

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

LIGHT ! MORE LIGHT !"—Goethe.

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

No. 1,028.—VOL. XX. [Registered as] SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1900. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	449	Another Ghost Story. By F. J. Lippitt	455
Transition of Mr. Fabyan Dawe ..	450	Developing Circles	457
A Séance with the Russian medium Sambor	450	Astrology	458
Is there Danger Ahead ?	451	The Love-Bird	458
The Brixton 'Haunting'	452	A Promise Fulfilled	459
Man, and his Relationship to God ..	453	Is Spiritualism a Religion ?	459
A Revolutionary Book	454	Society Work	460

NOTES BY THE WAY.

We ought to be very happy. Everybody seems to be taking off his hat to us—or crossing over the way to avoid doing so. The fact is the world greatly overdid its scorn, its pity and its abuse ; and it is now paying the penalty. The church, the stage, the novelists, the newspapers, the scientists, and even our much-quoted and long-suffering brother, 'the man in the street,' all unite to accost us or avoid us. We ought to be happy : and we are.

Here is 'The Catholic Times' again, with a letter from a Mr. George Wise, in which he says :—

Kindly allow me as a constant reader of your weekly to express my intense pleasure that you have opened your columns to the more educated and scientific members of your Church to contribute letters or articles on the important subject of 'Spiritualism.' There can be no doubt that this is a question of growing importance. It is absolutely useless for the clergy of any or of all the Churches to silently ignore this matter. Spiritualism has come to stay, unless it is successfully exposed. The science of psychology is now well to the front.

Mr. Wise then suggests, we know not why, that 'The Catholic Times' is not open to him on this subject : but the editor appends the following note :—

We see no reason why Mr. Wise should not write on this subject in 'The Catholic Times,' it being understood that his creed is different from ours.

Of course, this is all very interesting and hopeful.

'The Esoteric Art of Living,' by Joseph Stewart, LL.M. (New York: The Alliance Publishing Company), is a thoughtful book dealing with the inner topics of the day, such as—'Mental States and Selected Consciousness,' 'Self-Revelation,' 'Subliminal Consciousness,' 'The Rationale of Concentration,' 'The Normal and the Supernormal.' The writer decidedly believes in the development of psychic powers, for the purposes of evolution. 'If we would rise higher in the scale of being, we must seek consciously to relate ourselves or to come into correspondence with the true in every manifestation beneficent for us, upon every plane of existence ; in other words, more perfectly to embody the cosmic mind and abide in its wisdom.'

This is said in a truly scientific spirit, and under the influence of the modern knowledge that man is not created but is being created ; and the end no one can foresee. It is therefore not only permissible but highly important to pass all barriers that can be passed, and to penetrate all veils ; but discreetly and with no coarse rush and clamour.

Mr. H. M. Alden, the editor of 'Harper's Magazine,' has given us some keenly interesting reminiscences of past

writers in that brilliant monthly. One refers to a certain mysterious Amélie Rives, of Virginia, whose stories and dramas, written before she was sixteen, draw from him the remark that American literature has no such example to present of genius in its simplest terms and most naïve expression. He then adds, concerning a much-admired and, in this country, better known writer :—

In some way Mary E. Wilkins, of New England, is associated in my mind with certain qualities of Amélie Rives's genius ; for, while the results are so widely variant, there is a like spontaneity and dream-like freedom of subjective construction. Both these writers would have been suppressed by early academic training ; they remained plastic long enough to show native qualities and moods. Anyone supposing that Miss Wilkins derives her stories from studies of New England life and character is greatly mistaken ; she is, first of all, an impressionist, with a dominant subjective motive, her fiction taking its outward shape from an inward prompting, having only such connection with actual life as there is in the texture of a dream. Whenever she deviates from this procedure the result lacks her individual quality.

That is a mysterious announcement. An 'inward prompting' which causes a young woman to turn out stories steeped in 'local colour' which she has not studied is something very like a medium, especially when it can be said that she is not so successful when she awakens up and tries actual life : for that is what this statement amounts to.

The opinion is, we believe, wide-spread that religion and the church are gradually being 'played out,' though, oddly enough, spectacular religion and the musical church are apparently highly acceptable. But the teaching Church, the church of simple consolation or guidance, the church of a gentle humanity, is, they say, doomed, as out of harmony with this boisterous, pushing, pleasure-seeking and self-sufficient age.

It may be so ; but we doubt it. There are great changes going on ; and great changes often mean great desertions as well as great welcomes. Religion and the Church have perhaps been weighed in the balances and found wanting ; and it sometimes looks as though this modern taking refuge in millinery and music is the result of a knowledge of that fact, partly unconscious, partly deliberate.

But we agree with an extremely quick-witted American minister who sees, behind all the noisy and feverish signs of the times, the old needs. Human nature and human life are the same. No one, he says, can say that our age presents original obstacles to spiritual vitality. The temptations to self-indulgence and indifference to a religious life are neither greater nor more numerous than they have hitherto been. Worldliness and godlessness are not more attractive now than they were centuries ago. The spiritual necessities of mankind are unaltered. Men and women are perplexed or despondent now as they have ever been in all stages of religious history. They hunger and thirst for the things of the spirit as much as they did when Paul preached in the cities of the Gentiles, or Wesley appealed to the Cornish miners.

Perhaps the real want of the age is, not less Religion and less Church, but more of both—but on new lines, and with more relation to common life. Here again our bright brother perhaps hits the centre:—

Is the Church sufficiently democratic? Is it free from all the demons which torment men in the outside world, or do devout people find that the ecclesiastical atmosphere is no purer and no better than the secular? Is the fellowship of faith a warm and sympathetic brotherhood, which men and women feel and appreciate, or is it an icy relationship, in which all the divisions and asperities which divide mankind are intensified? Of one thing we may rest assured, the religion that is really magnetic will magnetise on its own account, and without any feverish effort to develop energy from the outside. It will burn without constant fanning. The vital thing grows and bears fruit in season, and it never occurs to anyone to question its destiny.

The late meetings of the British Association were noteworthy for nothing so much as for the witness they bore to the fact we are always insisting upon,—that the old Materialism of a few years ago is dead and buried. The President's address took us far beyond the veil, and most of the Sections had to take turns at looking over the mystic space into which Matter disappears, and speculating as to what lay beyond. One thing is certain, that the Spiritualist has, at all events, ample room to breathe. He has, in fact, more room than anybody else.

'Psyche' for September is a modest pennyworth, but there is real animation in it. The original writing in it is well done, and the same may be said of the reporting. It appears to be a local publication, Forest Gate way. We wish it success.

TRANSITION OF MR. N. FABYAN DAWE.

We regret to learn that Mr. N. Fabyan Dawe, an earnest Spiritualist, who was for years a staunch supporter of the old British National Association of Spiritualists, and a member of the London Spiritualist Alliance from its commencement, passed to spirit life at Braemar, N.B., on the 6th inst., at, we believe, the age of seventy-two, after enduring much bodily affliction for many years. Until compelled by his failing health to avoid assemblies of people, he had actively interested himself in psychical and spiritual phenomena since 1869, and to the last fully recognised the preciousness of the evidence which they afford of the spiritual nature and progressive destiny of man. The self-knowledge thus obtainable he regarded as the key to human freedom. He felt that apart from this truth of truths there is no moral basis for human society and that a life in harmony with this truth is the essence of real manhood and religion. He exercised a wise humanity in generously supporting the promulgation of true spiritual and social principles and for many years contributed liberally to the sustentation of 'LIGHT.' He took an active interest in the efforts to secure land nationalisation and in other movements for the social uplifting of humanity, whereby the causes of human misery may be reached and to some extent removed. Many will, we fear, sadly miss the aid which his humane heart prompted him to impart so freely.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

N. J.—Not quite up to our standard.

G. W., J. S. H., E. A. W., and T. R. E.—Next week.

E. N.—The subject to which you refer will probably come under discussion very shortly.

S. S.—We advise you to persevere. Be calm and sympathetic—but make sure of your ground as you go.

ASTROLOGERS AND THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN AMERICA.—The prophets are divided. But, so far as we have seen, the majority declare in favour of the re-election of President McKinley, although Mr. E. S. Green, of California, seems confident that Mr. Bryan will be the successful candidate.

A SEANCE WITH THE RUSSIAN MEDIUM SAMBOR.

TRANSLATED FROM THE 'UEBERSINNLICHE WELT.'

The account of séances with Sambor by M. Petrovo-Solovovo, which appeared in the 'Annales des Sciences Psychiques,' and has been translated for the 'Uebersinnliche Welt,' by Dr. Nagel, is concluded in the latter journal's double number for August and September. In this concluding part Petrovo-Solovovo describes three séances at which the phenomenon of materialisation took place. At the last one of the three, some of the incidents were so extraordinary and uncommon that I will translate the whole account, thinking it will interest English readers, as well-authenticated narratives of materialisations are far from frequent at the present day in England.

The account runs as follows:—

I come now to what is, perhaps, the most important incident in all the séances; but before I proceed to give S—n's account of it, I must prefix it with a few details.

Herr S—n became acquainted with the medium at my house (in December, 1897), and, in spite of the difference in their social position, a kind of friendship sprang up between them. Besides the ordinary séances, they had some special ones together for automatic writing. In February, Sambor came to see me one day and told me that by this means of communication he had received a message from a spirit, previously totally unknown to him, calling himself 'Friedrich,' who had appointed a day for a new séance, at which only he, Sambor, S—n, and Herr Bujinsky should be present. 'Friedrich' had promised to partially materialise and to give the sitters some tokens. To his question as to what I thought of these instructions, I replied that such predictions deserved no credit, and advised him not to make the trial. The event proved that I was quite wrong. This is shown by the following account of S—n, which he sent me directly after the séance:—

On May 23rd, 1899, a séance with Sambor was held in the dwelling of Herr A. Bujinsky. First I will describe the position of the rooms. A door leads out of a small entrance-room into the kitchen; another into a small room with one window, having a white blind; a third into a dark bedroom, in which a small lamp is hanging before a holy picture. By day the bedroom receives its light from three windows beneath the roof. Out of the bedroom is a door leading to the workroom of the master of the house.

