

# Light:

*A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.*

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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

No. 1,116.—VOL. XXII. [Registered as]

SATURDAY, MAY 31, 1902.

[a Newspaper.]

PRICE TWOPENCE.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

We see no reason to qualify our oft-repeated confession of faith in the natural immortality of the human spirit: but we hope we are very far from the passionate confidence which leads an American Methodist Magazine to say that 'a pious shudder runs over the Christian Church as it reads this erroneous, diabolical, and damaging theory that the soul is not immortal.' We certainly decline 'diabolical': our good orthodox friends make far too free with the Diaboloi.

The person who has stirred up this black draught is one of the leading ministers of New York, Dr. Charles H. Parkhurst, who faces the question with commendable frankness. He says:—

It appears to be imagined that if one can get past physical death without his soul ceasing to exist, the everlasting duration of his soul's existence is thereby insured. That is taking a good deal for granted.

So if—and there is nothing to disprove it—it is the intention of Nature that a soul should reach that spiritual longevity expressed by the word 'eternal,' the soul will have to pay for the superb prerogative by fulfilling the conditions, and taking good care of its spiritual health.

There is nothing in Scripture or in things that encourages us to feel that a soul can be kept from dying any more than a body, unless it is taken care of. There is no warrant from Bible or from Nature for supposing that a soul carries within itself a policy of insurance against its own eventual obliteration. We may be immortal, but if we prove to be such, it will be because we have succeeded in being such.

We like this way of putting it, anyhow, even if we do not agree with it. The one thing needed is, to escape from the arbitrary and to take our stand on law.

We note with interest that the Magazine just quoted says of Dr. Parkhurst:—

The Christian Church will await with anxiety to see whether the noted divine, regardless of his profundity of learning, will be tried for heresy or not. The only way that he could escape trial and be unfrocked in the Methodist Church would be by proof of his insanity and irresponsibility.

We suppose this is one of our modern ways of inducing the heathen to say: 'See how these Christians love one another!'

The April number of the 'Transactions of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society' contains the substance of a series of Lectures by Mr. A. P. Sinnett, on 'Obscure problems of Karma and Re-birth.' These Lectures largely relate to the laws which determine sex and nationality. Mr. Sinnett, of course, traces these on the lines which determine reincarnation, and holds that 'the Ego' is guided in its re-births by its needs and capacities, now male and

now female, and now Roman or Briton, according to the needs or uses of the Ego.

Mr. Sinnett holds that all law is the outcome of conscious will 'residing in some specific Beings—however little resembling the entities that make up humanity—on some level of Nature.' The theory which follows is noteworthy: 'In one way, therefore, the question whether any given result ensues from the operation of a law or from the intervention of an exalted Will, is meaningless. The exalted Will is the law. But there may be Will within Will; the broad, predominant decree, subject to modification by the (relatively) subordinate agencies employed in carrying it out.'

'The Christian Register' faces, with commendable courage, the greatest, because the most spiritually vital question of the day. It says:—

Out of all the diversities and controversies concerning religion in our time, an issue is slowly emerging which will make all other questions seem unimportant. Is any religion given by divine revelation and supernatural authority? If so, which religion has been so given, what are its credentials, and what is its authority? When it comes to the final test, there is no escape from the most extreme position of the Catholic Church, or a total rejection of it. Revealed religion is infallible, if God knows the truth and knows how to tell it. A religion given by supernatural authority is not to be neglected or resisted. It has the right to command the allegiance of every human being. Outside of this religion there is no truth that can be set over against it, and beyond its jurisdiction no human being has the right to live, or, living, to choose his own course of action. Under the claim of supernatural authority there can be no room for doubt, there can be no liberalism and no liberty. There never has been a time in the history of the world when this question could clear itself of all the accidents of tradition and belief; but the time is at hand when the churches and the theologians must decide whether religious truth is to be sought as all other truth is, and its authority be that which all truth possesses, or whether it is to be received as a gift, to which nothing can be added and from which nothing can be subtracted.

