? However, I will give some facts.

I was sitting with a friend more new than myself to the subject, when the table (by tilts) spelled out the presence of his mother. As a test he asked her maiden name, which was correctly given. He then asked, "Where were you at school?" "Liverpool."—"Where were you married to my father?" "At Finchley."—"By whom?" "The Rev. Mr. Williams." My friend wrote by the next post to his aunt and to his father, and received from the first-named the following reply:—"Your mother went to school in Liverpool. She was married to your father at Finchley, by the Rev. Mr. Jones, the rector of the parish." He was annoyed at the error as to the name, but before we sat again he had a letter from his father, who wrote: "I do not know where your mother went to school. We were married at Finchley, by the Rev. Mr. Williams, the curate-in-charge, because the Rev. Mr. Jones (the rector) was from home at the time." Now my friend had put these questions because he had never known the circumstances.

On another occasion we were sitting and he expressed a desire to renew acquaintance with a person whom he had known and of whose address he was ignorant. The Spirit expressed approval of this intention and told him to take no trouble about the address, as a communication from the person would reach him ere he left my chambers that night. In about an hour afterwards a message did come as predicted, brought by a near relative of the person.

On another occasion a message was given from a little boy of the Galla tribe whom he had known on the coast of Africa. This was a counsel for him not to carry out an intention he had formed, and was in the Galla language. The same Spirit, who had been a Mahomedan on earth, spelled out the following message:—"Allah il Allah—Christ il Allah—Mahomet Rasul Allah!" and he persistently held to affirming the last clause, which my friend denied.

Like "Pseudo-Medium" I have had numbers of lying messages given me, but most of these, if not all, mingled with either facts previously unknown to me, or with statements which never could never have come from my brain or those surrounding me. I soon learned something of the danger of giving credence to all that came, and with me the result was that I was driven to earnest prayer for aid to keep away any false Spirits, save when they came to ask aid from me. "Pseudo-Medium" seems to have been unfortunate in his experiences, but it seems probable that he and his brothers and sisters sat down in too light and careless a spirit, and we all know that when this is the case it is easy to obtain messages which are utterly valueless. I could give many more instances of my own experience, but most of your readers are too well acquainted with the matter to need them, and if "Pseudo-Medium" has any wish to have more of them you are perfectly free to supply him or any other inquirer with my address. I must add that the names which I have given above are fictitious, as I don't want needlessly to import into the matter those of persons who might not wish to be mentioned.—I am, sir, yours, &c., H. T. H.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Your very able correspondent, "Epsilon," has certainly replied in a triumphant manner to "Pseudo-Medium." Will you permit me to follow as junior counsel on the same side, or rather to play second fiddle to my eminent leader in our argumentative orchestra?

Does "Pseudo-Medium" know what unconscious cerebration is, or is said to be? It is that special form of activity of the cerebral system of man which produces objective (external) phenomena from subjective (internal) forces previously latent in

the individual and manifested by unconscious effort under certain conditions.

Now, "Pseudo-Medium," by adopting this theory of unconscious cerebration as a solution of his mediumistic difficulties, places himself on one of the horns of a very uncomfortable dilemma.

If, as he says, the Spirits only told the truth when the truth was present in his own mind, then the untruths which the Spirits revealed were, in accordance with the law of unconscious cerebration, the untruths which were already lurking latently in "Pseudo-Medium's" own mind, and which were only awaiting the conditions suitable for their development and manifestation. For these untruths "Pseudo-Medium" is therefore personally responsible. How does he like this interpretation of his theory? Not at all, I should say.

While perusing the interesting letters in your columns, I observe that one of your correspondents, "C. C. M.," attributes to imaginative desire a very remarkable result, that of a male breast secreting milk and suckling a child. Doubtless such a fact has been verified, although it is so rare and exceptional a phenomenon as to amount to a *lusus naturæ*.