We assembled at eight o'clock (S—n had called for Sambor and brought him with him to Bujinsky's) and found the curtain already drawn before the window. Upon the table we placed paper, ink, pencils, and a sheet of paper covered with soot. I searched all the rooms carefully and convinced myself that the doors to them were securely locked. The servant girl was sent out and told not to return before an hour, as, if she did, no one would open the door for her. The dwelling had only one entrance door. There was, therefore, no one in the house except Bujinsky, Sambor, and myself. According to the previous direction of the 'spirit,' we took our seats at nine o'clock. We could see from where we were sitting the windows of the sleeping apartment, from which sufficient light entered the sitting-room for us to discern even objects at a distance. The doors leading to the entrance-room and the workroom were locked. At first the medium sat perfectly still, but at 9.14 he began to be restless, and at 9.30 he seemed to be in much pain, at which time the first phenomenon occurred; this was a creaking sound in the door leading to the entrance-room, and a sound of rustling in the bedroom.

At 9.50 the hands and the head of the spirit 'Friedrich' appeared before the one light window of the bedroom. As ten o'clock struck, 'Friedrich' told us to let the medium leave the circle; and during the next hour we conversed with 'Friedrich' through the medium, who gave us instructions and answers in his natural though rather sleepy voice; it was evident that he was in the trance state. He then rose and with unequal steps entered the cabinet, the door of which he left open, so that the light from the uncurtained window penetrated

to the room we were in. To judge from the sound of the footsteps the medium must have been in the bedroom when we first heard the voice of 'Friedrich'—a very loud one—which bade us not to break the chain. Then we heard distinctly the sound of the uneven steps of two persons. We felt a pain in our hands, and the room became perceptibly colder. Sambor now showed himself at the door of the cabinet; another figure held him by the right hand; this figure was shorter than Sambor but much stouter; it had a round head with short hair, and the face was dark grey in colour; it seemed to be dressed in black, or rather to be covered with soot. Both the figures then drew near to the table upon which lay the paper. 'Friedrich' sat right down on the chair (while Sambor remained standing), seized a pencil, the point of which broke when he tried to write; upon which he took another and wrote very rapidly these words (which we afterwards read): 'Dear Friends,—I wish you every happiness. Friedrich.' During the whole time we were talking with him, and begged him not to come nearer to us, as we were not yet accustomed to the cold and to his somewhat terrifying appearance. In spite of this, however, he rose heavily from his seat and walked slowly straight to us without loosing the medium's hand. The nearer he approached the colder it became. Our hands felt like lead, but all the same, we lifted them involuntarily when 'Friedrich' stopped before us, and, bending over Bujinsky—who thus had an opportunity of seeing 'Friedrich's' face—he touched our hands with his own, while, at the same time, he passed something dark and sweet-smelling across them. We found afterwards that this was two beautiful fresh dark red roses. There were none such in the house, and it is difficult to suspect Sambor in the matter, for he had laid his coat upon the sofa, and it can scarcely be imagined that he could have concealed two big roses with long stalks under his waistcoat without their becoming crushed.

'Friedrich' and Sambor then withdrew. We soon heard another voice from the bedroom; this was that known to us as 'Olia's'; besides which we heard 'Friedrich' say he would immediately reappear with three other spirits. This we would not hear of, as Sambor was much exhausted. Then we were instructed to receive Sambor again into the chain, which we did. 'Friedrich' then said to me: 'Stand up and take your watch and a pen and hold them both above the medium's head.' I did so. The medium sat quite still; my hands felt very heavy and I experienced a strong pricking sensation in them; but in spite of this I held the watch over Sambor's head, with the point of the pen touching the glass. The medium started as though an electric shock had passed through him. Then I was told to return to the chain. This I did, after putting back the watch and pen in their places. Sambor then awoke. When the light was admitted we found an interesting impression of 'Friedrich's' hand upon the blackened paper. A quantity of ink was on the watch-glass. When I wiped it off we saw some 'mirror' writing on the inner side of the glass, which could only be read by holding it in front of a looking-glass. In legible and firm characters was written: 'In memory. Frid.'

After a pause of fifteen minutes we again took our seats. 'Olia' wished to show herself, but the medium was so exhausted that she could not quite succeed. Once we saw a white mist, and again in the bedroom a white form of which we could not distinguish the features. We now closed the sitting, as very disorderly manifestations began to take place—books were thrown from a bookcase, and we were pushed about, &c.

(Signed) S—N,

AL. BUJINSKY.

M. Petrovo-Solovovo adds: 'On the whole, I am inclined to believe that these two gentlemen saw a real materialised phantom,' and he concludes these interesting accounts with a list of instructions to persons intending to experiment with Sambor.

M. T.

MADAME FLORENCE MONTAGUE, the Californian psychic, will leave England for a holiday, sailing next Tuesday with her husband, Captain Montague, to America. They will both be 'At Home' next Sunday afternoon, from 3 to 6.

* 'Olia' is Sambor's little twelve-year-old female control.—TIL.

IS THERE DANGER AHEAD?

By 'WATCHMAN.'

The 'Banner of Light' for August 25th contained a leading article entitled 'Danger Ahead,' which is far from pleasant reading. Although it deals with an aspect of the work of Spiritualism which lies outside the province to which 'LIGHT' is generally devoted, its importance, as indicating the present state and tendency of Spiritualism in America, warrants us in dealing with it for the benefit of the readers of 'LIGHT,' many of whom are deeply interested in the efforts of local societies in this country. The 'Banner of Light' says:—

'There is danger ahead, and the sooner the Spiritualists of America awoken to that fact the better will it be for our Cause as a whole. Local societies are everywhere complaining of hard times and inability to meet their expenses. The most capable speakers upon the platform are now being asked—nay, even *commanded*—to speak twice per Sunday for the sum of five dollars and expenses. The first cut in expenses is made in the salaries of the speakers, yet the financial stringency is by no means removed. . . . Our local societies to-day as a whole are weak numerically and financially. Many of them report losses in membership during the past season, while few of them, if any, will open the coming season with money in the treasury. Unless a change is made, unless Spiritualists can be induced to support their own Cause, and not exclusively that of the churches, our local societies will surely pass out of existence. It might be well if some of them did go down, but we cannot feel that it would be right or wise to have them do so.'

Contrasting this lamentable state of things with the large and enthusiastic gatherings familiar to the Spiritualists of the early days of the movement, the 'Banner' endeavours to discover the cause for the falling-off in the number of those who now attend the meetings, and this is what it says:—

'We are face to face with conditions, not theories, and those conditions must be met by the Spiritualists themselves. In the early days of Spiritualism, thousands of people thronged the halls in which spiritualistic lectures were held. Those thousands were held in closest attention by the eloquence and erudition of the speakers, and marvelled greatly at the logical order of their thought. So great was the value of the spiritual, intellectual, and ethical or religious instruction given, the people desired no other phenomena, and declined to permit that which belonged to the home circle and private séance to be exploited from the platform. When the place of the former was actually usurped by the latter, *local* spiritualist societies began to disintegrate, and the result is the present chaotic condition of our Cause locally in many sections of the land. To this must be added the introduction of the itinerant system, whereby the speakers were changed every week or every month. It is too much to expect that a society will grow in numbers and financial strength when a highly-gifted inspirational or trance speaker is followed by a person who can neither read nor write, whose ability lies solely in the direction of presenting a few simple phenomena in the way of entertainment. In 1851, and for twenty years afterwards, the educational phases of Spiritualism were presented to the public; when these were supplanted by the amusement features, and lack of proper talent, the cultured, spiritual, progressive people withdrew from the meetings.

'There may be several causes for the existing conditions, but the one of the greatest influence is very easily determined. It lies wholly in the thought that Spiritualism was vouchsafed to mankind for amusement rather than for instruction. The false idea was seized upon that the greater the show, the larger and more enthusiastic would be the crowd in attendance. This put a premium upon the marvellous, and relegated the spiritual and ethical elements of Spiritualism far to the rear.'

We admire the courage displayed by the 'Banner' in bravely speaking out the unpalatable truth in regard to this matter; and lest its position should be misunderstood, the following definition ought to be read:—

'We are not enemies of phenomena, but we do desire that phenomena shall not be made to stand as the only representatives of spiritualistic teaching. They have their legitimate place, and are invaluable in that place, but when they are presented to the exclusion of the philosophy and religion of Spiritualism, they menace rather than aid the movement of which they are naturally a useful part. . . . If the Spiritualists would have their meetings attractive and prosperous, they must make them so by the uplifting character of the

thought presented, and the assurance of the continuance of that presentation. They must cater to the tastes of those who want spiritual instruction, and not turn away to pander solely to the appetites of the curious and the amusement seeking classes. If the latter are to be considered, let special meetings be held for their benefit, at such times and places as will not destroy the influence of the former.'

To make the meetings attractive to educated and thoughtful people, competent speakers, who will also be teachers, are needed—but speakers of ability are being driven out of the lecture field :—

'The speaker, if he or she has a family, cannot pay actual living expenses at a salary of five dollars per week for forty weeks of the year. The camps do not afford in twelve weeks an income sufficient to make up what a speaker really needs to live upon. As the natural result of this condition many of our ablest men and women have turned to secular pursuits in order to earn a living, and there is danger that others may follow their example. It is argued that the Spiritualists as a class are poor in purse, hence not able to give anything to the support of their religion. This may be true of some of them, but it is not true of even the majority. The progressive Spiritualist, the spiritual Spiritualist, is found in attendance upon some liberal church or metaphysical or theosophical society, to which he contributes liberally.

'Can he and his friends be blamed for this course when spiritualist societies fail to give the spiritual pabulum for which they are seeking? When the members of local societies, or those who attend the meetings of the same, are really spiritual in thought, and sincere in purpose, they will be as willing to give a dollar to support their religion as some of them now are to purchase tobacco and fine raiment. They cannot honestly expect scholarly people to come to their meetings to listen to bad rhetoric, worse grammar, and incoherent vapourings in many words.'