There are Spiritualists who try to evade that great question, or who actually think that it does not concern their Spiritualism. This is a profound mistake. Spiritualism will come up with a blank wall, or will die of atrophy before it reaches even that, unless it strikes out for the direct route between God and Man, and flanks all the barriers and finalities set up by those who, in every age, fancied that the Divine Spirit had spoken His last word to them, and made them custodians of all He had to say.

It is the Spiritualist who might lead the van in testifying that Inspiration never ceases, but that the living God is for ever the Guide and Teacher of living Men.

All over the world may be heard at least the first breathings of the music of the Religion of Humanity, the true note of this new century. We need not attack the cruel creeds of the dark ages: they are shrivelling: they are vanishing. What is needed is the affirmation of the larger Faith and Hope: and this affirmation is audible in

all the churches. Here, for example, is Principal Grant, of Queen's University, Kingston, Canada, who, though very cautious and very strongly theological, yet calls for a common ground, 'Christocentric' but available for all. As to this common ground, he says that we must be guided by the Christian consciousness of nineteen centuries, common to all the churches, and carrying with it the doctrine that Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecies, and that he 'belongs to a higher order of being than the merely human'; and yet he concludes that the great churches of the Reformation will, as preliminary to organic union, rewrite their confessions, adapt them to our own time, and find out the extent of the common ground on which Christians now stand. He says, bluntly enough:—

What is required in this work is not the elimination of phrases and chapters, or the addition of supplementary articles and understandings, but testimonies of the Church's faith, written from the new point of view which we all occupy. The organising principle of the twentieth century confession will be, not the sovereignty, but the fatherhood of God; not His secret purpose, but His revealed will, that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. This central revelation of God will dominate the view taken of man's nature, place and duty. It will be recognised that love is mightier than, because inclusive of, faith; that the note of every true Church must be hope; and that every work by which man is benefited is Christian work.

That well contents us, though we do not agree with many of Principal Grant's conservatism.

A writer in 'The Banner of Light' says:—

The various Methodist sects, semi-sects, and sub-sects of the Australian Commonwealth have just recently held a great meeting in Melbourne, resulting in the religious amalgamation of Methodists, Wesleyans, Free Methodists, Bible Christians, &c. In this ecclesiastical gathering of 'saints,' English Churchmen, Presbyterians, Baptists, and Congregationalists were invited as sympathising and fraternal participants. But Roman Catholics, Seventh-day Adventists, Christians (Disciples), and Unitarians were left out 'in the cold'; and strange to say—strangest of all—the Spiritualists, the only religionists who demonstrate the future existence of the soul and prove themselves true believers in Christ by having the promised 'signs' and 'gift of healings,' 'gift of tongues,' and 'discerning of spirits' (1 Cor. xii. 10), were utterly excluded as participants in this brotherly union of long-estranged Methodists.

We admit the crudeness of such exclusions, and their almost grotesque unfairness, but we must be patient. It is something to the good that these little fragments have united. Besides, the exclusions mentioned are not altogether unreasonable. Methodists and their theological relations, in their hymns, prayers and discourses, could not help setting forth notions which few Spiritualists could enjoy or honestly condone.

#### SPIRITUAL PRAYERS

(From many shrines).

O God, our heavenly Father, to the direction of Thy providence we entirely commit ourselves. Safe under Thy protection, and happy in Thy favour, we would cheerfully follow where Thou pleasest to conduct us. Deliver us, we beseech Thee, from the snares of prosperity and adversity. Suffer us not to forget Thee in our abundance, or to question Thy faithfulness in our distress. In health and in sickness, in life and in death, may we lift up our souls unto Thee, evermore rejoicing in Thine eternal goodness, and always thankful for the blessings we receive; and may we so pass through the changing scenes of this present world, that we may depart in peace, and awake in the world of light beyond the veil, where Thy believing and trusting children will find their true and everlasting home. Amen.

