

Light:

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

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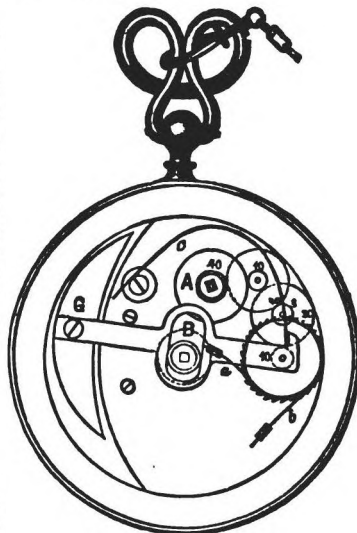
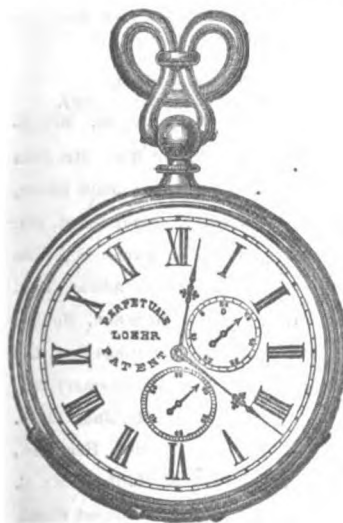
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PRICE TWOPENCE.

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RELIGIOUS BEARINGS OF SPIRITUALISM.

By Miss Emily Ford.

Paper read before the British National Association of Spiritualists on Monday evening, November 21st; Mr. Desmond G. FitzGerald in the chair.

I cannot call myself a Spiritualist. It is only a year and a half since I became practically acquainted with the subject, and I am by no means convinced of its truth. I have never attended a physical phenomena séance. I could almost count upon the fingers of one hand the trance mediums whom I have heard speak. Physical mediums I have known none. Under these circumstances it would seem that I am a very unsuitable person to address this audience. But it is on the very ground of my want of special knowledge of this subject that I have ventured to speak—because that which I wish to consider, and afterwards, I trust, hear discussed, is whether Spiritualism has more than a special or scientific meaning, whether, in fact, it has a general or religious bearing. If it has only a special interest, if it be truly a subject suitable only for investigation by scientific people for scientific purposes, then for those whose occupation is not of a specially scientific nature its consideration will be waste of time.

Spiritualism may become very engrossing; it takes much force out of its investigators; and outsiders not unnaturally ask, what is the good of it? Assuming Spiritualism to be true, what then? It may easily be answered to this, that everything which is true must be of some benefit, and that truth should be the aim of all research, the benefits to be gained from the knowledge of that truth being after-considerations.

But for those who are already engaged in work which should absorb all their time and strength, this vague searching after general truth will be a forbidden interest. The material proofs of Spiritualism must perhaps always be for specialists only. At all events they cannot be investigated by all persons. Of this I am convinced from what I have seen of the effects of such research. For instance, for myself, I have now finally abandoned table-turning, the only kind of physical phenomena séance at which I have assisted; mainly because I find I cannot continue it with safety to my health. Even though the nervous exhaustion following such experiments should proceed only from the "nervous strain of expectation," it makes it none the less a fact that there are those who cannot pursue this branch of Spiritualism. And that for which some are physically unfitted will not be necessary for all. If these material proofs, therefore, be all Spiritualism can do, it will not be of universal interest. If physical phenomena be truly its all, then, at all events in its present stage, it is for specialists only and it is not for the whole world.

Moreover, although I, like many others, have yet to believe that beyond all doubt Spirit exists and is immortal, there are still those to whom this is a matter of absolute certainty, without the aid of modern Spiritualism. Therefore, though it may convert the materialist and strengthen the doubter, if the proof of a future life be all it has to shew, for the true believer Spiritualism practically can do nothing. And yet, one is led sometimes by the conduct of Spiritualists to imagine that these objective proofs of Spirit existence are the sole aim of Spiritualism. The first rap that may have convinced one soul of a future life, the first raising of a chair by unseen hands,

must indeed fill the mind with wonder at this simple proof of the power of disembodied Spirit over matter. But although religious feeling may start the inquiry, yet once these things have been seen and heard there can be no religion in a continuance of what must then be mere wonder-seeking. Science there may be, and to the scientist it must indeed be interesting, but religion assuredly there is none. It is because it is built on this scientific basis that Spiritualism differs from all other religions.

It has been asserted hitherto that all religious knowledge is grounded on faith, and is consequently laid upon a subjective structure. Now the quite distinctive feature of Spiritualism is that it lays its foundations on the objective. When it says that Spirit is not a condition of matter, but that matter is a condition of Spirit, it claims to prove this so to speak material truth by a material process. Consequently the first step of Spiritualism has nothing to do with morality; it has only to do with material fact. It is a reply to the single question—Does Spirit exist, or does it not? A Spiritualist, I suppose, will at once assert that Spiritualism *does* give a decided affirmative to this question, since continued life is proved to exist after the physical conditions have ceased. But this fact of continued life does not in itself prove that Spirit is not a condition of matter subject to physical laws; nay, a wider knowledge may prove the disembodied Spirit to be as material a fact as materialists assert the embodied Spirit to be. It may be that Spiritualism may prove only a deeper founded Materialism. It may shew us that the Spirit, also, is subject to material laws: that the hopes of Spiritual souls in all ages have been vain; for that holiness is no better in itself than vileness, that the old saying that the pure in heart alone can see God is a delusion; for that purity of heart is as much a fiction as the God of purity whom the saints have hoped to see. It requires no Spiritualism to prove the advantages of practical morality; the material results accruing from such conduct are proof enough. But morality is not religion. Religion may perhaps be defined as the following of an inner law for the sake of that law; morality as the following of that law for the sake of its material results. A man is religious who is truthful for the sake of being truthful. A man is moral who is truthful because he believes it best for the material interests of the world that he should be so. Spiritualism, if it affirms that physical law alone is the governing force of the universe, may be the death of all religion.

This, then, is to my mind the great question of Spiritualism. Does it teach that Spirituality is a power in itself, that matter is only a condition of that Spirituality? Or does it bind us with the chains of acknowledged fact to the principle that Spirit is matter, since it shews there is nothing, in all the regions of space, but only supreme matter obeying with ruthless uniformity the laws of physical force? It was once emphatically stated to me by a Spiritualist that goodness has nothing to do with Spiritualism, for that Spiritualism is a question of material fact alone. Outsiders also assert that whatever may be the truth of Spiritualism, its moral results seem to prove this statement, for we have only to look at its history, and we shall find endless proofs of the laxity of character it engenders. Medium after medium is "exposed," and the personal experience of inquirers is only a series of sad disillusionments. These facts cannot be denied, and there can, I suppose, hardly be a person in the room to-night who has not had to undergo some of the suffering caused by finding some, in whom they had believed, to be guilty of some failure in principle or character. But that all persons convinced of the truth of Spiritualism should not in consequence become at once high moral characters, will not seem surprising if we reflect for a moment. For we should remember that the pain of remorse is a Spiritual suffering, and will be more clearly imagined by a sensitive conscience than by a slightly developed one. Imagine, then, certain assurance of continued life coming to a selfish

mind, unaccompanied by the fear of physical retribution for wrong doing, which may have haunted it and acted as a sort of deterrent to crime. Old landmarks will be in consequence overthrown, the infinite in a new form will open out, and in the chaos which will follow, morality may easily be mistaken for convention (since this kind of mind is not a deeply discerning one), and all moral law may come to be regarded as mere tradition. Hence surely the irregularities of so many Spiritualists. It is natural that the most sacred claims of human life should fall the soonest and the most frequently under this lawless influence. Therefore, while at first we may shrink with just horror from that rebellion against established codes of conduct with which Spiritualism may seem to inspire some of its believers, we may find that these revolting extravagances are but the contorted reflections of the honest efforts of others to find a deeper moral standing point.