What is to be done to find a remedy for the evil, which, while it may not have reached the acute stage, as it has in America, is already sufficiently pronounced in this country to cause considerable searching of hearts? The suggestions made by the 'Banner' are worth considering. They are :—

'A forward step is the first thing necessary. This step is the work of every individual Spiritualist. Establish permanent work in each society, interest all thinking people in the meetings, and engage a speaker who will labour with his people to the same end. Get hold of the broad-minded Unitarians, Metaphysicians, and Theosophists; attract them by the talent upon the platform, and numerical and financial strength will speedily come. Do not neglect the phenomena for those who need them; it is well to remember that others may require the helps upon which we ourselves were once so glad to lean. Therefore we urge the recognition of phenomena, in the home circle and private séance, where their genuineness can be determined and their revelations made clear.'

Do Spiritualists love their cause? Are they willing to co-operate to present it worthily to the public and provide attractive meeting places and win the sympathy and support of intelligent and spiritually-minded people? The blame has been laid upon the managers of the meetings, but that is rather unfair. If the members of the societies took more interest in the work and made their wishes known, the officers and committees would soon fall into line—especially if the members showed their approval of a forward policy by steady attendance at the meetings and generous financial support.

It has been suggested that a national organisation and a governing body can remedy the evil and dictate the course to be pursued by the local societies, but that would be like attempting to grow the branches of a tree before the roots and trunk had been developed, and in all probability would do more harm than good. The healthy growth must come from the actions of the individual Spiritualists. Those who are dissatisfied with the existing state of things, and feel the need for reform, should not take themselves off to ethical churches, or to those places where they can get objectionable traditions and dry-as-dust theology, sugar-coated with fine music, singing, and artistic surroundings, but they ought to stay in the society and exert their influence there. If every enlightened and progressive Spiritualist would do that, and would participate in bearing the burden of responsibility, it would not then be too heavy to be borne by the few as it is to-day. We hear that there is a danger that the meetings which have been held in Cavendish Rooms for so many years will have to cease unless they are supported

with more heartiness and generosity than they have been of late. Surely such a calamity will not be permitted to occur! The 'Banner' asks :—

'What will be the result if our local spiritualist societies of to-day do pass out of existence? Will Spiritualism be presented under another name, or will there come a new movement under other leaders?

'It is possible that a union will be formed by liberal Unitarians, Metaphysicians, Theosophists and Spiritualists, who will continue to investigate psychic problems and proclaim to the world the results of their experiments. If this is done, then the so-called "higher Spiritualism," of which much is said to-day, will continue to be expounded under some occult name, while the Spiritualism of our present local societies will either degenerate to small public circles around some favourite medium, or become an obscure system of class work, through which a modicum of spirituality may be strained into the minds of a few individuals. We love the word Spiritualism too well to wish for any other term in its place. It is the one word in our vocabulary that has become sacred through its application to and expression of human thought for fifty-three years. We therefore want *Spiritualism*, pure and undefiled, as the name of our movement. We feel that conditions in local societies can be changed to meet the progressive thought of the age. We appeal to all Spiritualists in all sections of our land to rally around the standard of Spiritualism in the glorious work of reform that will rejuvenate and upbuild our local societies everywhere. Who will aid us in our efforts as we go forth to do what we can in this direction? Remember, there is *danger ahead*, and that the time for action is *now*!'

We cordially unite in the above appeal, and would urge Spiritualists of this country not to abandon the work, not to forsake their society, but to endeavour to reorganise it, and with enthusiasm for the truth and love for humanity labour earnestly to make our societies centres of spiritual activity for good.

THE BRIXTON 'HAUNTING.'

This affair, which has unfortunately got into the papers too early, is undoubtedly the work of some supernormal agency. The matter was known to 'LIGHT,' and an investigation arranged, before the story got abroad. Briefly, the facts are these :—

The bells of the establishment (the Gresham Hotel) have been ringing separately and collectively, at all hours of the night and day, for the last five months. Footsteps are heard on the stairs, and doors hang during the night. Two barmaids are believed to have left on this account; and the proprietor (a confirmed sceptic) is only anxious to get rid of the nuisance. The writer has heard and seen every bell on the premises ring at midday! The 'rat' theory, so much employed by the would-be facetious as a *double entendre*, is utterly out of the question—a paleolithic joke that still passes for wit!

A séance was held on Tuesday, 11th inst., by kind permission of the proprietor, with Mrs. Brenchley, who, as kindly, gave her services. There were only two Spiritualists in a circle of nine; the conditions were, naturally, most difficult for any medium. However, Mrs. Brenchley was soon 'influenced,' and made much ado about one who had dropped down dead in the house. A man died in the bar singing 'Those bells shall not ring out' some few months ago! This fact was *absolutely unknown to the medium*, who was a stranger to us and the district! In the various rooms into which we followed the medium, deaths were described, and she pointed out one particular window through which she said a coffin had been lowered! *This was all subsequently verified!*

The chief witnesses of the phenomena are the proprietor (Mr. Welch), the manageress, the barmaid, the potman (a soldier lately at the 'front'), and the writer. The actual causes of the phenomena have still to be discovered.

W.C.L.

SPIRITUALISM IN CANADA.—We are pleased to be able to record the fact that the Spiritualists of Canada have formed an association for the Dominion, of which Dr. Austin has been elected president, and Mr. R. W. Simpson, of 414, Yonge-street, Toronto, the secretary. A 'Canadian Day' is to be set apart at the Lily Dale camp next year, when Dr. Austin will be the speaker. We sympathise with the efforts of our Canadian friends and wish them a large measure of success.

MAN, AND HIS RELATIONSHIP TO GOD.

BY ALFRED KITSON.

It is a grave error to attempt to define the undefinable, and thereby limit the illimitable, an error that is too frequently made. Yet we are as conscious of a Supreme Power, an Invisible Principle, but not a personal God—to whom it would be an absurdity to impute the form, the sentiments, and passions of men—as we are of the existence of gravitation, neither of which, however, depends on our ability to define it. To make one's belief in their existence depend upon the ability to define them would be ridiculous.

The well-known illustration of the 'design argument' of Paley, will, if carried to its logical issue, show us how mankind has erred on this question. If we could endow the watch with intelligence, and then ask it to define its maker, it would, reasoning from the analogy of its own nature and wonderful mechanism, inevitably conclude that its maker was an enormously big watch; and its answer would be in accordance with that idea. This is a brief illustration of what mankind has done, and continues to do in its mind and speech concerning God; it has likened this Supreme Power to itself; and it seldom fails to designate as 'atheists' those who have outgrown this childish conception.

The thought of God as a person may be as necessary to the multitude, on which to fix their attention at the hour of prayer—and images may, and undoubtedly do, serve a similar purpose for those less mentally strong—as crutches are for those who are unable to go without them, but in each case it should be the duty of their respective teachers to lead their minds from the sign to its signification, and from the anthropomorphic conception of God to the Infinite Spirit.

It is gratifying to note there are indications of the latter being realised in certain quarters, but, as a rule, it is in a hesitating, half-hearted manner. The phenomenon of life in its myriads of forms, and the knowledge of the existence of the illimitable expanse of suns and systems of suns, with their probable systems of habitable worlds like our own, have tended to enlarge man's conceptions of God from the anthropomorphic creator to an Omnipresent ocean of Life in Whom we live and move. The immanence of God in Nature is being adopted as the most reasonable conception of God. This is opposed to the idea that 'God is a spirit,' as a spirit implies limit, and that which is limited cannot be Infinite; and God being immanent in Nature—in which term I include the spirit-world—and Nature being Infinite in extent and duration, the two—God and Nature—are co-equal and co-eternal, God being to Nature what the soul is to the human body.

The ancient Egyptians looked upon God as being the Soul which animated all Nature; not external to and separate from the world, but embodied in it. From this Universal Soul it was imagined that all gods and demi-gods, as well as the souls of men and inferior animals, and even plants, were emanations. They considered every part of the visible universe as endowed with life, energy, and intelligence. They worshipped the intelligent and active cause of the phenomena of Nature, as it is displayed in its most striking and powerful agencies, but without clearly distinguishing the cause from the effect; or they believed that the elements themselves were animated.

The inhabitants of Thebais, in Upper Egypt, were said to have worshipped the immortal uncreated God alone, whom they called Cneph; for which reason they were exempt from contributing to the maintenance of the sacred animals adored in Lower Egypt.

This excellent conception of God and our relation thereto did great credit to the ancient Egyptians, as it came very near the best thoughts and conceptions of to-day. God is All-present, All-embracing, and is the fountain of all life and being; and that being so, we are a part thereof. Hence the brotherhood of man follows as a natural consequence. This being granted, we are safe in affirming that parentage pertains to the physical body and its psychological environments only. It is by these that the differentiated *Ego*, or self-conscious soul, is conditioned. Parents do not beget souls, but physical organisations for differentiated souls to

dwell in. Neither are souls waiting for bodies in which to take up their abodes on this earth. They are individualised portions of the All-present Soul we call God, and henceforth those differentiated by the human body maintain their individuality, while the differentiated portions that animate the animal and lower kingdoms lose their individuality at death, except where the magnetic affections of those who have pet animals and birds may enable them to maintain a temporary spiritual individuality which will last as long as the magnetic attraction is able to maintain it. This explains why animals are seen in spirit-life; but it does not follow that they are immortal. The vast spheres of the spirit world afford ample scope in which to unfold and perfect all the latent, God-derived, and divine qualities of our nature without having recourse to reincarnation.

God being immanent in Nature, and divine, *per se*, it is illogical to speak of soul as struggling in and through the lower kingdoms of Nature to perfect itself in the human form. Though I may be unable to determine what end these lower forms subserve in the great economy of life, yet it does not follow that they are not manifestations of the Divine Will manifesting for a definite purpose yet to be determined by science.

It also follows, as a natural consequence of the postulate that God is the fountain and source of all life, that this All-present Soul is as much Mother-God as it is Father-God, though not commonly recognised as such. If there be any difference in the soul qualities of the male and female, and they are both derived from one common source, then that source must, of necessity, be dual in nature, and we must come to the conclusion that these peculiarities become pronounced, or determined at the time of differentiation. Or is it that the equipoise of the soul qualities in the Great Over-soul constitutes a condition corresponding to what may be described as neuter? In which case it would be incorrect to address God as being of either gender.