#### A SPIRITUALIST MAY MEETING.

On Thursday, May 22nd, a convention was held in South-place Institute, Finsbury, London, E.C., at 3 p.m., under the auspices of the Union of London Spiritualists. The President, Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn, welcomed the large audience and expressed the hope that although the meeting was the first of its kind it would not be the last. He then called upon Mr. E. W. Wallis to read a paper on 'The Work Before Us.'

MR. E. W. WALLIS said that he did not speak for others, but would present what he himself thought was 'The Work Before Us,' as Spiritualists. Briefly, it might be summed up in a few words: 'To make everybody a Spiritualist.' He claimed that Spiritualists were such from conviction, and believed that others would like to share, and would be benefited by, the knowledge that 'There is no Death,' and they therefore worked to make the truth known to those who were in doubt and uncertainty, in grief and darkness. He thought it was necessary to take steps to discover and develop more mediums, and recommended that home circles should be formed for that purpose, as there could be no manifestations of spirit presence and identity without mediums. 'Many people who think they believe in immortality are practically materialists, and repudiate the phenomena of Spiritualism as impossible, and the work before us is to combat materialism by obtaining evidences of spirit identity.' Spirit manifestations proved that man is a spirit now, possessing spiritual attributes, hence the whole realm of spiritual possibilities comes within our province as Spiritualists. He regarded Spiritualism as the 'science, philosophy, and religion of the spirit'; it included all that pertained to the spiritual nature of man, and proved his continued conscious and progressive existence after death. It, therefore, appealed to and aroused in him the sense of spiritual relationship to the Infinite. He claimed that Spiritualists share with the whole race the ideals, intuitions, and longings which are involved in the religious consciousness; that the knowledge which Spiritualism gives of the continuity of life and consequences (and therefore of individual accountability) made it a *moral force and a religious teacher*, and he suggested that Spiritualists should consider whether they could not agree upon certain philosophical general statements which would emphasise that fact, avoiding dogmatism and leaving the way open for future developments. He thought that the era of antagonism had nearly passed and that the work of *winning* others by showing them the comfort and help that Spiritualism would be to them and of uniting spiritually-minded people in sympathy and service for the good of all, was the most pressing need of the hour. Many Spiritualists thought they should leave their children free to think for themselves, but the speaker thought it was incumbent upon parents to teach the children the truth as they knew it, and help them to think clearly and act wisely and lovingly. The little ones could not grow up without being influenced by *some* one, and there were many agencies at work to teach and capture them; hence he thought that a very necessary branch of the work before the Spiritualist was to exert home influence by example as well as precept; to encourage the Children's Lyceum movement, and to establish training colleges for the education and preparation of mediums and speakers in those principles of truth and goodness which would strengthen their characters and help them to unfold their own spiritual powers. Mr. Wallis referred to the fact that in the early days of the movement women were to the front as advocates of the new truth, and he thought that Spiritualism has always been identified with the work for the emancipation of women, and trusted that in the future they would be encouraged rather than repressed.

As regarded organisation, he was averse to red-tape and thought that 'constitutions' were frequently fetters for willing workers 'in love' with truth. He did not care greatly for *methods*, but he did care for the *spirit* of loving service; then the external expression would naturally follow; and if Spiritualists were to organise for work, then he thought they might have Spiritual Temples everywhere, and that the most capable, sympathetic, spiritually-minded and brainy men and women should be

sustained as teachers. The 'services' should be bright, optimistic, and helpful; the 'after' 'communion service' should be lifted above the plane of fortune-telling, and mediumship should be employed for spiritual purposes. While it was wise to welcome the stranger, the members of the household should not be forgotten; they should be made to feel that the Temple was their home, where they could both give and receive help and good. He said that President W. R. Harper, lecturing in Chicago on 'The Religion of the Future,' had recently declared that: 'It will be simple. It must be reasonable. It must stand the test of investigation. It must make no false and pretentious claims. It must be a religion of toleration. It must be characterised by idealism, or the artistic soul cannot endure it. It must be ethical. It must also be a religion capable of furnishing comfort in time of trouble, for this is what art and science cannot do, and this, after all, is the greatest demand of the human soul.' In my opinion, said Mr. Wallis, that is an admirable description of what Spiritualism *is* and *does*, and the work before us is to demonstrate that fact to the world by our personal example and influence, and by our collective efforts to realise the ideal and disseminate the glad gospel of Life and Immortality brought to light by angel ministry.