Once men blindly obeyed moral laws; they did not question *why* they should; they considered such questioning wrong. It was good to be good, they said; that was all the reason they required.

But in this age of strong inquiry, the positive philosophy has taken possession of all the strongholds of thought, of all but one, that is, and now this last citadel is approached and religious faith is ordered to deliver up her keys also. Will it be that Spiritualism (in reality the co-worker with Positivism) shall shew that the coffers of Faith are truly empty; that she inhabits a sepulchre whitened outside indeed, but inside full only of the bones of men's dead hopes? Or will it be found that only when the hand-to-hand struggle came, would Faith open her doors; but not in submission to Materialism, but that hand in hand she and her would-be conqueror should together march through her gateway into the kingdom of a new force? What if modern Spiritualism be indeed but the mere reflections of the dawn of wider life which is coming to us? The night has been long; what if its darkest hour be upon us now? What though it crush us to the earth with its thick blackness, may not its very gloom be a sign that the night is far spent, for is it not the darkest hour which comes before the dawn?

But out of this sea of revolt, this seeming chaos of moral law, do we see a new world forming? does any of this expected day-break shine upon us already? If we answer in the negative, before we proceed on this account to deny the *possibility* of such a dawn, let us consider (and here I must be allowed to class myself among Spiritualists) whether we have fitted ourselves to receive a higher stage of the movement; in fact, to make this dawn not only probable but *possible*. Thought must realise itself in action before it can progress as thought, and how far have we allowed ourselves to be mere passive recipients of knowledge without seeking to use it as a means of wider life? If there be truly angelic presences in the universe, can we expect they will inspire us with Spiritual knowledge if we are forever grovelling on the material side of Spiritualism?

Nay, *can* they if they will? for highest truth can only come to him who has highest aspiration. He would be blind to the vision else, for people must learn to see Spiritual truth as an artist must learn to see colour.

To sum up then. If Spiritualism be no more than a proof of continued individual life, and this by means of physical facts, then, although the knowledge of these facts must eventually be of universal service, in this early stage of their investigation their study must be as much the work of specialists as are the facts of chemistry or astronomy; that even if this continued life be proved, it will still remain an undecided question whether Spirituality be not a delusion, and Materialism the only truth; but that before we can prove Spirituality to be this, we must follow the conditions necessary for its development; while religion has nothing to do with the material proofs of Spiritualism, it seems to depend on the individual whether Spiritualism can reveal itself to him as a religion or not.

And if we wish to know what are the conditions necessary for this discovery of Spirituality, it may be well to consider what Spiritualism as a religion *may* mean.

Spiritualism can be no new disjointed idea suddenly bursting on the world. It will not contradict facts. If it be anything beyond Materialism, it will be, I suppose, a clearer unfolding of that which has before been dimly felt; it will be a higher and wider development of life. I suppose that all have imagined themselves to be conscious of a mysterious guiding in their lives. To know that this guiding is a reality as much as any material fact; to be certain that life is not a chaos, and that to follow this highest soul is not moonshine

but the most practical wisdom; becomes sooner or later in every one's life a question of vital urgency. It is possible that Spiritualism may be the light to shew the nature of this guiding. It was the hope of this being so which made me seek out Spiritualism myself. We have, then, still to see whether Spiritualism be a will-o'-the-wisp leading us yet deeper into the bog of Materialism, or whether it be the dawn of a new day. How can we bear to put off even the slightest chance of that day dawning, by keeping to futile wandering over first ground? How vitally necessary it is that we should rouse ourselves to highest action, that highest vision may come to us.

Consciousness of Spiritual life, the perception of Spiritual truth, are the first aims of all religions. Let us as far as we can prepare ourselves for this wider consciousness, by living the best life we can, by following our highest soul, by constantly seeking Spirit Communion to aid us in worthy action, and above all, if it be possible to us, that highest form of Spirit Communion, prayer. Then if Spiritualism be truly a conflagration which shall destroy the last standing place of men's Spiritual hopes, with the courage of brave endeavour we can but face this final destruction. At least we shall have done all we can to find the light. If light we cannot find, because light there be none, we shall know our failure has at least not been our crime, though it must then needs be our profoundest despair.

The above address was read before a large audience and was followed by a long and animated discussion, in the course of which great sympathy was expressed with Miss Ford in her earnest hope that if Spiritualism were really true it might be pursued only for high and noble ends, and might be the means of leading to a purer and holier life. Several of the speakers, however, directed attention to the self-confessed fact that Miss Ford is almost a novice in the subject, that her fears and doubts were groundless, and that she evidently knew but very little of the esoteric and higher phase of Spiritualism; and in her reply to some of the remarks which had been made she expressed her determination not to abandon her inquiries till her mind was fully satisfied on the question. The proceedings closed with a cordial vote of thanks to her for her admirable paper.

UNITARIANISM AND LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In common with many readers of your admirable paper, I have been not a little startled by a sentence in a paragraph in the otherwise admirable article "Notes by the Way," in the last number of "LIGHT."

This sentence occurs at the end of the first paragraph, and the inference from it is that Liberal Christians and Unitarians in general "ignore" the Eternal and the Infinite.

Now this allegation I hold to be utterly unfounded. The very fact of being a Liberal Christian or a Unitarian implies the acknowledgment of the existence of God and consequently of the Eternal and the Infinite. I go further and maintain that to most minds the absolutely necessary corollary from a belief in an all-wise and just God, is the necessity of a future state to redress the inequalities, the injustices, the sins, and the sorrows of this transitory life.

I willingly acknowledge the advantage of a belief in Spiritualism as a tangible proof of the existence of this future state, and as affording more rational views of its nature and prospects than those held by orthodox believers, and especially as tending to destroy the hideous doctrine of eternal punishment, which, I am rejoiced to observe, is every day losing its hold on general belief, and which I believe has been one of the most fertile sources of the prevalent Agnosticism and Atheism.

But I must enter a protest against the assertion that Liberal Christians or Unitarians in general ignore or disbelieve the Supernatural or the Infinite, though many of them withhold their assent from the belief in the Miraculous as generally held.

I would fain hope that so liberal a writer as "M.A. (Oxon.," will see that in this somewhat sweeping assertion he has given unnecessary pain to a numerous class of intelligent readers.—I am, sir, yours faithfully,

R. B.

November 20th, 1881.

["R.B." entirely mistakes the purport of my remarks on Mr. Merriam's paper, respecting which he writes. My note was a highly condensed summary of the argument of Mr. Merriam, which I do not adopt as my own, save in so far as it makes for a wide acceptance of a belief in the higher aspects of Spiritualism. He says in effect: There are three faiths claiming men's attention. The ethical religion (of George Eliot); Liberal Christianity; and Unitarianism. "Mankind is not ready for a creed which ignores the eternal and the infinite." This refers to the ethical religion. "Liberal Christianity has no organisation, no unity, no existence even as a distinct faith." "Unitarianism is simply no *religion* at all; it is a friendly fellowship among men who are facing towards every point of the compass, and some of them towards all points by turns, from Positivism to supernatural Christianity." These are Mr. Merriam's words, not mine, and the "somewhat sweeping assertion," as "R. B." calls it, I do not adopt.—M. A. (Oxon.)]

WHAT I KNOW ABOUT GHOSTS.

Some weeks ago in concluding a narrative of an interview with a medium, I said I might some time relate my experience of a ghostly kind. I said it was not terrible. Here it is:—

My father, one of a long line of farmers, lived at Drayton in Berkshire. His place was called Manor House Farm, rented from one of the Oxford Colleges. When he moved into it, it had been long unoccupied because, so people said, the old Manor House was haunted. My father did not mind that, for my grandfather tenanted a haunted house; he even thought a ghost might put something worth while in his way. Manor House was of good size and old. In it was an oak-panelled room, with a fireplace as wide as a small gateway. This room was especially said to be haunted. I remember one Sunday autumn evening, all the family, my father, mother, brother, two sisters, and myself, with our sweethearts, were in this room, some on one side of the fireplace and some on the other, when, before candles were lighted, the red embers of a large wood fire glowing on the hearth, all of us perceived a tall figure in an old-fashioned military dress, walking to and fro, from the end of the room in our direction, with hands folded behind and chin sunk on the breast. He did not seem to heed us but at every turn came nearer to the fireplace, enabling us all to have a full view of him, and at last was lost to our sight at the fireplace. This ghostly figure had been seen before, but never so clearly, nor by so many at once. He always seemed self-absorbed, and his appearance never led to anything.