Again, God being Omnipresent, it is incorrect to speak of life as flowing, or emanating therefrom, as such a use of words implies distance between the two, which is a misnomer. We must accustom ourselves to think and speak of God as being as all-embracing as the atmosphere, working in and through Nature with a divine purpose—our at-onement with which gives us happiness, while our opposition thereto gives us pain.

It will have been observed that I prefer the term 'soul' whereby to designate the *Ego*. I do so because I am of the opinion that as the term 'spirit' lends itself more readily than 'soul' to compound with other descriptive words such as world, people, homes, temples, flowers, &c., it is best to confine the term 'soul' exclusively to the signification of the *Ego*, and 'spirit' to signify what is, by common consent, termed the 'spirit-world.' So that the term 'spirit' stands for the substance or etherialised 'stuff' of which everything is composed on the spirit side of life. The spirit being objective, but the *Ego* or soul never, it is proper to speak of spirit-people, homes, temples, flowers, &c., as distinct from earthly people, &c. Thus the spirit-world, and its people, and all appertaining thereto, are summed up in the appropriate appellation Spiritualism. Whereas such an appellation would not be appropriate were the terms 'soul' and 'spirit' used *vice versa*. The above definitions, I think, are calculated to commend themselves to the spiritual student, as being by far the most appropriate.

'All are but parts of one stupendous whole
Whose body Nature is, and God the Soul.'

ALFRED KITSON.

Hanging Heaton,
Near Dewsbury.

REV. MOSES AND MRS. MATTIE HULL COMING TO ENGLAND NEXT YEAR.—'The Sunflower' announces that it is the intention of those energetic and capable workers and speakers, Moses and Mattie Hull, to visit England in the autumn of 1901, and, after lecturing for a few months, proceed to the Continent, Palestine, Egypt, Australia, and back to America. Mr. Hull began to preach in 1852, when he was but seventeen years of age. He is one of the most forcible and earnestly eloquent advocates of Spiritualism in America—especially from the Biblical standpoint. He should receive a hearty welcome here.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,
LONDON, W.C.
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22nd, 1900.

EDITOR E. DAWSON ROGERS.

Assisted by a Staff of able Contributors.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.—'LIGHT' may be had free by post on the following terms:—Twelve months, 10s. 10d.; six months, 5s. 5d. Payments to be made in advance. To United States, 2dol. 70c. To France, 13 francs 86 centimes.

Light,

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

COMMUNICATIONS intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, Office of 'LIGHT,' 110, St. Martin's-lane, London, W.C. Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Office of 'LIGHT,' and not to the Editor. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to Mr. E. W. Wallis, and should invariably be crossed '— & Co.'

'LIGHT' may also be obtained from E. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and all Booksellers.

APPLICATIONS by Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., for the loan of books from the Alliance Library should be addressed to the Librarian, Mr. B. D. Godfrey, Office of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

A REVOLUTIONARY BOOK.

Exactly forty years ago, Herbert Spencer launched upon a sea, already ruffled by the teachings of Darwin, his proposed 'System of Philosophy,' beginning with 'First Principles,' including Part I. 'The Unknowable,' and Part II. 'Laws of the Knowable.' In 1862 this first volume was published. For a time it 'hung fire,' but gradually aroused attention, and to-day we welcome 'The Sixth edition (otherwise eleventh thousand).'

We call it 'a revolutionary book': but, like everything revolutionary, the end was not seen from the beginning, and the misunderstanders were many. It is always true that no age really understands itself, that no revolution is possessed of all the data, and that no leader ever quite knows what he is doing. It is equally true, that, as a rule, those who are terrified by revolutions mistake their men and misread the signs of the times. The heretic has usually been hated, but he has nearly always been necessary; and, as often as not, the dreaded iconoclast has been really the forerunner of the architect and master-builder. It is not quite clear yet that it is so in the case of this epoch-making book of Mr. Spencer's, but people like ourselves, who are committed to no theological or ecclesiastical systems of thought or opinion, can already clearly enough see that this masterly hand has done a vast amount of excellent pruning, and guided the new shoots in an exceedingly hopeful direction, well adapted for taking advantage of light and air.

The new edition of 'First Principles,' now before us (London: Williams and Norgate), has received the benefit of its author's ripe experience and careful revision. The changes are not fundamental, but they are decidedly helpful, as bringing illustrations and certain statements into harmony with present-day knowledge: and, though there have been many additions, a bias in favour of compression has left the volume shorter by about fifty pages. A cool reading of Part I., in its present form, especially with the help of the Postscript, written in March, last year, has, in our own case, resulted in the impression that Mr. Spencer is as much for us as against us, as Theists and Spiritualists of a teachable and cautious kind. It is quite true that he rules out Theists, as solvers of the problem of creation, but that does not affect us. We do not expect to solve the problem of creation, and, as Spiritualists, we do not and cannot be caught in the meshes of the net which so readily entangle the Theists (or, rather, Deists) who discuss creation as though 'the Heavens and the Earth were made somewhat after the manner in which a workman makes a piece of furniture.' We do not and we cannot think that

there is 'an analogy between the process of creation and the process of manufacture.' We are spiritual evolutionists and intend to take full advantage of Mr. Spencer's own afterthought when, having reduced God to the Unknowable, and shown us how illogical and unphilosophical it is to say or imagine that the Infinite, the Unconditioned, the First Cause, the Absolute, are thinkable, he tells us that thought naturally overleaps the limits of the conditioned, and alights upon territory where logic and philosophy cannot follow, and yet where thought or imagination cannot be permanently dislodged. 'Who by searching can find out God?' cried the old-world seeker; 'who can understand the Almighty unto perfection?' 'No one,' he seems to say, and yet he affirmed Him, as more real, and wiser and mightier than man. It is the magnitude, not the mistiness, which baffles. We are 'blind with excess of light': and, in the end, it may be seen that Mr. Spencer has been a real help to us here,—trampling down our paltry little definitions and private preserves, scattering our theistic card houses, hedged about with paper anathemas, turning us out of our sheltering Articles and Creeds and Catechisms, and sending us to wonder and adore under the stars and the mysterious dome of Heaven.

Let it be remembered that Mr. Spencer does for Pantheism and Theism, with all their Temples and Little Bethels, only what he does for Science and Philosophy, with their conceptions or words; and that he flatly says 'Ultimate Scientific Ideas are all representative of realities that cannot be comprehended.' 'Both ends of the thread of consciousness' are beyond our grasp. Force, Space and Time are as much beyond our comprehension as God. Even of sensations, we can give no account: still less of 'that which is conscious of sensations.' The Objective is as inscrutable as the Subjective as to their substance and genesis. 'In its ultimate nature nothing can be known.' That is a lesson we all greatly need. If it were properly learnt we should all be not only more modest but more wise, not only more charitable to one another (with a repeal of all our impudent anathemas) but more really receptive to such a measure of truth as is possible for us.

Assuredly, the Spiritualist stands to gain most from this teaching concerning 'The Unknowable'; for, be it remembered, 'The Unknowable' does not mean the isolated, the non-real, but the reverse. If we understand Mr. Spencer aright, he, in his way, will say with us: 'In Him we live and move and have our being.' We are passing out of the early stages of belief in God, such as idolatry, the offering of sacrifices, the localising of His presence, the arbitrary issue of decrees or the arbitrary use of power; and we are passing on to a thought, an emotion, a trust, turning upon His 'universal immanence,' to 'the identification of Being as present in consciousness with Being as otherwise conditioned beyond consciousness,'—a pure gain to us. Everywhere we are dealing only with symbols: nowhere have we reached the Reality.

In his concluding paragraph, Mr. Spencer very gravely puts the Materialist and the Spiritualist in the same class. Both are dealing only with appearances. 'The interpretation of all phenomena in terms of Matter, Motion and Force is nothing more than the reduction of our complex symbols of thought to the simplest symbols.' The relation of subject and object renders necessary to us the antithetical conceptions of Spirit and Matter, but 'the one is no less than the other to be regarded as but a sign of the Unknown Reality which underlies both.' So far as we are concerned we care but little for names. Call that, to which the Mind *must* speed on, 'Unknown Reality' or 'Our Father,' it matters little. There it is; and all that we have fondly and foolishly been calling reality is but a poor symbol, after all.

ANOTHER GHOST STORY.

General Francis J. Lippitt, writing from Jamestown, Rhode Island, U.S.A., sends this interesting record of some personal experiences :—

The following narrative of certain occurrences has been written out from full notes made by me at the time.

In October, 1884, I went to a country town in a certain Northern State in the hope of raising a little money for a deserving charity by one or more lectures and readings. I had never before visited that part of the country, and there was no one in the place, so far as I know or believe, that knew me. But at about four miles from the town there lived a married couple whom I had repeatedly met some years before, under interesting circumstances not necessary to detail. I had been lately pained to learn that they had become wretchedly poor. The husband had been for years a confirmed invalid, and the few acres they owned round their cottage hardly sufficed to keep the wolf from the door; the wages of a hired man to cultivate them absorbing most of the yield. I therefore determined to take up my quarters with them instead of going to a hotel in the town, so as to give them a lift by a week's very liberal board. I shall call them 'Mr. and Mrs. X.' On arriving I told them of my intention, and they received me with cordial thanks.

There were two other persons in the family. One was the farm hand, and the other a weak-minded young girl who had taken refuge with Mr. and Mrs. X. from the brutal treatment of a drunken father, and who naturally helped Mrs. X. all she could in the little *ménage*. I made no note of her name, but shall call her 'Mary.'

In the evening of October 9th, I was seated in the dining-room, which was about ten feet square, facing an open doorway leading into another little room of the same dimensions, and which was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. X. as their bedroom. Over this doorway there hung a curtain of dark coloured cloth. Mrs. X. was sitting on my left, on my right was the hired man, and on his right the young girl Mary. Mr. X., who was suffering more than usual, was seated in the bedroom. A kerosene lamp stood in one corner of the room in which we were sitting. Its light was somewhat dim, but amply sufficient to enable me to see distinctly every person and object in the room.