Mrs. H. Boddington then sang a solo entitled 'Something sweet to think of.'

MR. J. J. MORSE, after complimenting Mrs. Boddington on her sweet singing, said that he thought this was the first time in the history of South-place Institute that its walls had resounded to words in favour of Spiritualism, and he would like to capture it for Spiritualism. He had been pleasantly disappointed by the address of Mr. Wallis, as it dealt with points which he had not anticipated, and in a manner with which he in the main agreed. Mediumship was indeed the bed-rock of Spiritualism, as without mediums there could be no spirit manifestations. Thirty years ago, time and attention were devoted to the development of mediums, but to-day most people are in too great a hurry for results. But developing circles should be private, not public, and, where possible, under the direction of experienced Spiritualists. In his opinion no one had any right to devote time and energy, and take up the time and thought of others for mediumistic development, from frivolous or personal motives; it ought to be sought with the earnest intention to use it for the good of others. He was inclined to doubt the advisability of attempting any declaration of principles, as every one must interpret what comes to his consciousness in his own way. Formulated bases of belief necessarily aroused criticism, and it was better to have a minimum of occasion for dissension and a maximum of liberty for all. He thought that we were impressing the community with our truths; but while he recognised the need for educated workers, he was afraid the movement was not yet prepared to pay for cultured service. It is generally true that we get what we want, and where there is parsimony in the pews there will be mediocrity in the pulpit. It was necessary to recognise that societies exist for the education of the people in the glorious truths of Spiritualism, and to provide conditions of sweetness and goodness congenial to intelligent spirits both in and out of the body.

THE CHAIRMAN explained that the Union of London Spiritualists aimed at bringing together all the Spiritualist societies in London, for work of a general character, but it did not interfere with the local work of the societies, and he was much pleased with the success of the present meeting.

On the motion of Mr. WILL PHILLIPS, of Manchester, seconded by Mr. G. COLE, a hearty vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Wallis for his able address.

At 5 p.m., a large number of friends adjourned to Mr. A. Glendinning's Apple Tree Restaurant for tea, and at 7 p.m. a large and enthusiastic audience assembled for the evening meeting.

After an organ recital by Mr. A. Clegg, the CHAIRMAN (Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn) expressed his extreme gratification that the efforts of the Union of London Spiritualists had been blest with such signal success; he felt safe in affirming that Spiritualist May Meetings would become an annual fixture.

MRS. H. BODDINGTON spoke on 'Is Spiritualism a Religion?' and affirmed that it is the universal religion of humanity. Her speech was bright and clever, and appealed directly to the hearts of her hearers.

THE REV. J. PAGE HOPPS said that he was used to meetings of all kinds and fairly sensitive to the note which prevailed, and on the present occasion he felt that this was essentially one of the happiest meetings he had ever attended. For some three years he had been trying to induce Spiritualists to have a great central gathering in London on a Sunday once a year, and he still hoped for the accomplishment of that project. He then delivered a very happy address with all his customary eloquence and feeling, and claimed that Spiritualism had a living relationship to everything that concerned the well-being of humanity.

MR. WILL PHILLIPS, editor of 'The Two Worlds,' spoke forcibly and well on 'Spiritualism Militant.' He did not think the fight was over by any means; it had only changed somewhat, and new methods were being employed, but the same bad old spirit existed and had to be resisted and overcome.