I certainly should not like to be the child who was nourished in this fashion; but what I wish to ask is, how does "C. C. M." know that the phenomenon he mentions is attributable to imagination? What authority has he or anyone else for this dogmatic dictum? The cool manner in which controversialists make imagination responsible for many of the most surprising human phenomena seems to me one of the strangest scientific freaks in this strange world of ours.—Yours, &c.,

TRIDENT.

## THE FLETCHERS AND DR. MACK.

[As a matter of fairness we give the following letter from Mr. Fletcher; but as we feel that no good whatever can come of a prolonged correspondence on the subject, we must decline to insert any further communications—except any new and important feature in the case should arise.—ED. "LIGHT."] ]

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have read in "LIGHT," May 7th, a story of Dr. Mack's connection with the Fletcher-Davies affair, and I presume there will be no objection to printing the other side, as many of the statements made by the "Friend" are absolutely without foundation. To read the story from the stand-point of the writer, Dr. Mack is little less than the Good Samaritan, which character he is very fond of playing. I cannot here go into the details of the case, but will only refer to the part which Dr. Mack sustained in it. As to what occurred between Mr. and Mrs. Horne and Dr. Mack on the train, I of course know nothing. I am aware, however, that Dr. Mack and Madame Davies travelled about together, hiding in one place and another for fear of what might be done. Dr. Mack, after having obtained the search warrant, came with the officer to Mrs. Fletcher's bedroom, and opened the door and went in. He was of course ordered from the room, but instead of leaving he sat down and began making insolent remarks, saying that I had run away and couldn't be found, &c. Finally he was forced to leave the room through Mrs. Fletcher threatening to call for help. He came to the breakfast room, and shewed the power of attorney, and exclaimed that the officer was upstairs. I made no such remark as "darned stuff"—which is totally unlike my manner of speaking. We went to the bedroom, where we found Mrs. Fletcher dressed, and Mack demanded Madame Davies' things, or rather jewels, and said to Mrs. Fletcher, "If you had not treated me in the way you have this would never have happened." He then called the officer, who produced the search warrant, which I read aloud—never having seen a paper of the kind before—and read the schedule of the things demanded. I returned them, as I then believed, to the authority of the law, as it was in the name of the law that they were demanded. Dr. Mack took them, and also went to Lawrence and got the jewels. He afterwards had Mrs. Fletcher arrested upon her own things, not an article of which was marked with Madame Davies' name, save one towel. Madame Davies, however, swore they were hers, and on that ground Mrs. Fletcher was arrested, but they have all been returned since. Dr. Mack was then arrested. He applied to be allowed to take the poor debtor's oath, urging that he did not intend to leave the State. I was sent for very early to go to the Sherman House, where Mack was staying in the custody of two officers. He said, with tears in his eyes, "What are you going to do with me?" My reply was, "Put



you where you belong." He then drew up a paper and signed it, as representing Mrs. Hart-Davies, agreeing to give up certain wearing apparel, and to pay a certain amount of money if the proceedings could only be stopped. So he was allowed to take his oath *not to leave the State*, and to be on his own recognizances for 40,000 dollars. We repaired to Mr. Ives, his solicitor's office, where papers were made out, and in the agreement this line was inserted:—"On no account was Dr. Mack to enter 22, Gordon-street." The things, &c., were to be delivered to us the next day. Instead of this being done, without informing his solicitor, Mr. Ives, of his intention, he fled, followed by Mrs. Hart-Davies, and they together went to Gordon-street and instituted their proceedings. Dr. Mack stands on the law books a defaulter to the State to the amount of 40,000 dollars. There was never any attempt to keep a thing which belonged to Mrs. Davies. We never saw her after she waved good-bye—to go on a friendly visit to the Hornes—until we met in the court-room. If necessary I will forward a copy of the judgment against Dr. Mack, shewing him to be a fugitive from the United States. He may possibly succeed in misleading the English people—he will not the American.—Yours truly,

J. WILLIAM FLETCHER.

### OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

#### "The Spiritualist."

The editor's concern for the position of the cause in relation to the late law case is expressed in the following characteristic manner:—

"A fine opportunity has been lost, for want of some good men working publicly in Spiritualism in London, to have provided an outlet whereby a great number of Spiritualists could have expressed to the general public their indignation at the Fletcher fraud, and their sympathy with the lady who has been swindled by some, and foully slandered by several others, in our ranks. For aught the general public know, most of the Spiritualists in the Kingdom may be sympathisers with the Fletchers, and nothing has been done to remove such a stigma. The treatment the Fletchers' victim has received ought to weigh heavily on the conscience of the movement."