I was talking with Mrs. X., when suddenly the curtain over the bedroom doorway was pushed aside, and there stood before us a little girl apparently about three years old, clothed in pure white gauzy drapery. The hired man exclaimed that it was his little sister, who had died some time before. He spoke to her, calling her by name, to which she responded by signs. We asked her to come to us, and she made some attempts to do so, but did not succeed. In a few moments she disappeared behind the curtain.

With Mrs. X.'s permission I went at once into the bedroom. The room was quite dark and I could see nothing. In groping about I found Mr. X. seated in a chair, and apparently in a deep sleep. Fearing that if he should awake it might prevent a second appearance of the phantom, or whatever it was, I postponed examining the room with a light; and therefore softly retired and resumed my seat.

The only entrance into the bedroom was by the doorway where the child had appeared. There was a door behind us opening into the kitchen, and another one opening into the parlour. This latter was locked, and kept locked; but even had it been left open, no person could have passed from it, or from the kitchen door behind us, into the bedroom without being plainly seen by us all.

A few moments after I had taken my seat the curtain was again drawn aside, and there stood before us a woman clad in a pure white gauzy material, with a white veil round her head, but leaving the face partly exposed. Mrs. X. asked who it was, but there was no answer. She then asked, 'Is it Mary's mother?' The figure nodded, 'Yes.' 'Can you come to her?' No answer. 'May she come to you?' No answer. The figure then retired and the curtain closed.

A few minutes afterwards I heard Mr. X.'s voice, and he presently came out to us, having the appearance of being suddenly awakened out of a sound sleep. On his being

questioned it appeared that he had neither seen nor heard anything, and remembered only that he had been asleep.

I then entered the bedroom with the lamp in my hand, burning brightly, and made a thorough examination of the little room and of everything in it. There was nothing to be seen but the four walls, without any closet or recess; a rough double bedstead; a small bureau under a looking-glass; a little stand; and one chair. I opened the drawers of the bureau and looked under the bed, but found nothing. The only article of clothing was an old black threadbare coat hanging on the wall. I should mention that Mr. X., whose height was about 5ft. 11in., was dressed in a tight-fitting suit of black.

In the evening of October 11th Mr. X., who felt somewhat better, at my request again retired into the bedroom, and the experiment was tried under precisely the same conditions as before. In a few minutes after we had seated ourselves the curtain was drawn aside and there appeared the same little girl that had come before, and clad in the same white drapery. She made two or three attempts to come to the hired man, but failed to advance more than a step or two. Again she nodded 'Yes' when asked if she was the hired man's sister. She retired behind the curtain, and in a few minutes appeared the same female figure of the first evening, draped as before; and who again answered by signs that she was 'Mary's mother.' On my asking her if she was glad to have her daughter with Mrs. X., she nodded 'Yes,' and then retired.

A few minutes afterwards the curtain was again drawn aside, and there stood in the doorway a striking figure. It was that of an elderly man, broad-chested, and rather short in stature. His costume resembled that of the time of Louis XVI.; a long, broad-skirted coat of dark blue or black cloth, a long drab-coloured waistcoat with flaps, large metal buttons, dark knee breeches and buckles, cuffs with lace ruffles, and a lace tie round the neck. His hair was very grey, or else powdered. I asked him his name. There was no answer. He remained visible a minute or two and then withdrew, the curtain closing upon him; but he presently reappeared. The appearance and reappearance were repeated three or four times. Finding he could not communicate by speech, I questioned him after each withdrawal, and answers came promptly by raps from behind the curtain. I had asked him to make three raps for Yes, and one for No. The questions and answers were as follow :—

'Did I know you personally?'—'No.'

'Would I recognise your name if I heard it?'—'Yes.'

'Were you an American?'—'No.'

'A Frenchman?'—'Yes.'

'Did you take part in our revolutionary war?'—'Yes.'

It then occurred to me that the B— family from which I am descended were on terms of intimacy with General Rochambeau.

'Are you Count Rochambeau?'—'Yes.'

I then put several questions to him touching the names of members of the B— family, including that of my great-grandmother, and as to when and where he knew them, and as to a memento of himself he had sent to Governor B. after his return to France. As the answers could be only 'Yes' or 'No,' the questions were necessarily 'leading' ones, as the lawyers call them; but the answers were all correct.

I asked him if he remembered landing with troops at Newport, R.I., in 1778. He answered 'Yes.'

'Was it in the month of May?'—'Yes.'

'Do you remember the day of the month?'—'Yes.'

'Was it the 7th?'—'No.'

'The 8th?'—'No.'

'The 9th?'—'No.'

'The 10th?'—'No.'

'The 11th?'—'Yes.'

During the summer I had been looking over a book lately published that contained an account of the landing, and the date given was May 11th.

Every time he reappeared I requested him to come to me. He made efforts to do so, one of which was successful. I was seated at some five or six feet from the curtain. He came close to me and tried to put his hands on my head, but they seemed to be repelled as if by an electric shock. He allowed me to touch his hand, which was perfectly natural and flesh-

like, rather warm than cold. I stood up as he approached me and judged his height to be about 5ft. 7in. His manner was in the highest degree courteous and dignified.

Only a moment or two after he had retired for the last time, a totally different-looking figure emerged from behind the curtain. He was tall and rather slender, with a grey, forked beard, and was dressed in a cassock, with a clerical collar. I asked who it was, but there was no answer. Presently he retired behind the curtain, and I then questioned him as follows (the answers given by raps):—

'Did I know you personally?'—'No.'

'Were you an American?'—'No.'

'An Englishman?'—'Yes.'

'A Bishop?'—'Yes.'

'Would I recognise your name if I heard it?' I thought of Bishop Colenso, but could not for the moment recall his name.

'Were you proceeded against for heresy?'—'Yes.'

'Were you Bishop of Natal?'—'Yes.'

The figure retired, and a few minutes afterwards another one appeared. It was that of an old man of short stature. He was unable to speak, and soon withdrew behind the curtain. Then we heard the voice of Mr. X., who was evidently awake; and he presently came out of the bedroom and took his seat with us, quite exhausted.

Two evenings after this we repeated the experiment under precisely the same conditions as on the preceding evenings. The first figure that appeared was the same woman that had come on the first evening, clothed in the same white drapery, and who had declared herself to be Mary's mother. The same questions were put to her as on the first evening, and the same answers were given. A few moments after she retired the curtain was drawn aside, and there stood before us a figure much resembling in height and general appearance the *soi-disant* Rochambeau; except that his costume seemed to belong to a century earlier. He walked forward, placed his hands for a moment on my head, and then returned to the doorway. On his withdrawing behind the curtain I questioned him thus (the answers being given by raps):—

'Did I know you personally?'—'No.'

'Were you an American?'—'No.'

'A Frenchman?'—'Yes.'

'Would I recognise your name if I heard it?'—'Yes.'

'Were you an historical personage?'—'Yes.'

'Political?'—'No.'

'Military?'—'Yes.'

'In the reign of Louis XVI.?'—'No.'

'Of Louis XV.?'—'No.'

'Of Louis XIV.?'—'Yes.'

'When you come out again will you try to speak your name?'—'Yes.'

The figure presently reappeared and walked a step or two towards me. I said to him, 'Now try to speak your name.' After several ineffectual efforts to articulate, he said twice very distinctly, 'Tu——.' I said, 'Please try again.' But he could only repeat 'Tu——.' He then retired behind the curtain. Strange as it may seem, it was only then that the thought struck me who it could be. I said 'Marshal Turenne?' Three raps.

After a minute or two another figure drew aside the curtain, much like that of Count Rochambeau in appearance and costume, but shorter, and his hair was quite white. He was unable to speak, and soon withdrew behind the curtain. I then questioned him, and the answers were given by raps:—

'Were you an American?'—'No.'

'A Frenchman?'—'Yes.'

'A French officer in our revolutionary war?'—'Yes.'

'Would I recognise your name if I heard it?'—'Yes.'

'A friend of the B——family?'—'Yes.'

'Count Dumas?'—'Yes.'

While I was residing in Paris in my early youth there came there from the United States an aged female relative of mine, who, at the time of our War of Independence, was the youngest daughter of the B——family, in which the young Count Dumas, then on Rochambeau's staff, was a very frequent visitor. The Count had not seen her since she was

a beautiful girl of fifteen. Hearing of her arrival in Paris, he came to visit her at her lodgings, and I happened to be with her when he came. The venerable old man, then entirely blind, entered the room, supported on the arm of his tall and handsome son, Colonel Dumas (then aide-de-camp to the King, and who was killed in battle the following year in Algeria). The meeting was a most interesting one, but it would be out of place here to describe it. His features I had entirely forgotten, but I distinctly remembered his broad shoulders, his short neck, his abundant, snow-white hair, and his height, which was an inch or two less than my own. My own height is about 5ft. 6in.

He presently reappeared, and I asked him to come to me. He at once complied with my request. I stood up by his side and found that his height exactly corresponded with my recollection of that of Count Dumas when I met him in Paris. I asked him if he remembered meeting me when he visited Mrs. W. He nodded 'Yes,' and then retired behind the curtain. Whoever he was, this much is certain, that his manner had all the graceful, old-school courtesy that had so impressed me in the living Count Dumas.

In a few moments the curtain was again drawn aside and there stood before us a tall figure in a clerical dress. The face was entirely different from that of 'Bishop Colenso.' He answered my questions by nodding his head.

'Did I know you personally?'—'No.'

'Would I recognise your name if I heard it?'—'Yes.'

'Were you an American?'—'Yes.'

'Bishop Polk?'—'Yes.'

'Did you study divinity under my uncle?'—'Yes.'

(Of the *real* Confederate General, Bishop Polk, this was true.)

The figure then retired, and in a few moments another and different one presented itself. It was that of a tall, robust man, clad in a suit of farmer's grey. I asked him his name. No answer. I asked him to come to me. He did so, patted me on the head in a friendly manner, and then retired to near the curtain. I put several questions to him to ascertain who he was. To every question he answered only by tapping his forehead in a very significant manner. On his withdrawing behind the curtain I questioned him again. His answers were given by raps. I asked:—

'Did I know you in this life?'—'No.'

'Would I recognise your name if I heard it?'—'Yes.'