MR. ROBERT KING gave a useful and interesting address on 'Clairvoyance,' and in response to those who said they would believe if they could see, he urged that sight depends upon our ability to take up and register the vibrations of the ether, and that clairvoyance was capable of being developed if one trained for it along certain lines with sufficient perseverance.

MR. E. W. WALLIS spoke briefly and well on 'The Religion of the Spirit.'

MR. J. J. MORSE dealt with the 'Rise and Progress of Spiritualism,' especially in Great Britain, and gave some very interesting statistics. Thirty years ago the societies of the land could be counted on the fingers of the hand; now there are some two hundred and forty meetings held on Sundays, and a national body had existed for thirteen years with which eighty-one societies were now affiliated. The Yorkshire Union had forty affiliated societies, and the London Union nine, while the London Spiritualist Alliance occupied a unique position, with a large and influential membership. He estimated that, including those who openly or occasionally attended the meetings, and the larger number who knew all about it but kept in the background, there would be about a quarter of a million people who were actually Spiritualists, and there were a still greater number who were interested in the subject. The Children's Lyceum movement had grown since 1869, when there were but two Lyceums, and now there are 136, with a total of 6,000 officers and members, a result which is largely due to the zeal of Mr. Alfred Kitson. Mr. Morse enumerated the different journals and magazines which had been published in the interest of the movement, and paid a high tribute to the earnestness and ability of their several editors.

A motion, proposed by the International Corresponding Society, was then adopted, wishing Mr., Mrs., and Miss Morse God-speed on their journey to the Antipodes, and extending greetings to our brethren who may be visited by Mr. Morse.

MRS. WALLIS gave an earnest and impressive address on 'Why are we Spiritualists?'

MR. D. J. DAVIS gave an impassioned and eloquent speech. He contended that it was a false charge to say that Spiritualists were a Christless people, as some opponents did. Spiritual phenomena such as we accept and experience were the very backbone of the life work of Jesus, and Spiritualism would rescue the New Testament from those who misrepresented it to the world.

THE CHAIRMAN appealed for all to *work*: there was much to be done. He felt it was a high vocation to be a Spiritualist, and asked those who would pledge themselves 'to live henceforth to help mankind' to hold up the right hand, and a fine show of hands followed.

A solo was sweetly rendered by Mrs. Sinclair during the evening.

The meeting, which lasted three hours, was a most enthusiastic one, all the speeches being heartily applauded and the interest well maintained from start to finish. A cordial vote of thanks to the workers and the able chairman terminated the proceedings. The collections realised £11.

## THE FRENCH PSYCHIC PRESS.

The March-April number of 'Annales des Sciences Psychiques' contains an article by Colonel de Rochas on cases of long fasts. He introduces his subject by saying that one obstacle which indisposes students to study psychic phenomena is a tendency of the human mind to regard as impossible all facts with which it has not gained familiarity by their frequent repetition: 'I have, therefore,' he adds, 'considered it a useful task to point out that in the greater number of branches of human knowledge there are misty regions which official theories are not adequately capable of illuminating.'

He then relates in detail cases recorded in history of fasts undertaken voluntarily and fasts resulting from disease. The latter are most astonishing. One is the case of a young woman called Josephine Durand, who, in the year 1790, was studied by *savants* of Geneva. Their report was inserted in the 'Bibliothèque Britannique.' When they reported on her case she had been four months without food or drink and her jaws were convulsively closed. A little liquid was occasionally, at long intervals, passed between them through an opening caused by the absence of a tooth. This case is given in full. Her patient resignation is particularly recorded. She had been ill for four years, always on her back, suffering at times from the sense of hunger and thirst; her intelligence was unimpaired, her memory was good, and her character inspired admiration. 'At the time of our visit,' say the reporters, 'she had been fifteen days without water and did not complain of thirst; sometimes two or three months pass without her feeling this craving.' Her hearing and sense of smell were very keen, also her sense of touch, but her sight was gone. She did not want them to pity her, saying that she was happier than many others.