The lady, now my wife, who was one of those present then, was on a visit once to my sisters. One evening she went, candle in hand, to the larder for something for the supper table, and as she descended some steps leading to it she seemed to lose her hold of the candlestick and it went to the ground. She felt for the dish she went for and brought it away. Next night she went again. This time she was careful to hold the candlestick firmly, but at the same spot she felt it forcibly drawn from her hold and thrown into a corner.

When visitors came my brother and I had sometimes to sleep in a bed made up in the oak room. We were not surprised if the clothes were stripped off the bed, nor at being sometimes jerked off the bedstead.

Our curate used to drop in when passing, and I told him once of our experiences in this way, and I said the ghosts of the old house did it. He drew himself up and asked if anything was on my mind, and said it was his duty to call upon me to confess anything troubling my conscience; for as to ghosts there were none. I said I was thankful that my mind was easy; but that the things happened of which I told him he would perhaps know himself if he slept there. He said he would, so that he might speak to me with more authority and put an end to such talk. So one evening the bed was made up in the oak room for him. Before we wished him good night, I shewed him the door of my room that he might call me if he wanted anything. In the night there was a hasty rattling at my door, and in rushed the curate, asking me to let him lie by my side until the morning. I wanted him to tell me what was the matter, and asked if anything was on his mind! I could get nothing out of him, but he did not preach to me again about a troubled conscience.

When my father took the house he had in memory, as he used to tell us, the experience of my grandfather many years before. In relating this experience I must draw upon my recollection, quite vivid, of conversations of father and mother.

My grandfather farmed at West Drayton. The farmhouse and farm next adjacent had been long untenanted. The house was said to be haunted. Grandfather did not believe in ghosts. He made a good bargain with the landlord, and added the farm to his own. The house he would occupy, or let it to his labourers. Grandmother believed what the people about said, that the haunting was by an old miserly farmer, G. She believed all about the sights and sounds and stone-throwings at the house. She said grandfather might take the fields, but she would have nought to do with such a house. Grandfather thought the ghosts were poachers and vagabonds, and he would know how to deal with them. Part of grandfather's bargain was that he should keep whatever he might find, as old G., who lived there so long, was reported to have hid money. The landlord said he had heard so, and had had the house searched, and grandfather was welcome to keep his findings, if any.

Getting possession, he had the rooms warmed and aired; then

a bed put up for him to sleep in to be ready for the labourers in the morning. The first night of his sleeping there he was wakened by a movement of the bedstead. Rubbing his eyes, he perceived a figure with hands on the bottom bedposts. He thought it was one of the vagabonds come to frighten him. Grasping his pick, which he had placed at the bedside, he strode forward and struck at the figure as it moved towards the door. The pick passed through it into the floor. The figure beckoned to be followed and went down the passage. Grandfather rubbed his eyes, thought he must have been dreaming, and turned into bed again. In the morning his men came and he went to the work in hand with them.

Next night he slept there again, and was again wakened by the bed shaking; again the same figure with hands on bedposts; again he slipped out of bed and grasped his pick. The figure backed towards the door, beckoning. Grandfather said it was of no use hitting, and motioned that he would follow. The figure glided into a little kitchen and there went down, the last to be seen of it being the eyes and beckoning hand. Grandfather, to know if this also were a dream, dropped his pick where the eyes and hand disappeared, and turned back to bed and to sleep. In the morning the pick was not at his side. Following his footsteps of the night he saw it, as he dropped it, in a corner of the little kitchen. "Then I was not dreaming," he said, "and I'll see where you went." With pick, shovel, and labour, he unearthed sundry crocks containing coin, and then a carefully packed piece of blanket containing more. My father used to say that, judging by circumstances, there must have been a good sum total; grandfather never said how much. When the landlord heard the rumour that money had been found he put in a claim, but acting under advice, grandfather told the landlord to keep to his bargain, kept quiet himself, and the landlord ceased troubling him.

It was remarked that the house was unhaunted after the unearthing of the coin. It would look as though the burier of it had had to get that part of his earthly work undone. In seeking to do this he had frightened those whom he had been able to approach, until my cool, robust grandfather came in his way.

A reflection occurs to me: Was the Spirit in the Manor oak-room drawn thither by the memory of a wrong with which that room and that fireplace were associated? Perhaps so, and perhaps it was a wrong not to be rectified by the restitution to orderly use of any earthly thing. As to the petty, trifling disorders accompanying it, may they not have been caused by others, perhaps of a lower grade, attracted by them, or coming in their wake?

J. C.

A FULFILLED PREDICTION.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In looking over some old memoranda, I came across the following prediction which is interesting in the light of recent events. It was published early in November, 1879, I believe in the *Medium*, by A. T. T. P.—

"Among the present living statesmen are two who have served England well. The chief in position now will soon be called away, and he that lost will again resume his premiership, and his last premiership shall be blessed with his greatest political success."

And again: "You are going to have troubles in Ireland. Ejectment should not follow non-obedience to the landlord's will, and this will be proved at the forthcoming battle for place. Prominent among the battle cries will be the revision of the land tenure."

W. H.

CHEAP EDITION OF "A NEW BASIS OF BELIEF."—We have more than once had the pleasure of referring to Mr. John S. Farmer's work, "A New Basis of Belief," in terms of the highest praise, and we were therefore not at all surprised at the commendation which it received at the recent Church Congress at the hands of the Rev. Canon Wilberforce. Such an expression in its favour, it is not unnaturally thought, will have had the effect of removing some of the prejudice which has existed against Spiritualist literature in the minds of many of the clergy and other friends of the Established Church; and the opportunity has been wisely seized of reproducing Mr. Farmer's excellent work in a cheap form calculated to secure for it a very wide circulation. Towards this object some liberal donations have already been promised, and, trusting to the help of other friends, Mr. Farmer has decided to go to press at once with an edition of 20,000 copies, which—for purposes of free distribution—will be supplied at £12 10s. per 1,000, or 25s. per 100. It will then be the cheapest book ever published in connection with the movement. We hope to see the whole edition rapidly disposed of.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT."
4, NEW BRIDGE STREET,
LUDGATE CIRCUS, E.C.

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.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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SPECIAL NOTICE.

Having removed to new and commodious premises at No. 4, New Bridge-street, Ludgate Circus, E.C., we are now prepared to undertake the publishing of books connected with Spiritualism and kindred subjects. We shall keep a selection of such books on sale, and any orders with which our friends may favour us shall have our best attention.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon.)."

The current number of the *Theosophist* contains an important manifesto, which establishes and defines the ground finally taken up by that body. Shortly put, it is one of complete antagonism to Spiritualism. The Spiritualist believes that it is possible for Spirits of the departed to communicate with this earth. Whatever divergence of opinion there may be among us in respect of other matters, we are agreed on this, the cardinal article of our faith. Our daily experience affirms its truth. The consentient testimony of the most experienced among us agrees that, whether there be, or whether there be not, other agencies at work, the Spirits we know of are human Spirits who have once lived on this earth. To this the *Theosophist* returns the simple answer that we are mistaken. No Spirits communicate with earth for the sufficient reason that they cannot. It is idle to argue further. We can but go on our way with the assured conviction that, whatever may be the case in the East, we find that the departed Spirits of mankind are both able and willing to communicate with us in the West. And no metaphysical theorising as to *what cannot be* disposes in any degree of *what is*.