'Were you a relative of mine?'—'Yes.'

'Grandfather?'—'No.'

'Uncle?'—'Yes.'

'My father's brother?'—'No.'

'My mother's brother?'—'Yes.'

I called over successively the names of my mother's four brothers. There was no response except to the last one, which was E——. Then came a perfect shower of raps. By questioning, I found that it was desired that I should go into the bedroom. I did so, and groped my way to Mr. X., whom I found sitting in his chair, and, to all appearance, in a deep sleep. In a few moments there was another succession of raps, which I interpreted as a direction to return to my seat. On reaching it, I was told that the 'farmer-looking' man had followed me out. But when I turned round on reaching my seat he had retired behind the curtain again.

Now, *à propos* of this last apparition, I would state that, in my early childhood, I was repeatedly told that I had an uncle E——, my mother's youngest brother; and when I used to ask about him I was always told that he was very weak in his mind, and that when quite a lad he had been sent (after some terrible family reverses) to be brought up by a farmer 'somewhere in Massachusetts.' I never saw him, and remember only hearing many years ago that he had been dead a long time. On thinking it all over I could not help asking myself whether this was indeed my uncle E——, and whether his suit of farmer's grey and the significant tapping of his forehead were for the purpose of identification.

It appeared that by some means or other news of these apparitions reached the town; for, early in the evening of October 15th, a man and his wife residing there, acquaintances of Mr. X., made their appearance, accompanied by another man, who was a stranger in the place. They had driven out in the hope of 'getting a sight of the ghosts.'

Mr. X., to oblige them, again retired into the little bedroom. The three guests seated themselves on the right of our own little circle. Two female forms, in white flowing drapery, with faces thickly veiled, presented themselves successively at the opening of the curtain. There was a palpable difference between them in height. By raps in answer to questions, after they had respectively retired, it was said that they were for *me*. In the presence of very uncongenial strangers I did not care to ask further; but I could not help thinking of my departed wife and daughter.

Then two men successively appeared, who stated by signs that they came to the stranger guest. One of them crossed the room to him and placed his hands on the stranger's head. The stranger asked: 'Is it my brother?' The apparition nodded 'Yes,' and retired.

Afterwards the same figures that had come on previous evenings, calling themselves 'Marshal Turenne' and 'Count Rochambeau,' emerged successively from behind the curtain and stepped forward a pace or two. Their costumes and general appearance were as before described.

The last figure that appeared was one totally unlike any of the others. He was tall, rather slender, and was dressed in close-fitting dark clothes. To my questions he answered as follows (my notes do not record whether these answers were given by visible nods, or by raps, after he had retired):—

'Did I know you in this life?'—'No.'

'Would I recognise your name if I heard it?'—'Yes.'

'Were you a historical personage?'—'Yes.'

'Were you living during our War of Independence?'—'Yes.'

'Did you take any part in it?'—'Yes.'

'Were you an American?'—'No.'

'A Frenchman?'—'No.'

'A German?'—'No.'

'A Pole?'—'Yes.'

'Kosciusko?'—'Yes.'

The question is, Who or what were these forms? On this point I shall offer no opinion, but will advert to certain considerations that seem to me to have an important bearing upon it.

First: It is difficult to conceive any motive for deception on the part of Mr. and Mrs. X. It is true that in former years they had been professional 'mediums'; but, owing to Mr. X.'s severe suffering from an organic disease, they had been obliged, several years before, to abandon the exercise of their gift (or art, whichever it may have been), and retired to the little solitary home in which they were now living. And these experiments were made only to oblige me, without any fee or reward being asked, expected, promised, or given.

Secondly: Perhaps it may be suggested that all these figures were Mr. X. himself in disguise. This would seem to be an impossibility. Conceding that the three adult females (two of them of different height) may have been Mr. X., his face veiled and his person covered with white drapery, he certainly could not have personated the little child. As to the tall male forms, though Mr. X. was himself tall and slender, their faces were unveiled and plainly visible, and their natural colour and play of features showed that they were not masks. Moreover, two of the male forms had broad shoulders, and were of low stature. Finally, where were the various costumes, male and female, concealed? For the bare walls showed no sign of a closet or other hiding place.

Thirdly: Were the figures then confederates? The only entrance from the room in which we sat to the bedroom was the doorway where the curtain was hung, within a few feet of which we were sitting. No person could have gone into it from the kitchen door behind us without passing over our heads. As to the parlour door, it was in plain view of us all, and no one could possibly have passed from it into the bedroom without being seen.

But as to the possible entrance of confederates into the bedroom, three other suppositions may be made. They may have been let down through the ceiling from the garret overhead; they may have come up through a trap in the floor; they may have come into it from outside through its solitary window.

As to a trap in the ceiling: the plastering was entire, not a crack to be seen in it. As to a trap in the floor: not

only was there no indication of one, but the cottage had no cellar, the lower floor resting on the ground. There remains the supposition of an entrance through the bedroom window. But the house was four miles distant from the town, *en pleine campagne*, and not another house in sight. Is it likely that a little child and several grown persons could have been induced to come on three different evenings to visit a house in such a solitary place, in order to perform in a (to them) objectless masquerade? Perhaps if Mr. and Mrs. X. were to receive a round sum of money for the exhibition, these *figurantes* might have been hired; but under the actual circumstances this last supposition can hardly be entertained.

These suggestions I offer for what they may be worth. As to what is the true explanation of the facts I have stated, I leave that for others to decide.

FRANCIS J. LIPPITT.

DEVELOPING CIRCLES.

The development and exercise of mediumship are the most pressing need of the hour. The present dearth of phenomena is directly due to the abandonment of the practice of holding home circles. The investigator now-a-days desires to 'see something' without the trouble of waiting for the cultivation of the incipient powers of a sensitive. Few people have the patience to join a circle of inquirers and watch and wait for results, and yet, unless more mediums are forthcoming, we shall shortly be in the position of those who can only point to the record of by-gone evidences but are unable to offer present day proofs. Hence the study of the laws and conditions favourable for intercourse with people on the other side is never out-of-date. The 'Harbinger of Light' has given a timely and serviceable article dealing with the subject of mediumship and the use of developing circles. We commend the following to the careful consideration of the readers of 'LIGHT':—

'The bald affirmation frequently made that "everyone is a medium," though true in a sense, is somewhat misleading; it would better express what is meant to be conveyed to say "everyone may develop by application some form of mediumship." This would naturally suggest to any aspirant for the possession of mediumistic powers, inquiry as to the nature and extent of the application requisite in his case to evolve the essential condition, the result of which would test the strength of his aspiration and probably deter a large proportion from attempting the task. This would be no disadvantage to them, it would save them much unprofitable work and clear the road for those who cry and mean, "Excelsior."

'Some people are born with an excess of psychic aura either inherited from their progenitors or imparted during the period of gestation through favourable mental and spiritual conditions of the mother. But, as a rule, the environment during youth does not favour the development and expression of the power this confers. Such persons by coming in contact with a developed medium, or being introduced into a harmonious circle of investigators, have their hitherto latent powers quickened into manifestation; they were already budding, and only wanted the stimulus of genial magnetism to bring them into bloom. This is the only use of a developing circle, to give an impetus to the expression of powers that are ready for efflorescence. To place a person whose latent mediumship is deep set and immature, in a mixed circle, is like placing a weak and sickly plant in a hot bed and forcing it into flower before it has developed the necessary stamina; the result is a weak and imperfect blossoming. Natural development is attained by pure living; the practice of the virtues, the cultivation of the intellect, self-control, and high aspiration, all these tend to the harmonisation of the individual, and harmony is the one essential for communion with the denizens of the higher or wisdom spheres, whence reliable teachings come. It is necessary that the intellect be cultivated and the mind familiarised with the full range of the language the individual is accustomed to use. Ideas are expressed in words; our vocabulary at its best is inadequate to express many things which the spirit world desires to transmit, and for an advanced spirit intelligence to communicate through an uneducated person on high themes, is like a maestro having to perform a complicated composition on a piano of two or three octaves. There are instances of illiterate persons under spirit influence using words outside their vocabulary and uttering matter far beyond their normal powers, but these are exceptions where, for a special purpose, power is brought to bear to control the vocal organs to articulate what the controlling intelligence wishes to convey, and

good as this may be of its kind, it falls short of that which could be given through a cultured medium attuned to the requisite pitch for accord with the communicating intelligence. These qualifications will not come without effort; nothing of real value can be obtained without this, or costly sacrifice. But is not the attainment of communion with glorified spirits an adequate inducement to devote a lifetime (if necessary) to, apart from the pleasure incidental to the progressive harmonisation of both mind and body?

'We are asked very frequently what is the best way to develop mediumship, meaning, as a rule, "what is the most direct way to open communication with the spirit world." It is easy to point this out to a person having a mediumistic aura, though when he connects the line between the two states, the communications are often indistinct; yet even when they are so, whilst they give satisfaction for the time, they lose their zest and pall upon the mind unless progressive. In the pursuit of Spiritualism, we must progress or stagnate, and so (as a rule) with mediums; the exception being with those who are used by the spirit world as test mediums to prove the reality of the after life, and the nearness of the spirit world; they are often kept to the work on the same plane in the interest of humanity, but they have their reward when they come to realise the use they have been to their fellows.

'Except where bands of teaching spirits operate to communicate truth to man, the communications come from planes of development approximating to those of the investigators; hence the one who is pursuing natural development is gradually bringing himself into *rapport* with higher intelligences and reaping the reward of his self-sacrifice and forbearance from indulgence in the more carnal pleasures of life: he finds in a higher appreciation of nature and the influx of spiritual ideas a greater joy than they can give, whilst on the other hand the uncertainties of artificial development are often productive of mental suffering and disappointment. Hence it is apparent that whatever the latent mediumistic capacities may be, there is no better or safer road than self-harmonisation and development; even if your mediumistic gifts are few, you will reach a higher plane of thought and action, bringing you so much nearer the heavenly condition, and thus realise that your efforts have not been in vain.'

ASTROLOGY.