The Countess of Caithness is also dragged into the matter. A pleasant variation might be made in giving space for information and particulars in favour of the late defendant; it is easy to abuse an imprisoned woman who cannot defend herself.

Writing on "Rational Asceticism" "J.K." argues strongly in favour of vegetarianism, and in the course of his article he says:—

"Many vegetarians believe that every vegetable product is food for man, but therein they are in error, for the vegetable realm contains many injurious, poisonous products, from which we must abstain. All large-leaved vegetables, and roots which are the right food for an animal with a multiple stomach, are wrong as food for man, as the digestion of such food causes fermentation in the human stomach, consequently yeast is engendered and ultimate disease must result. Tea and pure coffee have valuable medicinal qualities, especially the latter. Cocoa and unsipped chocolate are, for the more delicate, also valuable products. But all spices, salt, liquors, and wines must be always strictly avoided. The Rational Ascetic's bill of fare consists of cereals, farinaceous preparations, potatoes, and pulse. The best ripe fruits always form part of the meal, while olive oil, butter, cheese, and honey or sugar impart wholesome seasoning. Living upon this food one can know real, permanent happiness, and become pure and fit to receive the knowledge of the absolute."

#### "The Medium."

The articles on "Bible Spiritualism," by "Ouranoi," are continued in the current number of our contemporary. The writer says:—

"The Spiritualism of the Bible reveals two parts—the good and the bad, and the good counteracting the bad. It calls the lower spirits demons, a more exact word than our version of devils. A demon is a sinful, malicious, fiend-like spirit-man, a maximum of evil with a minimum of good, in active, potent force. The New Testament more particularly shews the direct influence of these spirits upon the earth. Their influence is revealed as that of possession, injecting evil thoughts, and instigating dark designs. Christ and his apostles manifested the real cause of much disease and evil by the remedial measures they adopted. The corruption of the church has made that a lost knowledge. It is to be hoped that modern Spiritualism will more than restore it."

We notice that Mr. J. Burns, the proprietor of the *Medium*, in a letter headed, "A Case of Urgency," has encountered a misfortune that, no doubt, his friends will assist him in tiding over. "A loan," he says, was obtained, "and the company objecting to my piecemeal method of paying my instalments, they at last sued me for the whole amount. I could not prevail upon them to give me time to find the money, but they have without further ceremony put my effects into the hands of the sheriff's officer."

Mr. Burns in appealing for assistance states his case thus:—  
"My wife and I are not unknown adventurers. For nearly twenty

years—12 of them in Southampton Row—we have been before the world. All acknowledge the value of the work we have done. Are we as a reward for ability and faithfulness to be turned homeless into the streets? Is that to be put forth as a specimen of the blessings which Spiritualism has in store for the children of men? There have been evil and disgraceful things in Spiritualism, but no one dare lay them at our door. We have foretold and fought hard against the practices that have done all possible to ruin the Cause. A large number of Spiritualists have seen all this, and have nobly stood by us, and to them my fraternal acknowledgments are due and offered. This is a state of things which cannot be permitted to exist long. I must have £200 immediately. I grant that it is not a pleasant thing for the Cause to have such an affair occur, but the fault has not lain at my door. I have done my duty to the full. At this moment the subscriptions to the Spiritual Institution in arrears would do more than clear my feet from these difficulties."