My correspondence testifies to the fact that Canon Wilberforce's warnings as to the risks attendant on the investigation of phenomenal Spiritualism have frightened some people, and have caused them to seek for guidance from more experienced persons. If this be a means of preventing merely idle curiosity, and deterring the frivolous from finding in sésances an excuse for frivolity, nothing but good will be done. If those who seek for evidence of Spirit-agency are warned against methods of investigation that have too long prevailed, and are led to seek in a pure and reverent spirit as well as with a clear and level head, Spiritualism will be so much the gainer. It is the abuse, not the use, that is dangerous. The psychic emanations of a promiscuous circle, held under the conditions that too often obtain, are poisonous to the sensitive, and hurtful to all. It is seldom remembered that until the magnetic aura that surrounds each sitter is interblended with that of his neighbour no phenomena can occur. Each person is brought into intimate *rapproch* with those who make up the circle, and is the recipient of the influences so brought together. Yet what care is exercised in promiscuous gatherings to secure conditions of health—physical, mental, and spiritual?

Usually none whatever. Men and women come to see what may be seen: to amuse themselves after dinner: to indulge in a favourite pastime: to prove the fallacy or fraud that they suspect—for any and every sort of reason. Some are enthusiasts, and to them every creak is full of significance; every sound the signal of the presence of "an angel" or a "darling friend." Some are full of suspicion, or of dogmatic scepticism, and their strong will acts like an iron barrier to Spirit, and their suspicions cut into the sensitive nature of the medium, till the "iron enters into his soul," honest though he be. The atmosphere is loaded with impurity, the darkened room is close and oppres-

sive to the outer sense, how much more to the inner Spiritual sense! Yet into that mass of psychic foulness it is believed by some enthusiasts that the angels of God can descend, and it is expected that the pure Spirits of those they have loved, and who they think are in a state of peace and bliss, will return to play a few pranks for the amusement of this motley company! And those who are sensitive to Spiritual influences go away wondering that they are unstrung and nervous and ill at ease. They have been drained of vitality, or they have imbibed a poison; or, possibly, they have been subjected to the influence of some undeveloped Spirit that saps their life. No wonder they suffer. Others less sensitive are less affected, and are more ignorant of the cause. Some impervious to Spirit-power go away perhaps unharmed, but surely not satisfied, or elevated by what they have seen. Assuming all that has occurred to be due to Spirit agency, I shall not go too far if I say that communion with such Spirits should not be sought, except for serious reasons, and under carefully guarded conditions.

It is the business of the analytical chemist to experiment on poisons; the physician goes on his errand of mercy into alums poisoned by fever, and reeking with impurity; but it is not necessary, nor is it desirable, that all should breathe that fever-laden air, or that dangerous experiments should become a fashionable after-dinner amusement. So with Spiritualism. Ordinary common-sense will suffice to protect us from the possible evil. Few go deeply enough into the subject to be brought face to face with the inseparable risk attendant on a prolonged excursion into that unknown country. If all will remember that they are dealing with forces whose potency they have no standard to gauge, with beings whose moral consciousness they must prove before placing themselves in their power, and with a subject profoundly fascinating, beset with difficulty and perplexity, yet holding out promise of illuminating the great problems of life, they will surely see the need for circumspection and care. It is to forgetfulness of these points that deplorable results are attributable.

It must not be imagined that these, however, are usual or general. Most of us have gained from our investigations a blessing and a comfort, and that, in spite of our own ignorant folly in many cases. There are beneficent and wise Spirits at work as well as others less advanced, and I, at least, entertain no doubt that our steps are guided by their wisdom, when our own would sadly fail. It suits the opponents of Spiritualism to take their idea of it from such sésances as that I have pictured. It is no more a fair type than the air of some foul reeking alley is of the unpoisoned atmosphere that Nature intends us to breathe. But unfortunately every one who chances to have a few shillings in his pocket can assist at such a sésance, and go away disgusted with it, to fasten its frauds and follies on Spiritualism: and the experiences of the family circle, elevating and ennobling, are to the public a sealed book. So even those who should know better charge on Spiritualism the vagaries of some of its least prudent votaries, and spice them with revelations drawn from the records of a police-court, or with the pseudo-exposures of some conjurer, who earns a precarious living at our expense. No doubt Spiritualists have themselves largely to thank for this, and may be left to gain experience for themselves. Investigators, however, are in need of help and guidance. They do not know how to proceed; and often err for want of simple rules. Such rules are published in various forms, and I hope I may be allowed to save myself some trouble by referring my correspondents on this point to the Advice to Enquirers which is contained in my pamphlet on the Church Congress. M.A. (OXON.)

ANOTHER MIRACLE AT KNOCK.—The Dublin *Evening Telegraph* says:—"The most wonderful cure which has yet taken place at Knock was effected yesterday (Sunday). Miss M. F. Cusack (the Nun of Kenmare), who has been an invalid for the past nine years, reading and hearing of the miracles and cures which were taking place at Knock, determined on visiting and inquiring into the subject personally. She arrived on Saturday, and yesterday attended Mass at Knock, and was carried on a couch to the altar rails to receive Communion, but before receiving she stood up from the couch, knelt at the rails, and received the Communion, a thing which she had not done for nine years. This miracle was witnessed by the priest, nuns, and hundreds of the laity, who were attending Mass in the chapel at the time. She is at present the guest of the Sisters of Mercy, Mount St. Michael, Claremorris."

NATURE SPIRITS AND ELEMENTALS.

This is an intricate subject but I will attempt briefly to answer the questions "Student" asks in "LIGHT."

In "LIGHT," 3rd September, I attempted to shew that when the Occultist says the *imagination creates*, he is not speaking of the imagination in the ordinary sense, but of the imagination or image-creating faculty of the Spirit.

The ordinary imagination cannot create objective forms, visible to ordinary vision, although a strong will can "biologise" weak wills, and compel such weaker wills to see the ideas of the operator objectively.

When a man of imaginative nature indulges in reverie he creates forms in his mind which he can describe in writing, or exhibit in drawings and paintings, and if a man of very sensitive imagination dwells long on these ideas, they will so impress his brain that he will sometimes see these ideas as if they were objective facts.

The insane, or at least I am persuaded a large portion of insane beings, are only those who have indulged in favourite ideas until these have, by impressing their brains, assumed objective forms in their minds; and other insanities are the result of objective visions, created in the mind by the "biologising" of evil Spirits, just as the phenomena of so-called electro-biology, as produced by foolish itinerant mesmerists, are temporary manifestations of insanity.

Those who indulge in day dreaming or reverie, if their thoughts take selfish or impure directions, may become more or less "biologised" and imagine themselves to possess great wealth, or great powers, or Spiritual wives, or to be magicians.

But it is only the delusion of the imagination, and if not checked may end in monomania or an asylum.

The air, the earth, the water, the furnace fire are four forms of matter, and the imagination dwelling on these forms may create subjectively forms in harmony with these, such as fairies in the air, Undines in the water, gnomes in the dark earth, and salamanders in the living fire. Moreover, if long dwelt on these subjective forms may become to the individual objective substantialities.

Making all allowance for innumerable frauds, yet of the creation of materialisations at dark séances there exists no doubt in the mind of the laborious observer.

These forms may sometimes represent the identities they say they are; at other times they represent assumed names, and at other times they may be the forms taken by the will, or desire, or belief of the spirit of the medium.

They are not the less solid bodies, and if so it is conceivable that *Nature Spirits* may sometimes take form, not only in the imagination of the day dreamer but objectively; not only to the dreamer but to those in his company at the time.

As to *Elementals*, or Forces of Nature, I conceive these have no individual existence *per se*, although I can conceive that Elemental forms may be also objectively evolved by means of the forces of Nature controlled by the power of the Spiritual Will.

The two great physical forces in Nature are attraction and repulsion, or positive and negative electricity, and all Spirits we interrogate say that they work by controlling these forces; and thus the Spiritual imagination might not only subjectively see forms as presiding Elemental beings, but realise such objectively to itself and by will realise their appearance to others.