'Modern Astrology,' for September, in a lengthy article upon 'The Political Outlook,' warns us that 'we are nearing events compared with which those of the last few months will sink into insignificance.' From the Ingress and Lunation figures for the month we gather that the position of the moon is regarded as favourable to occult study, and that a new prophet is likely to be heard of. Other articles deal with: 'A Subject of Mars,' 'Planetary Hours,' and 'Descriptions from the Rising Signs.' This number also contains the second and third chapters of 'Astrology for All,' in which certain astronomical details—stumbling-blocks to the student—are lucidly explained.

'The Astrological Magazine,' for August (published in Madras), has a striking paper entitled 'India's Poverty,' from which we quote the following: 'The six millions now on the famine rolls do not represent a fourth of the numbers who are absolutely helpless, and who, from a sense of shame or humiliation, do not seek public help, preferring rather to starve than the disgrace of begging.' There are also interesting contributions dealing with 'Greek Astronomy,' 'The French Navy,' 'The Empress Dowager of China,' and 'European Astrologers and the Recent Wars.' The number strikes us as being both varied and attractive.

A. B.

'THE SPIRITUAL REVIEW.'—The September number of the 'Spiritual Review' opens with a portrait and an interesting sketch of Mr. George Spriggs, the well-known medium, whose work and remarkable experiences in Wales and in Australia have entitled him to the respect and esteem of Spiritualists and mediums everywhere. An article by Hudson Tuttle dealing with mediumship gives very valuable advice to inquirers and mediums. The editorial notes are mainly devoted to the consideration of the present system of public meetings in connection with the movement, and reform is urgently insisted upon. The 'Review' holds that the matter rests with the audiences and the members of the societies. An interesting 'short sermon' by Mr. Peter Lee and a 'singular literary parallel,' entitled 'The Hall of Eblis,' by Mr. A. Janes, with the usual features, make up a useful and instructive number.

THE LOVE-BIRD.

A PARABLE.

I am all alone now, all alone in my cage, for she, my little love, the companion of my life, is dead. All our days had been spent together, and we needed no one else, for I was all in all to her, and she was everything to me.

How we would sit for hours on our perch, whispering to each other, and cooing, cooing, till the very cage seemed no longer a prison, but a fair heaven, for it held all our love. The thought of a parting never came to us; why should it? We lived in the happy present, and the past and future were alike shrouded by its golden radiance.

Then at last came a day, a sad day for me, when my little love grew ill. She sat silent on her perch, her pretty green feathers ruffled up, and her little head drooping forward, while I cooed pityingly beside her. Our little mistress, Marjorie, tried to coax her with seed and groundsel, but in vain! She only grew worse, and my heart was sad as I looked at the little ball of green feathers perching there so silently. Then came the darkest day of my life, when I awoke in the morning to find my little love no longer by my side, and I saw something on the sandy floor of the cage which made me well-nigh die with anguish. Oh! would that I had died.

How our mistress wept when she came down to find one of her little love-birds lying dead, and I, the other, crying in sad, sad tones by her side. She loved us both so much, did Marjorie, and now she laid her head on the table and sobbed, and sobbed. By and by the hard-faced governess came in and told the child to dry her eyes and come to breakfast. The little girl obediently tried to wipe away the tears, and said, 'If I am good and do all you tell me, shall I go to Heaven and see my little birdie again?'

'Marjorie! how dare you talk like that! It is very wicked! You know perfectly well birds have no souls, and when they die, they die, and that is an end of them.'

Oh! hard, cruel words!

'That is an end of them,' she said. Did she mean that my little love was no more? That I should never, never see her again?

No souls? Ah! no, we have no *souls* like men; we have no intellect, that wondrous gift by which men can understand high and noble things, and are able to conceive beautiful ideas, in order that they may glorify their Maker, and help their fellow men. No, we have none of that; but still there is a *something* within us that makes us what we are—something, other than our bodies, which is, in fact, our very being. Shall that come to an end?

Once again I hopped round my little love and tried to call her back into what she was before. There were the same feathers, the same little beak, the same little claws, but she was not the same, nay, I should say she was not there at all. For that *something*, which was, in fact, her very self, peeped no longer from the eyes; they were still and glassy, and the little body was cold and motionless. They said she was dead. Ah! I saw it now; she was dead, because her little Life had gone, and it was that Life I had loved, not this cold mass of feathers. And I love it still; the Life within me, my very self, longs for her's, and it shall be with her again, oh! it *shall*! For surely Life cannot die! I understand not these things; I am only a poor, unhappy little love-bird; but still I feel that *something* in me that will live, and *must* live, for was it not placed there by the great Master of Life, and will He undo what He has done?

They have buried her now, and I am quite alone. I cannot sing, for she is not here to listen, and so I only sit on my perch, and long, and long for her, till my heart is well-nigh dead with longing!

Nay, little mistress, tempt me not with food; I cannot eat, for my Love is not here to share it with me.

It will soon be over now, this sad, sad waiting. 'Twill not be long before the Life within me will burst from this tired little body, which seems each hour to become more feeble. Oh! the joyful thought! To break from my prison and join that other Life I yearn for! I feel she is not far away, my little Love, even now, for as the body grows weaker,

the something within me seems to obtain a strange strength, or rather it penetrates my very weakness, for there have been moments when I felt a gentle presence by my side. And I knew that she was there.

Ah ! there it is again ! But hark ! What is this strange, sweet cooing ?

She is calling me ! Ah ! my little Love, my little Love, I come ! I come !

When Marjorie came down in the morning she found her second love-bird lying cold and stiff on his sandy floor.

Weep not, little maiden ! What are a pair of green love-birds, imprisoned in a cage, compared with two little Lives, free and happy, in the vast, vast universe ?

ELADOR.

A PROMISE FULFILLED.

In February last, at a sitting with Mr. Peters, I was suddenly addressed by a control who seemed for some few minutes to be entirely unknown to me, no name being given. There was great joy and elation expressed that age and pain had passed away and the grave had opened up to that ideal freedom which could only be called heaven. The delivery was in a deep-toned voice, and an appeal to the small gathering of friends present to live worthy lives was full of force and stirring emphasis. Turning to me, I was reminded of letters addressed to and received from this spirit before leaving the body, when I was a lone worker in my neighbourhood, and an alien in my views. With kindest reference to past intercourse and an admonition of courage, the address concluded with 'God understands,* but not before I had recognised Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten as the control.

The sequel of this is somewhat strange. Several months later, in reading the wonderful autobiography of Mrs. Britten, recently published as a memorial of her life work, I was reminded to search among my desk papers for her several letters to myself. Having found them I was interested to read them through again, and in so doing was startled to find an apparent explanation of the control in February in these words : 'If ever you can come to this cold-hearted Manchester, if alive I shall welcome you—if passed on higher, as I daily hope and expect—I will still greet you as the friend of Emma H. Britten.'

Is the above better explained as simply coincidence, or a purposeful manifestation ?
A. F. C.
Canterbury.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

Propaganda : A Suggestion.

SIR,—Considerable discussion has been going on in the columns of 'LIGHT' during the past few months with respect to various suggestions regarding the promulgation of the knowledge of Spiritualism. Some of your correspondents deprecated the free house-to-house distribution of literature, but I think there cannot be any objection to the following suggestion, viz., that those readers who are interested in 'propaganda work,' as it has been called, should quietly introduce and recommend 'LIGHT' to their friends and such inquirers as they may meet. 'LIGHT,' after all, is the best propagandist agency in existence, and if the offer that you made last year to supply 'LIGHT,' *post free*, for thirteen weeks for 2s. to new readers to induce them to become subscribers, still holds good, then, surely, the zealous ones could not do better than send you the name and address of one inquirer (more, if possible) with the necessary 2s., for the enlightenment of the reader ! A single copy is hardly likely to do very much in the way of educating the sceptic or arousing inquiry—but the reading of the paper regularly for three months would be much more likely to prove efficacious. While I admire the enthusiasm of the earnest propagandist, I am of opinion that this is a more practicable plan than any yet suggested, especially if he can induce the inquirer to order the paper himself, because most people value what they *buy* more than they do what is *given* to them.

LUX.

[The 'offer' referred to above still holds good.—ED.
'LIGHT']

* Her motto,

Is Spiritualism a Religion ?

SIR,—Referring to my letter of August 25th, in which I tried to show why Spiritualism is a science and not a religion, your correspondent, 'A. T.,' in your last issue, asks me, after the fashion of the wise Socrates, to give my definition of religion, which I shall attempt to do.

Religion is a system reposing on *speculations* about the Infinite and the Ideal, and satisfying the demands of the soul.

Science is the group of those systems which are dealing with *facts*, and meeting the longings of the intellect for always fuller knowledge.

Those two domains are often mixed, and it is no easy matter to draw the exact line of demarcation, hence the present controversy.

By necessity, *Man is a systematiser*. He finds in himself complicated feelings of love, reverence, and awe ; he builds lofty ideals of beauty, truth, and goodness, according to which, if he be true to his aspirations, he will live. In fact, he imagines a system of worship which we call *Religion*.

By necessity again, man examines, studies the conditions in which he lives and has his being, brings forth theories, compares them, catalogues facts, calls to his aid *experience*. He observes the same phenomena frequently recurring in well controlled conditions which, *à tort ou à raison*, he calls laws. The results attained are precise in so far as his finite understanding grasps them. This attained *knowledge* he places in systems which he groups together under the generic title-name of *science*.

For me Spiritualism is a branch of science because it has to deal with the study of certain phenomena, whose mechanism is still more or less unknown. After all, as says Tennyson :—

'Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be ;
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, oh Lord, art more than they.'

Spiritualism, or better *Spiritism*, as I understand it, is this part of the occult sciences which specially deals with intercommunion between dead (so-called) and living people, and tries to establish the laws according to which such intercourse is possible—and you call this Religion ! If you have a Spiritistic Religion, I don't see why you would not have an *Electrical Religion* or even a Religion of the Steam Engine.

Science has rendered possible intercourse between people living in far distant districts of the earth, but because beautiful messages can be exchanged at an exceedingly quick pace and by an unseen agent, called electricity, mysteriously running along a metallic thread, it does not follow that you can judiciously erect into a religious system the study and the practical application of that special branch of science which is called electricity.