#### "The Herald of Progress."

In a letter entitled "Concerning Spiritualism," by "Candour," we find the following sensible remarks:—

"Do we do all we can to further the cause of Spiritualism, and to bring about the era of peace and brotherly love? Let the history of our movement for the past 30 years be our judge! We fear we cannot as a body proclaim ourselves practical followers of the doctrine of truth, justice, and charity, a sad confession to make, certainly, but we challenge contradiction of our statement. What to our mind appears to be the greatest hindrance to the extension of the movement is the expression in our meetings of too much individuality. No greater error in the management of large bodies can be committed by any man than to *persistently* force antagonistic individual opinions upon his brother workers. Not that we have any desire to prevent anyone from thinking and giving expression to his cherished opinions, but we certainly object to any member, possessing contrary opinions to the majority of the other members, making his tongue and pen the boisterous and indecorous vehicle of his private feelings. To anyone that *really* wishes to see our cause prosper, such a course of unseemly conduct is suicidal in the extreme. We repeat that we are not of that school who desire to gag people for opening their mouths against our wishes, but we respectfully leave it to the common sense of our brother members, whether it is not better to do the washing of such dirty linen at home, than to raise such a disagreeable odour under the very noses of the people of this too infidel world. Another element which has a good deal to do with preventing sensible people from examining the subject of Spiritualism is the excessive amount of what is vulgarly termed 'twaddle' being preached from the public platform, also the absurdly childish frivolities of people, who really should know better, at the circles. If modern Spiritualism is to make her mark and succeed in her high and noble aims she must prove her superiority both by fact and argument, and the all-important physical and psychical phenomena, on which her philosophy is built, must also grow in power and force."

#### "The Religio-Philosophical Journal."

An interesting narration, from the pen of John W. Gratton, attorney-at-law, Pittsburgh, Pa., recounts that gentleman's experiences during his investigations. After being for several years engaged in close study of the theory of Spiritual philosophy through the evidence of men of great intelligence and irreproachable character, he was convinced of the truth of Spiritualism. The séances were held at the country house of a Mr. William Fleming, of Pittsburgh, and the medium was Mr. R. W. Sour, of Tittusville, Pa., whose name is mentioned in Epes Sargent's last work, "The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism," on page 355. A number of materialisations are reported, and at one séance the phenomenon of slate-writing was obtained as thus detailed:—

"After other manifestations had occurred, Mr. Sargent appeared, and in a distinct whisper directed us to get the slate and he would write through the medium. I at once shewed both sides of a new pair of slates to every one present, placed a small piece of pencil between, fastened them together and handed them to Mr. Sour, who had then appeared outside the cabinet in presence of everyone and in bright light; he placed them on the ends of the fingers and thumb of his right hand, and in a few seconds we heard the sounds of writing. Upon its conclusion he handed the slates to me, and upon opening them all read the following well-written letter:—

'FRIENDS OF PROGRESS: If you keep on with your circles you will reap the fruit of your troubles. One of the reasons that this city is not more to the front is because your developments have not been uniform and regular. Much depends upon you. For the sake of the truth and all concerned, I hope you will organize and go right on.—Yours for the truth,

'EPES SARGENT.'

"I still have the slate in my possession and will be pleased to shew it to any honest investigator."

READERS of the *Banner of Light* are informed that if they write to Mr. J. J. Morse, the accredited European agent, they need experience no difficulty in being supplied. See Mr. Morse's advertisement.

## GOSWELL HALL.

On Sunday last, the platform of this hall was occupied by Mr. Goss, who took as the subject of his lecture "Welcome and Unwelcome Truths by Spiritual Authors." After passing in review many truths from the New Testament, the lecturer branched out in every direction in turn, presenting old truisms in a new and original manner, which found great favour with his hearers, judging from the frequent and hearty bursts of applause. It is an impossibility to present an outline of this lecture in a manner worthy of its excellence, for it overflowed with deep thought, sound philosophical reasoning, and plain, unvarnished truths, which were presented in the most kind and earnest manner. It is really surprising how our friend Mr. Goss has kept himself so quiet and retired for so many years. I think those who have known him so long and well are very much to blame for not trying to induce him to take a more active part in our movement, but now that he has come to the front let us hope that many more years are still in store for him to raise his voice on behalf of Spiritualism. I am sure he may always depend on a hearty welcome at Goswell Hall. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded him for his services, to which Mr. Goss suitably replied, when the meeting closed in the usual manner.—J.N.G.