Spirit being the ultimate one force, all subsidiary forces and forms are at its command, and hence, as Swedenborg says, "In the Spirit world we surround ourselves by the forms of our affections," and as we at death carry our affections with us, it must be of immeasurable importance to set our affections aright here.

Day dreaming as a cultivation of the imagination is so far good, but if persisted in as an habitual *indulgence*, it weakens the will and is in danger of breaking that odyllic sphere which protects us from the invasion of evil Spirits.

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

We learn that Colonel Bundy, of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, intends to reprint "M.A. (Oxon.'s)" valuable pamphlet on "Spiritualism at the Church Congress," in a cheap form, with a view to its extensive circulation in America.

Every week we hear of the interest which Spiritualism is exciting amongst intelligent and influential people. Can nothing be done to unite our forces, and make our power more widely felt? He will do immense service to the Cause who can devise a plan by which this can be accomplished. We invite our readers to give their views on the subject.

PSYCHO-MAGNETIC TREATMENT OF DISEASE.

Perhaps the readers of "LIGHT" may be interested in this very important subject, and in the following letter, referring more especially to the treatment of insanity, by Mr. J. H. Herbst.

In recognising the deep need of realising the curse of treatment proposed by Mr. Herbst, I can testify to the remarkable knowledge and successful power in very difficult cases with which Mr. Herbst is blessed as a mesmerist, and I trust, therefore, that some others of your readers will see the priceless value there is in Spiritualism in the healing of the sick, and in giving sight to the blind, and so in leading onward to the higher light of its Divine truths.

Whilst believing that our every-day actions are the real test and measure of our Spiritualism, I am very far from presuming to deem myself a Spiritualist, but I would gladly subscribe in proportion to income, or otherwise, with any sufficient number of others, who know what Spiritualism means, and who really desire its regenerating influence to prevail, by shewing to the world its mighty and peerless power in eradicating disease.

The establishment of an institution for the purpose, where healing mediums could regularly treat cases, and where supervision could be given by those who have their hearts in such work, would not only initiate a real Spiritualism amongst us, but do incomparably more than anything that has yet been done to elevate people generally to a recognition of its worth. If Mr. W. Tebb's indefatigable Spiritualism, manifested as a sanitarium, admits now of a little further responsibility, I have no doubt he would rejoice to act as treasurer if a worthy fund were raised, and I presume the editor of "LIGHT" would kindly permit subscriptions and offers of service to be acknowledged in that paper.

A. C. SWINTON.

[COPY.]

Often has the question been asked concerning Spiritualism—*Cui bono?* Permit me to suggest a practical use to which Spiritualism might be applied in connection with mesmerism. I have tried it, and found it the only means to benefit in the particular disease to which I now propose that it should be applied. For the most part we find (that is, those who have had to do with it, and who understand Spirit control) that lunacy is nothing but obsession; certainly nine-tenths of all cases of lunacy are attributable to that cause, and the remaining tenth will cover the cases arising from malformation, idiocy, and organic brain disease. In short, we find all lunatics are sensitives, either through ruined constitutions, hereditarily, or through bad habits. They are not only sensitive, but extremely so, and thus we find them the prey of any influence that comes within their sphere. They will generally attract such influences by their habits, or have them around them at birth, drawn there by the habits of their parents. I propose that such cases be first treated biologically by suggestion; that is, instead of leaving them to the control of an unintelligent Spirit or Spirits, that they be controlled by a mesmerist who supplies a healthy delusion for the morbid one that these controls produce. But as that would require lunatics to be constantly, or at the least for years, under the influence of the mesmerist (for should he withdraw his influence the old hovers would press in again), mesmerism would be too costly; for each lunatic would require a mesmerist. I therefore would suggest that developing séances be held with these lunatics after they are sufficiently under the mesmerist's control, so as to prevent something worse than a witches' Sabbath. At the beginning the result would be that the ignorant controls would be taught the enormous harm they do, and, whilst they would themselves be improving, the lunatics would be developed into mediums. Then the latter would have their guides or guardians, who would protect them, and prevent them from being obsessed, for they are but mental houses without keepers, and without keys to the locks. By these means the former lunatic would become a safe, sane individual, with a constantly attending *Spirit Mesmerist* at his back. I trust that some of the rich and influential who read "LIGHT" may be induced to co-operate for this great purpose, which, when once properly and systematically established, would prove an everlasting blessing to humanity and earthbound Spirit realms.

J. H. HERBST.

EVENINGS WITH MR. MORSE.—We hear that the B.N.A.S. have made arrangements with Mr. Morse for a series of meetings, to be held at 38, Great Russell-street, to enable the members and friends to have a little pleasant and instructive converse now and then with Mr. Morse's Spirit controls. Mr. Morse's gifts should certainly be better known in London than they have been, and no doubt many Spiritualists will be glad to avail themselves of the opportunity which will now be afforded them. The first meeting will be held on Wednesday evening next, November 30, at half past seven. Information as to terms may be had of the Secretary, 38, Great Russell-street.

SPIRIT TEACHINGS.

SECOND SERIES.

This series of Spirit-Teachings, like the former, is made up of selections from a great mass which have been automatically written during a series of years. They are selected on no other principle than that of printing what has been valuable to the person for whom they were originally given, in so far as this can be done without trenching on what is merely of personal and private application. The latter consideration excludes a great mass of what would otherwise be interesting and valuable matter. The phraseology has been preserved, as far as possible, intact, names only being omitted. The series follows directly on the first, from which, indeed, it is separated only by the accident of its publication in another journal, and after some considerable interval of time. The publication is resumed in deference to many repeated requests.

No. XIII.

I remember that a great deal was said some time ago by "Imperator" on the point of genius and mediumship being the means by which the Spirits made themselves felt. But the "Ocean" of Spirit is new to me. Do I rightly understand you?

Yes. Stores of wisdom and knowledge are drawn by you from that great Ocean of Spirit which is all around you, and from which your spirit draws life and sustenance. This ocean of Spirit finds vent everywhere, in greater proportion through those who are most receptive, and whom you call mediums. The physical brain originates nothing. All is the transcript, often very imperfect, of what exists with us.

"Great wit and madness near allied." What do you say to that?

That it enshrines a great truth but dimly realised by you, one which would be well for you to know more of. The indistinct line that divides what you call genius from what you deem madness is one that man can only realise with difficulty. Frequently those whom you call mad are but the instruments of undeveloped Spirits who try in vain to control the physical body, and cause ravings and incoherent utterances to issue from the medium. Moreover, what man calls insanity is frequently nothing but a disarrangement of the delicate instrument under unwise Spirit guidance. You have seen this yourself in the case of your friend X. The subject is too vast to be treated by us, or now. Dr. Benjamin Bush, who has exhaustively studied the question, is now elucidating it for you through the mediumship of Cora Tappan, and though the idiosyncrasies of the medium do interfere much, still valuable truth is evolved which you may well study. Hereafter some of our friends will enlighten you on these and kindred matters. Leave it for the present.

You speak of the idiosyncrasy of mediumship. Does that modify the sentiments you wish to express through the medium to any appreciable extent?

We borrow from your mind as little as may be, the mere shell in which we clothe our thoughts. They come with as little admixture of earth as may be. This is so in an eminent degree in such communications as this. It is so, too, in our circle when harmonious: when no strange influence is present, and when you are not harassed or tired. Indeed, we frequently prefer to originate thoughts there, and elucidate them here. You can see for yourself the extent to which your spirit is used by occupying your mind with other matters. It only renders the control more delicate and difficult, but does not hurt it at all. It is a very rare quality of mediumship, and when it is had the most perfect results can be obtained. We know of no other through whom we could get such results.

Is it then so rare?