I have spoken of danger to mind and body for those who are not very careful in dealing with Spiritism, and I am at a loss to understand on what ground your correspondent objects to my assertion, which, after all, is palpable enough. I leave him to find it out for himself, as I cannot abuse your generosity and space ; but allow me to point out that the danger to mind becomes acute when the *Spiritistic Science* is mistaken for a religious system. In this case you are apt to accept by faith the worst advice and the most misleading messages ever whispered or suggested by disincarnated evil-doers. As spiritistic messages, you well know, often take the form of spiritual advice, and many assist at our séances chiefly for the comfort they derive from them.

A year ago, in my private home circle, a spirit came to me assuming the rôle of my spiritual guide. Under his name I received the purest and noblest teaching a young man can be guided by. He was a Roman Catholic priest, living in the last century, and still holds the same belief, but on my query if he wanted to convert me, his answer was most emphatically, 'No. *Everyone is affected by faith in a different way and ascends to God through his own path.*'

At the same circle and with the same sitters, in whose good faith and honour I can well rely, another spirit frequently came—a female fiend, I might call her—'Malvina' by name, whose language was such that my friends were often obliged to break up the séance. A peculiarity, however, with 'Malvina' was that she used to predict, in an astonishing way, events (*but bad events*), and even made bold to give advice, *bad and practical* at the same time.

You understand that, if we had considered Spiritism a religion, the results, both for soul and mind, might have been disastrous.

For us, happily, it is but a scientific investigation from which we have certainly received pleasure and profit, that can be only enhanced by a genuine controversy leading us into *more light*,

EDOUARD ROMILLY.

Astrology.

SIR,—‘Man is a universe in miniature.’ How often we hear this said, but how little is it comprehended! We have organs, we have functions, and are continually drawing energy to each from an internal source somewhere. Where is this reservoir into which the human will dips its magnetic needle with which to engrave its destiny upon the palm, foot, face, and brain, and in every human bearing? The great Man of the heavens, according to ancient astrology, is an embodiment of individualised forces, from Aries the head, to Pisces the feet. Each group of organs of the brain is influenced or acted upon by vibrations from the planetary zones. According as thought travels to the zone of Mars, the organs of combativeness, time, destructiveness, and concentration are acted upon, and grow. Saturn sends thought to the organs of reason and firmness, and Venus to love, art, music and beauty. Jupiter accelerates veneration and benevolence, and Mercury, locality, memory, and construction. Urania spiritualises, gives hope and ideality, while Neptune brings friendship and truth, and the Sun makes strong the individual. Truth and Light are free to all, but they receive it first who are highest. Astrology is a science. It is founded upon fact. It has been proven by induction. It, too, must have definite rules. It has definite rules, and application brings added light, and proves its truth. The signs of the Zodiac, the planets and their relative meanings, in their varying movements and aspects, must be readily known as friends or enemies, as spiritualisers or begetters of spoil. Then will true intuition see the vibratory connection between the organs of man and the organs of the heavens.—Yours in the Love of Truth,

A. W. LUSHER.

Verification Wanted.

SIR,—Can any of your readers assist me to verify the following quotation, which is translated from the French and attributed to the late Professor Elliott Coues, President of the Psychic Congress at Chicago in 1893? I also wish to know what position Professor Coues held—what was he Professor of, and where? The quotation is as follows:—

‘Whether the soul can manifest after death or not, is a question of evidence; the evidence for this is numerous and conclusive and sufficient according to the ordinary rules of human evidence to establish the facts before any tribunal.

‘Such numerous cases of apparitions after death have been examined thoroughly by the Society for Psychical Research in America and England, that in my opinion the reality of apparitions is positively established.’—Translated from the French, attributed to Professor Elliott Coues, President of the Psychic Congress at Chicago.

H.A.D.

SOCIETY WORK.

STRATFORD—WORKMEN’S HALL, WEST HAM-LANE, E.—On Sunday last Mr. Ronald Brailey, after answering written questions from the audience, gave some very successful psychometric delineations. Mr. King will be with us next Sunday.—GEO. TAYLER GWINN.

THE FLEUR DE LYS PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, 260, MARE-STREET, HACKNEY.—The usual service on Friday, the 14th inst., was well attended, ‘Will Power’ being the president’s subject. A trance address and musical service next Friday, at 8 o’clock. Free, no collection.—F. M. D.

73, BECKLOW-ROAD, SHEPHERD’S BUSH.—On Sunday last the address by Mr. H. Brooks on ‘Is Spiritualism a Religion?’ led to an interesting discussion; many ideas were expressed, the general opinion being that Spiritualism is the truest religion yet revealed to mankind. On Sunday next, Mr. Macdonald, the Federation Missioner, will speak in Ravenscourt Park at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., and at the usual meeting place at 7 p.m.; also on Thursday evening, at 8 p.m.—C.

BATTERSEA SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, HENLEY-STREET, S.W.—The subject of the address by Mr. Davis last Sunday was ‘Investigation,’ based upon the text, ‘Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.’ Mr. Davis claimed that the powers for investigation into any subject are inherent in all people. The reason why so few people have decided opinions of their own is because they have been willing to accept those of others instead of investigating and proving things for themselves. He claimed that there is no cause where investigation is challenged more than in Spiritualism, and earnestly pleaded that all should be mentally free. Mr. Boddington gave a brief chairman’s address. On Sunday next, at 3 p.m., Lyceum, and meetings in Battersea Park and on Clapham Common; at 7 p.m., the usual workers. On Tuesday, at 6.30 p.m., Band of Hope. On Thursday, at 8.30 p.m., public circle. On Saturday, at 8.30 p.m., social evening.—YULE.

BARRY SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, ATLANTIC HALL, DOCK VIEW-ROAD, BARRY DOCK.—On September 11th, we spent a most pleasant evening with Mrs. Dowdall, whose guides gave an interesting address and splendid clairvoyant descriptions. On Sunday last, Mr. E. S. G. Mayo’s guides gave a powerful address, the subject chosen being ‘The Stone the Builders Rejected.’ The room was densely crowded.—E. J. T.

HACKNEY SOCIETY OF SPIRITUALISTS, MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD, MARE-STREET, N.E.—On Sunday last, a fine trance address was delivered through Mr. J. A. White upon the reading lesson: a portion of the 5th chapter of St. Matthew’s Gospel. Clairvoyance followed and many convincing tests were given; all descriptions but one were recognised at the time. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. Warner Clark will occupy the platform. On Wednesday, 26th inst., at 8 o’clock, Mr. Macdonald (National Federation) will address a public meeting at Manor Rooms. No circle on Thursday, September 27th.—O. H.

LEICESTER SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, LIBERAL CLUB LECTURE HALL.—On Sunday last Mr. H. E. Howes paid his first visit to this society. His morning address was on the words: ‘Here am I,’ in the course of which he related interesting experiences of impressions and clairvoyance. The evening subject, ‘The Philosophy of Spiritualism and the Teachings of Christ,’ was very clearly expounded. Very good clairvoyance was given after each address. Our old friend, Mr. H. Clark, very ably officiated as chairman. Speaker for next Sunday, at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m., Mrs. L. A. Peters (Manchester), inspirational speaker and clairvoyante.—ALFRED O. WHEATLEY, Hon. Sec.

CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT, SURREY MASONIC HALL, CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD, S.E.—At last Sunday morning’s service many people were regretfully turned from the doors through insufficient accommodation. The continuance of the series of evening addresses upon ‘Spirit Mysteries of the Bible’ attracts an increased number of attentive listeners. Unfortunately the success of the clairvoyance given at the evening service was not of the same measure as that of the morning, consequent upon the disturbed conditions of the atmosphere. Next Sunday, at 11 a.m., a public circle will be held; a hearty welcome to strangers; doors closed at 11.15 a.m. prompt; at 3 p.m., children’s school; at 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long’s guide will continue the series of addresses upon ‘Spirit Mysteries of the Bible.’—J. C.

WOLVERHAMPTON.—The Harvest Festival Services on Sunday last were crowned with success beyond the most sanguine expectations of our members. A few earnest souls made our little church beautiful, and as the generously-disposed had contributed largely with flowers, fruit, vegetables, corn, and honey, we were able to make a fine display. The congregations were large, and fully appreciated the artistic taste displayed, and responded liberally to our appeal for help towards the funds of the local hospital. Mrs. Clarke, of Nottingham, kindly sacrificed her fee for that fund, as also did Mr. Wollison in the afternoon, and the workers won the appreciation of the many who attended. Much praise is due to them for their zeal and the sacrifices made.—G. E. A.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—Great interest was manifested by a large audience on Sunday last in the replies to questions given by the inspirers of Mr. E. W. Wallis. Familiar matters concerning the philosophy of spirit intercourse were presented in so lucid and able a manner that it gave them a freshness which chained the attention of all. Many new thoughts also found adequate expression. A reading by Mr. Wallis contributed much to the interest aroused, and the able chairmanship of Mr. Alfred Peters, who officiated (at a moment’s notice), was thankfully appreciated. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. Peters will give clairvoyant descriptions, and the friends attending are requested to be in their seats as early as possible after 6.30 p.m.—L. H.

STOKE NEWINGTON SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON-ROAD (Near Alexandra Theatre).—An overflowing audience assembled last Sunday at this hall. Owing to Madame Montague’s indisposition our valued friend and co-worker, Miss MacCreadie, came to our assistance, and her control, ‘Sunshine,’ announced that she was going to give successful clairvoyance, and this proved correct; of eighteen descriptions given, only two remained unrecognised at the close of the meeting. We hereby tender Miss MacCreadie our best thanks for her services. Miss Florence Morse rendered the song ‘The Better Land’ with taste, and in her usual good voice. On Sunday next, September 23rd, at 7 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis will deliver an inspirational address upon ‘Conversion, in the Light of Spiritualism,’ and will afterwards give a few clairvoyant descriptions. On Sunday, September 30th, an address will be given by Mr. George Spriggs upon ‘Materialisation, Transfiguration, and other remarkable Experiences.’ We hope to have a very large audience to meet this valued worker and medium.—A. CLEGG, 18, Fleetwood-street, Stoke Newington, N.