## QUEBEC HALL.

On Sunday, June 19th, Mr. Hunt read an interesting paper on the conversion of a Materialist to Spiritualism, which was listened to with great attention by a small, but appreciative audience. Indeed, during this fine weather, it is not to be expected that large attendances would be found anywhere. The lecture was an impressively delivered relation of facts, by which an honest sceptic, in full harmony with a circle, had the most complete satisfaction of the truth of continued life after the body's death. No discussion followed, the lecturer preferring his remarks to act on the mind undisturbed.

## CARDIFF.

Spiritualism in this district, as far as its organised centre, the Cardiff Spiritualist Society, is concerned, has passed through a severe test since the commencement of the present year. At the close of 1880 a dark cloud not only gathered but burst over us, and we were, at a blow, completely deprived of working mediums, our only satisfaction being that although we lost, Spiritualism, as a whole, was the gainer by the departure of our gifted associates to spread abroad the knowledge of its glorious truths both in England and at the Antipodes. Among us were some faint-hearted members who went so far as to suggest the breaking-up of the circle and the dissolution of the headquarters, but this was strenuously opposed, and in the end the wiser counsels prevailed, and a few workers devoted to the cause determined to stick together and await the passing over of the cloud, confident that the sunshine was as bright as ever beyond it, although temporarily obscured. The Society managed to keep open the weekly public meetings, offering such attractions as they could in the way of readings, lectures, &c., and, although the members before referred to left, one by one, what they considered a sinking ship, the total of the subscriptions thus becoming considerably reduced, yet, the remainder, nothing daunted, waited patiently for the dawn, which has come at last (as everything else comes to him who knows how to wait); medium after medium shewing unmistakable signs of active control by our Spirit friends. Our developing circle on Wednesdays is full of interesting experience, and striking tests. We have occasionally an open circle for invited guests, and on Sundays a general séance is instituted after the evening lecture.

The platform on Sunday last was occupied by the hon. sec., who read and commented upon a portion of Mr. F. F. Cook's paper, "The Rationale of Spiritualism." At the subsequent séance a celebrated ex-medium was controlled for the first time, after a long interval, by his Spirit guides, and a band of Spirits successively manifested themselves through him, promising to help us on all future occasions of the kind. A revival of interest is the result of all this, and we trust the coming half year will more than repay us for our labour and anxiety in the past.

## GLASGOW.

On Wednesday, the 15th inst., a soirée was held by the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists to afford its members an opportunity of wishing Mr. E. W. Wallis a hearty good-bye in view of his impending voyage across the Atlantic to America. The venerable Mr. Walker (president) occupied the chair, supported on the platform by Messrs. Robertson (vice-president) and Munro (secretary), together with Mr. Wallis. The programme of events included the presentation to Mr. Wallis of a purse of money, and an address briefly embodying the sentiments and wishes of the Glasgow Spiritualists on his behalf. The address was most tastefully illuminated by Mr. Ernest Barker, one of the members, and was altogether a most artistic production, evincing the deepest esteem which had been called forth on all hands. Mr. Robertson made the presentation of the purse of money in fitting terms, while the address was read by the secretary. Mr. Wallis's response was full of heart, he evidently feeling deeply affected. Towards the close of the meeting "The Standard

Bearer" gave brief utterance as to the views of the Spirit guides on Mr. Wallis's future work. On no occasion has Mr. Wallis spoken with more power. The testimonial was largely subscribed to, many old members contributing towards its success. The musical department was well arranged.—J.R.