The higher development of mediumship such as this which allows of the uninterrupted passage of Spirit influence is the highest and rarest of the Spirit gifts. It must be used with care and forethought, lest it be abused. The lower forms of material mediumship are to it only as the rude bar of iron to the delicately poised needle, responsive to the lightest influence; as the balance that weighs to the thousandth part of a grain compared with the machine that estimates by tons and takes no count of pounds. It can only be had in rare combinations of mental, physical, and spiritual gifts, and we warn you the rather against abusing or misusing it that many have made shipwreck of good through vanity, and pride, and folly. Beware!

One has little to glory in if the best are only vehicles.

Oh, yes! For there are distinctions and degrees, and the good instrument may look with scorn on the bad. Moreover, man does not estimate himself on principles of right. He glories most, frequently enough, who has least in which to boast himself. Nor does it detract from man's desert that he,

in common with all, is but the vessel into which the Supreme pours His revealed truth. Rather does it enhance his glory. We have said nothing of Birth of Spirit. We defer it until another season.

You speak of mediumship being entirely unconnected with physical peculiarities. Do they not modify it in any way?

Undoubtedly: in just the same way as the condition of the body acts upon the Spirit in all ways. Your Spiritual state is greatly affected by bodily ailments. Depression of spirit will result from bodily sickness, and mental processes are paralysed by physical ailments. To this extent and no farther are conditions of mediumship affected by bodily conditions. The force which we use is one well called Psychic, for it is Soul force, and of the Spirit, not of the Flesh.

Are objective manifestations owing in any degree to the independent action (unconsciously) of the Spirit of the medium? Serjeant Cox thinks that the shiverings which accompany or precede manifestations are caused by the Spirit leaving the body.

That is not so. The Spirit of the medium is not in any way concerned in manifesting. Far otherwise: seeing that it is a necessary pre-requisite to our operations that the Spirit of the medium should be in a condition of passivity. The shudderings are not caused by the Spirit leaving the body, but by the efforts of the operating Spirit to obtain or maintain control. The action of the controlling Spirit is exactly analogous to what is known among you as mesmeric control. The Spirit, whether in or out of the body, operates on another Spirit in the same way. The controlling Spirit affects the controlled by mesmeric power, and the shiverings are caused by the passage of the influence from the controlling to the controlled. When you know more of the action of all the forces which are operating round and in you, you will see that they are far simpler than you fancy: and that which we describe as will-power is the root of everything. By it we control your organism. By it we overcome the resistance which seems to you a property of matter. By it we can dispense with all the so-called properties of matter. By it we substitute another condition of attraction and repulsion for that which is known to you; for we move objects, not by lifting as you do, but by holding them in suspension by attraction. You can scarcely yet realise that magnetism is the great force which governs all things. This is the great agent of which you know little.

Magnetism. How does that govern all?

You ask what would take long to answer; nor would you understand. Matter is made up of atoms which range themselves in obedience to an inherent law of vitality. Like poles repel and unlike poles attract, and so homogeneous growth is obtained. Every condition of health is secured when the atoms of which the body is composed are ranged in due order. Conditions of disease are set up when their orderly arrangement is disturbed either locally or throughout the system. Magnetic treatment, which is the true healing, acts by restoring the normal condition and allowing the healthy state to be restored.

In these mesmeric passes is a force conveyed from the operator to the patient or not?

Assuredly. A stream of vital force is conveyed, as you may prove by the fact that a rapport is established between the two, so that the operator will frequently carry away the ailment which he cures, only in a milder form. And he will surely convey to the patient any pain under which he chances to be suffering. Hence care should be taken that only healthy operators should be allowed. But besides this the remedial process consists in the direction of the patient's mind to the seat of ailment, whereby his nerve force is directed to the place and deficient supply is remedied. But the subject is not yet ripe. Wait awhile. Only be sure that the expression of all force is ultimately contained in will-power and magnetism, magnetism being in itself only one of the modes of action of volition or will-power as known partially to you.

Atoms, you say, are all magnets having polarity. Then do they range themselves in obedience to the law of magnetism, like selecting like, and repelling the unlike? That would explain much.

That is so. And that explains the reason why every growth is homogeneous, why the tree selects unerringly the homogeneous atoms which build it up, why no heterogeneous atoms ever intrude into any growth. It is impossible because of the invariable law of atomic magnetism. The subject is vast, and we have not begun it. What is written is but desultory illustration. You will hear more of it as time goes on. We do but prepare you for what you will be instructed in. Our friend Benjamin,

who principally inspires this communication, has stores of knowledge on the subject.

One word. Is the law of Spiritual assimilation the same?

Yes: the same.

Then we can only take in from the great Ocean of Spirit round us what we attract; and so people can't take in what is uncongenial. It would be to them heterogeneous.

You grasp it well. It is true, and we will work it out. We have omitted to say that this information is also in great measure prompted by P., whom you know. He first discovered the true property of atoms, their inherent magnetic force, and communicated the idea to others who have developed it.

You say that this magnetic arrangement of atoms is at the bottom of all life?

Yes; of all life. Everything has a duplicate existence, physical, or natural, and Spiritual. Everything is framed by the orderly arrangement of magnetic atoms; and knowledge is similarly conveyed by what corresponds to atomic assimilation, namely, by the mind assimilating Spiritual sustenance from the surrounding ocean of Spirit, taking that only which is necessary for its sustenance. From this you will see why many minds are unable to grasp and assimilate particular ideas, why they create repulsion in them, why they reject them as the stomach rejects unsuitable food, why it is as wrong to force new truth on such as to force on a weak stomach food which it is unable to digest. This may give you food for reflection. You may ponder, too, the light shed by this truth on the doctrine of the origin and development of all things. We have very much yet to say on points which will be explained by degrees. Do not seek for more now. We have said all that is wise.

+ IMPERATOR.

THE PHENOMENON OF MATERIALISATION.

No less than four separate communications devoted to the phenomenon of materialisation, are given in the *Banner of Light* for November 5th. We quote from one of them. Mr. John H. Brewster writes from Laconia, N.H., the medium being described as Mrs. Fay, of Boston. The cabinet is described as a small ante-room upon the third floor, leading out of a large chamber. The entire contents of the little room were removed, except one chair, prior to the séance. A thin blue shawl thrown over a clothes horse, which was arranged as a sort of front to the "cabinet," completed the arrangements, which were made independent of any assistance from the medium, of whom the writer remarks:—

"Mrs. Fay being a stranger to Dr. Hunt and myself, and we both not a little suspicious that everything might not be genuine, we watched her movements closely. We found her, however, a pleasant lady, of medium size, and perhaps thirty years of age. She laid aside bonnet and shawl, and said she feared we might all be disappointed, but would do what she could. We all proceeded, like a family party, talking freely, up two flights of stairs to the chamber above described. The company were as follows: Colonel Moses Hunt and wife, Mr. and Mrs. Fay, Dr. Israel T. Hunt, Mrs. John T. Hunt, Mary, the house-girl, and myself. The gas-burner, opposite the cabinet was lighted, but not to its full extent."

The séance commenced, and "Mrs. Fay entered the cabinet and almost immediately a female figure, in white, was observed just inside. I confess to being somewhat startled. I now noticed, for the first time, that the curtain we so hastily put up fell to the floor obliquely, leaving an opening at the bottom of some eight or ten inches. It was through this opening that the form was seen."

Altogether nine distinct forms are reported as having appeared, concerning one of which the narrator makes the following statements:—

"There was one who appeared of great interest to me. It was Deborah, the wife of my youth. She remained inside the cabinet. The curtain was pushed partially aside, and I noticed a hand beckoning me to come up. I lifted up the curtain so that all could see, and at first could not recognise who it was. With one hand she gave a sweep to the skirt of her dress, which was heavily flounced, and then seemed to direct my attention to a very wide belt worn around the waist. I said, 'This is Deborah.' She nodded assent, gave me a kiss, and warmly took my hand. I confess to being greatly astonished. Her dress, form, hair, and manner were all Deborah's, but the face did not have a natural look. Some of the features I thought I could see, but they changed as I looked upon her to a death-like appearance. The dress, however, I remember quite well. It was made up in the style of forty years ago, with a deep flounce at the bottom trimmed with edging made by herself. The belt was some four inches wide. This dress had a very familiar look, and brought up all the associations of my early married life. I kept my eyes upon her until she faded out of sight."

Concerning the last "form" that appeared, the evidence of its *bond fide* character is seemingly well marked, as the following extract will shew:—

"Before separating, the medium indicated a desire to present her spirit-guide. In a few seconds the curtain was brushed aside, and Mrs. Fay stood just inside the cabinet, and her guide by her side dressed in white. The guide was a lady of mild and beautiful countenance, a little taller than Mrs. Fay, very handsome in person, with something resembling a crown upon her head; she whispered, 'good-night,' to us and faded from our sight. Mrs. Fay resumed her chair; asking for her husband, he came and assisted her to a chair in the larger chamber. Dr. Hunt, myself and others were present all the time. We returned to the hall on the first floor together. Mrs. Fay seemed somewhat exhausted, but was gratified that the occasion had been so satisfactory to us all."

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON AND THE PROVINCES.

GOSWELL HALL.

SECOND ANNIVERSARY SOIREE.

The committee of management at this hall celebrated the completion of the second year of the Sunday services on Thursday evening, the 17th inst., by a soiree and ball. There was a crowded attendance, and the proceedings throughout were marked by much spirit and enthusiasm. Among the more prominently known friends present we noticed Mrs. Everitt, Miss Alice Everitt, Mr. Frank Everitt, Mr. and Mrs. R. Pearce, Mr. and Mrs. J. Freeman, Mr. and Mrs. L. Freeman, Miss Bessie Freeman, Mr. J. Swindin, Mr. W. Towns, Mr. J. King, Mr. Greenwell, Mrs. McKellor, Mr., Mrs., and Miss Glendinning, Mrs. and the Misses Sparey, Mr., Mrs., and Miss Morse, Mr. and Mrs. Barber, Miss Houghton, Miss Hassall, Mr., Mrs., and Miss Allan, Mr. F. Guy, Mrs. Pearsall Clarke, and many others. Shortly after the time announced for the commencement, Mr. J. J. Morse took the chair, and in a few words called the meeting to order, after which the programme was immediately commenced. In the course of the evening, the chairman made a brief and pithy little speech, in which he informed the meeting that the success attending the committee's work during the past quarter had been unprecedented, resulting in their being clear of all debt, and having a balance of £4 11s. in hand. He was also pleased to add that the present soiree was the best, and most numerous attended, of any held in connection with the services at this hall, and he paid special praise to Messrs. Swindin, Towns, Greenwell, and King for the energy and determination with which they had worked to produce and maintain the success which has crowned their efforts in promoting the Goswell Hall Sunday Services, praise which the assembly heartily endorsed. Mr. Morse's remarks were most cordially received, and the vote of thanks, given at the close of the programme, to the artistes of the evening was responded to with acclamation. The ball was opened at 10 o'clock, and was sustained with an evident appreciation which must have been gratifying to the promoters of what was, in every sense, a successful and pleasurable evening to all concerned. The following is the programme of the concert:—Song, "Cherry Ripe," Horn, Miss Sparey; song, "The Warrior," Mr. Cowderoy; recitation, "Woman of Mind," Mr. Edwards; song, "The Distant Shore," Sullivan, Mr. Louis Freeman; song, "The Powder Monkey," Mr. Frederic Guy; song, "Twenty One," Molloy, Miss Florence Hassall; recitation, "The Artist's Dream," Miss Allan; song, "The birds are telling one another," Smart, Mrs. Pearsall Clarke; song, "The Scout," Campana, Mr. Frank Everitt; song, "When the heart is young," Buck, Miss Bessie Freeman; duet, "Come where my love lies dreaming," Miss Alice Everitt and Mr. Frank Everitt; pianoforte solo, "Heather Bell," Miss McKellor; song, "For ever and for ever," Miss Alice Everitt; recitation, "The Charge of the Light Brigade," Miss Allan; song, "Sailing," Marks, Mr. H. Presley; song, "The Kerry Dance," Miss A. Sparey; song, "The Old Brigade," Mr. Frederic Guy; recitation, "Reason and Fact," Mr. Fildes; song, "Il Mio Ceechin," Bodia, Mrs. Pearsall Clarke; song, "Punchinello," Molloy, Miss Florence Hassall; song, "The Blind Girl to her Harp," Miss Sparey; trio, "Maiden fair a word I pray," Bishop, Miss B. Freeman and Messrs. Freeman and Presley. M.C., Mr. Frank Everitt.

On Sunday evening last the hall was comfortably filled by an intelligent audience to hear a discourse through Mr. J. J. Morse, on "Humanity's Failures," which, it is needless to say, was a complete success, and elicited the unanimous approval of the audience. The human family in almost every position in life, socially, morally, spiritually, and intellectually, was reviewed at considerable length. The utter failure was demonstrated of those individuals (who, it is sad to confess, form a mighty class) whose high social position so acts upon their natures that they consider all who do not move in their sphere, or who have to live by the sweat of their brow, as beings of another order of humanity, and that their lot of labour is just what God intended, and against which it is very wrong of them to rebel. The moral failures, or rather the failures from inability to comprehend and inculcate true morality, in place of the sham article

that is so current in the present age, received a most rigid scrutiny; and the many failures that were plainly demonstrated received unqualified condemnation. The cause of these failures was described as ignorance, against which war is being perpetually waged. How far it has been successful may be judged by a comparison between the world now and what it was in the time of our earliest recollection, or as far back as reliable history will take us. The conversion of the failures of humanity into successes rests with each individual. Only let every man and woman determine to leave the world better than they found it by strict conformity to Nature's laws. Then, but not till then, will the long looked for and talked of Millennium begin to dawn. With such a discourse the Goswell Hall committee have commenced their third year most successfully. I trust their most sanguine hopes for the future will be fully realised.—*VERITAS.*

LADBROKE HALL.

On Sunday last, 20th inst., Mr. Walter Howell delivered his third address here, and a large audience was in attendance. The address was well received, and appeared to give the greatest satisfaction. On Sunday next, Mr. Howell speaks here for the last time during his present visit to London.

The committee have the pleasure of announcing that they have secured the services of Miss Keeves, who will occupy the platform upon the first three Sunday evenings in December, and it is earnestly hoped that the friends in the western districts will give the committee here all the support possible, so that meetings can be continued with success.

W. DARLING, Hon. Sec.

KEIGHLEY.

On Sunday, the 13th, and Monday, the 14th inst., those of the inhabitants of Keighley and the surrounding neighbourhood who cared to avail themselves of the advantage, had the great privilege of hearing three addresses given by Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten. The meetings were held in the Mechanics' Institute, and were numerously attended. Mr. Councillor Blezard, of Burnley, presided over the Sunday gatherings; and in the course of his remarks frankly stated that he had not travelled 30 miles merely to be their chairman, but in order to have another opportunity of listening to the impressive words of the lady lecturer, whom he had had the gratification of hearing at Blackburn, a few weeks previously. Friends from Bradford, Halifax, Leeds, Skipton, and the villages for several miles round Keighley, were present, and the Spiritualists of Keighley are to be congratulated upon their enterprise in providing such an intellectual treat. The subject of the Sunday afternoon's address was "The Gods of Men and the God of the Spirits." The oration in the evening was founded upon six subjects, selected out of twelve chosen by the audience. The Monday evening's oration was a disquisition on "The Cause and Cure of Crime and Want," Mr. Gray, of Bingley, being the chairman. The writer of this report here feels a pressing need for some of that inspiration which is said to be the creative force underlying Mrs. Hardinge-Britten's marvellous powers of oration, in order to do anything like justice to a description of her discourses. It was indeed wonderful to witness the broad, intellectual, and incisive grasp of her subject's, which was not more apparent in the announced questions than in those selected for treatment by the evening meeting; and it is utterly impossible to convey to anyone a sufficient idea in words, of the splendid oratorical ability, and impressive gesture, with which the lady held her audience as if spell-bound from the first word to the last. The delivery of a poem, entitled "Over there," at the close of Sunday evening's oration, was a remarkable and never-to-be forgotten display of elocution, and was listened to with breathless interest. At the close thereof, Mr. Blezard asked the audience to testify their appreciation of the treat by standing up, when, as if moved by one common irresistible impulse, the whole audience rose *en masse*.—*D.P.*