## KEIGHLEY.

The well-known and popular advocate of Spiritualism, Mr. J. J. Morse, once more visited Keighley on Sunday last, and delivered two lectures in the Temperance Hall, in the afternoon on "Prayer: its Philosophy and Use," and in the evening on "Sinners: how to save them; Saints: how to make them." The advice and arguments were of so practical a character that if the suggestions given could only be carried out the world would be much better than it is, and saints would be much more numerous than they are at present. Mr. Morse was listened to with great attention, and those who had the pleasure of hearing him for the first time were astonished at the sentiments uttered. Mr. A. Morrell presided at each lecture, and the choir, under Mr. Pickles, rendered its usual efficient assistance. Spiritualism has made not a little progress in the district around here, notably so in the neighbouring village of Cowling, where some very convincing phenomena, without the presence of professional mediums, have been obtained.—S. B.

## LEICESTER.

On Sunday last, June 19th, Mr. Bent delivered a trance address, taking as a subject "Prayer as a Refiner of Man's Spiritual Nature." The address was greatly appreciated by the audience. From the statement of the financial secretary for the quarter ending June 9th, the members of the society had the pleasure of finding that after all claims had been paid a small balance remained in the hands of the treasurer. The accounts were duly audited by Mr. E. Larrard, president, and Mr. John Coatow, who certify to their correctness.

## NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

On Sunday and Monday last Mr. E. W. Wallis, the trance speaker, delivered his farewell lectures to the friends at Newcastle. His Sunday morning's discourse was remarkably good, and on the Sunday evening he delivered himself eloquently before a large and appreciative audience. On the Monday evening he discoursed upon "The Facts, Freedom, and Future of Spiritualism." In regard to its facts he pointed out the vast variety of sources from whence they proceed; shewing that however dim or doubtful a large proportion of them may be, yet there remained a good percentage grounded in such a firm set base that it is impossible to destroy them, or reason them out of existence. Its freedom, he contended, was the essential basis of its power. He shewed wherein Spiritualism dealt a death blow to the errors of dogmatic theology. In regard to Spiritualism as a factor in the future life of man, he pointed out that his grander unfoldment in the higher expression of true charity and spirituality should usher in a tide of harmony, peace, and good will among men; while as a grand preparatory tutor for the future life, it would swell the ranks of the immortals with human spirits attuned to "the music of the spheres." The lecture was well attended, and deservedly appreciated; several questions were asked and admirably answered by the controls. At the conclusion a vote of thanks and an expression of high regard and sympathy was proposed by Mr. Scod and seconded by Mr. Kersey, as a parting God-speed to Mr. Wallis, on this his last visit prior to his sailing to the land of the West.

This week Miss Wood goes to Leicester to fulfill an engagement with the friends there. I hope they will have a good time of it. Mr. Westgarth, it is rumoured, will probably fill her place at Weir's Court during her absence.—NORTHUMBRIA.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A COUNTRY SPIRITUALIST.—Thanks; but [too late for this week. The matter needs discussing.

S.B.—If you will send your communications a little earlier in the week we shall be better able to give them insertion. Items of news often reach us too late for publication the same week, and by the next week they have become stale.

The *Banner of Light* states that Dr. Mack has been arrested at the instance of Mrs. Fletcher's counsel, Major Mahan, and after a partial examination was released on bail until July 2nd.

Miss C. E. Wood, the celebrated Newcastle medium, will visit Keighley during the summer, in response to a long standing invitation.

ERRATUM.—We are requested to state that in the last line of the first paragraph of Mr. Beattie's letter on "The Value of Prayer," which appeared in our last issue, the words "parted wires" should have been "parallel wires."

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—London, Sunday, June 26, Ladbrooke Hall; evening at 7; subject, (see Ladbrooke Hall advertisement on last page); same hall, July 3; Quebec Hall, July 10; Leicester, July 17; Nottingham, July 18; Stamford, July 24; Goswell Hall, July 31; Keighley, September 18.



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