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

NEWCASTLE.—Sunday last was marked by an interesting departure from the ordinary course at Weir's Court, the platform of the N.S.E.S. being filled both morning and evening by a stranger to the town, Mr. Armitage, of Batley-Carr, a well-known trance-speaker, belonging to the Yorkshire district. In the forenoon he lectured before a moderately good audience, and in the evening to a large congregation, upon the most interesting subject of "This Life and the Life to Come," which was chosen by the vote of the audience. The discourses were received with appreciation; the handling of the subject, and the mode of expression reminding one very strongly of an energetic Methodist discourse, with this difference, that the lecturer presented before us a philosophy more beautiful and sympathetic than the austere doctrines of most of the popular creeds. It is to be hoped that this gentleman will be heard in the North again as an interchange of talent would be of great benefit. Mr. Jno. Mould occupied the chair.

SEANCE WITH MISS WOOD.—At Weir's Court, on Sunday afternoon last, we had the pleasure of attending a remarkably good séance. After the medium, Miss Wood, had been firmly screwed into the gauze cabinet by Mr. Armitage, of Yorkshire, and we had sung and conversed together, and chatted with "Pocha," Miss

Wood's control, for about an hour, we were favoured with the appearance of a very tall form which was succeeded by six other forms varying considerably in height, and severally weighing from 11lb. up to about 54lb., while the average weight of the medium is about 100lb. At the conclusion of the séance, Mr. Armitage, after examining the screws, testified that they were exactly as he left them at the commencement, and remarked that, "if he had come from Yorkshire for nothing more, he considered himself amply rewarded by what he had witnessed that afternoon." The séance was attended by several friends from Shields, Hetton, Easington, Leeds, and London, all of whom expressed themselves highly satisfied, except one or two who were strangers to the movement, and who evidently, from their remarks, attended simply to gratify an idle curiosity. It is to be regretted that our committee do not exercise more discretion in carrying out the rules of the séances, which they themselves have framed, and see that these Sunday sittings, which are set apart for Spiritualists only, are not trespassed upon, and made unpleasant, by those who are entirely unacquainted with the subject.

GATESHEAD.—On Sunday evening last our meeting-place, the Temperance Hall, presented an interesting appearance, a large audience having assembled to hear an address from the guides of Mr. W. Westgarth, who spoke upon Theology, Religion, and Spiritualism as aids to progress. Mr. H. Burton occupied the chair. The lecturer endeavoured to shew wherein some of the present theologies were in their nature antagonistic to true religion, and therefore detrimental to mankind instead of beneficial. Religion, he contended, was a different thing to theology, and, instead of teaching unmeaning dogmas, taught the sublime idea of a pure life and good deeds. Finally, he shewed how Spiritualism filled the breach, and answered the longing appeal of the human soul. The discourse was listened to with great attention, and evidently produced a thoughtful impression upon the minds of the audience. We hope the Gateshead platform may be kept going as it has begun. If so, its success is sure. The librarian is making a worthy effort in the direction of his office, while he is shewing a fair and impartial spirit towards the periodicals of the movement, "LIGHT," *The Medium*, *Herald*, and *Spiritualist* being on sale at the bookstall. On Sunday next, November 7th, we expect to have the pleasure of listening to the guides of Mr. W. H. Lambelle, late editor of the *Herald of Progress*. His subject will be "The Religion of the Future," and we hope to have a large attendance.

ASHINGTON.—The society here is struggling most successfully, and doing good work in the cause. The district is full of Spiritualists, and if they would all combine they would be considerably stronger than any of the religious sects. Mr. Wake, a trance-speaker, often occupies the platform, and of late we notice that another gentleman, Mr. Beck, who speaks remarkably well, has located himself in the district, and is lecturing for the societies. Mr. T. M. Brown has been gaining laurels here during the past week, his labours having been much appreciated.

CROPTON.—Spiritualism, which for some time has been very quiet in this locality through the emigration to America of several families of Spiritualists, shews, at the present time, a sign of once more lifting its head above water. Meetings are being held, and such valuable workers as Messrs. William Westgarth and T. M. Brown are doing commendable work.

BEDLINGTON.—In this district, which is comparatively an unbroken one in regard to our movement, Mr. T. M. Brown has been doing excellent work. He has sat with several families for test purposes, and so remarkable are the evidences he has given at his meetings, that a spirit of inquiry has laid hold of the people, and promises to be the means of further extending our work in Northumberland.

NORTH SEATON.—We had thought that the Spiritual life of this locality had perished. Mr. H. Burton and Mr. W. C. Robson, some twelve months ago, endeavoured to stir up a spirit of action, and to an extent succeeded; but from the subsequent lukewarmness of the friends the interest flagged. But now we find that some steps are being taken to revive the movement in the place, Mr. W. Westgarth having been lately lecturing here, the audiences being fairly good, and much interest excited by his addresses.

FELLING.—On Sunday evening last Mr. F. G. Grey, of Newcastle, addressed the Spiritualists and friends at the Spiritual Temple of this place, upon "Two Ways: The Way of Life and the Way of Death." The remarks were highly appreciated, and the meeting was exceedingly well attended.—*NORTHEMBRIA.*

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—CARDIFF, Sunday, November 27; GLASGOW, Sunday, December 4; LONDON, Sunday, December 11; KEIGHLEY, Sunday, December 18. [*Adv.*]

MRS. HARDINGE-BRITTEN'S WORK.—By the desire of the friends of Spiritualism in the North of England, Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten announces that she is engaged to speak as follows:—November 27 and December 4, Nottingham; 11 Oldham; 18 and 19, Halifax; 24, 25, and 26, Batley Carr.—Mrs. Britten can still form some week evening engagements, but her Sundays up to the third Sunday in January next are all promised.—[*Adv.*]

WHO ARE THESE SPIRITUALISTS ?

The following is a list of eminent persons, who, after careful investigation, have fully satisfied themselves of the reality of some of the phenomena of modern Spiritualism :—

Archbishop Whately; the late Lord Brougham; the Earl of Dunraven; the late Lord Lytton; the late Mr. Serjeant Cox, President of the Psychological Society of Great Britain; the late William Howitt; the late George Thompson; Gerald Massey; T. Adolphus Trollope; S. C. Hall, F.S.A.

The late Abraham Lincoln, President U.S.A.; the late W. Lloyd Garrison; the late Hon. R. Dale Owen, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Naples; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of the U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; the late Hon. J. W. Edmunds, sometime Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New York; the late Professor Mapes, the eminent chemist, U.S.A.; the late Dr. Robert Hare, Professor of Chemistry at the Medical University of Pennsylvania, U.S.A.; Bishop Clarke (Episcopalian), of Rhode Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, of the Treasury Department, Washington.

William Crookes, editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, Fellow, Gold Medallist, and Member of the Council of the Royal Society; Cromwell Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; A. R. Wallace, F.R.G.S., the eminent naturalist, sometime President of the Biological Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science; W. F. Barrett, Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin; Lord Rayleigh, F.R.S., Professor of Physics in the University of Cambridge; the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President of the Royal Astronomical Society; Dr. Lockhart Robertson, F.R.S., long one of the editors of the *Journal of Science*; the late Dr. J. Elliottson, F.R.S., sometime President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; the late Professor de Morgan, President of the Mathematical Society of London; the late Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; the late Dr. Ashburner; the late Dr. Robert Chambers, F.R.S.E.; Professor, Ch. Cassal, LL.D.; Captain R. F. Burton, the celebrated traveller.

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