Another similar case is quoted on the authority of M. Gaston Méry (1900). This patient, Rose Savary, neither sleeps nor eats. She greeted M. Gaston Méry with a smile, and he seems to have been much impressed by the gentleness and grace of the white-faced woman. He writes: 'Rose Savary's face is not pale: it is white. It is the reflection upon her diaphanous flesh of an absolutely pure soul.' She has been on her bed since 1883. She can digest nothing. She has been examined in Paris by great physicians, who have attempted in vain to cure her. For seventeen years her illness has lasted; it is not stated for how long she has completely been without food. After referring to many other curious fasts, Colonel de Rochas concludes thus:—

'In conclusion, the human machine, like the steam engine, can exist long without food if no exterior cause interfere to destroy it. If the machine does not work, as in lethargic sleep, it can persist for long. This is proved at the present moment by Marie Boyenval, who has slept at Thénelles (Aisne) for nineteen years.'

There is a short article by Dr. Hahn in this same number on 'Medical Applications of Electrode.' Since sending to 'LIGHT' a *résumé* of articles which appeared on this subject more than a year ago, we have looked in vain for any further notice in foreign journals of this discovery of M. Rychnowski, and we hoped this article might give further information of interest. Dr. Hahn says, however, in reply to inquiries he has received on the subject, that he is not in a position at present to make any definite statements as to the results of experiments with electrode, but he inserts a letter in which M. Rychnowski claims that electrode is capable of important applications medically.

Principal Oliver Lodge's presidential address is translated in full in this number of the 'Annales.'

H. A. D.

CORRECTION. In a translation from the 'Caffaro,' of Genoa, kindly contributed by a correspondent, and published in 'LIGHT' of May 3rd, the authorship of the book (Libro d'Oro) entitled, 'The Duties of Man,' was erroneously attributed to Pius IX. We have since learned that it was really the work of Mazzini.

## FRAUDS AT SÉANCES.

After Mr. Colville's address in St. James's Hall, on the 15th inst., a gentleman offered a few criticisms of his remarks upon the possibility of finding fraud at materialising seances. I should like to add a few words to those then spoken by me, hoping that the gentleman referred to will understand that I am saying nothing personal to him in the following remarks.

As an investigating psychic of many years' standing and one who is not afraid of saying that she believes absolutely in spirit-survival and spirit communication after the change called death, I should like to say with all the strength of my absolute conviction that I *know* nothing has been more disastrous to the cause of Spiritualism than this most extraordinary and fatal idea held by a minority, that to admit any fraud—however flagrant—amongst those who call themselves Spiritualists, is to be disloyal to your fellow Spiritualists.

The gentleman to whom I have referred said to me that at any rate a spiritualistic platform was the last place from which such remarks should be made. I pointed out to him that I considered it, on the contrary, *the very first place* from which such wise and temperate warnings as those Mr. Colville gave us, should emanate. No one can deprecate, *nor* *thus deprecate*, more strongly than I have done, the ignorance of sitters who scent fraud at every turn and find it where greater experience convinces them, later, of their own errors of judgment. Unfortunately, ignorant people *always* talk first and talk loudest, and the wish to be a little 'smarter' than their neighbours and to show that *they* possess the true scientific spirit and cannot be taken in, leads to many most unfair accusations, which simply arise from the ignorance and inexperience of the investigator. Later, perhaps, he has the grace to recant, but by that time the mischief has been done and some absolutely honest medium has had a black mark put against his or her name which it is exceedingly difficult to live down.

But we are *all* at the mercy of fools as well as of knaves in this world, and spiritualistic mediums are not the only people who suffer from ignorance, as much as from malice, in their fellow-creatures.

But when a man of such extensive experience as Mr. Colville—a *practical psychic himself, to whom the various phases of mediumship are known through personal experience*—tells us honestly that we may find impostors in séance rooms as elsewhere, and that it is well to be prepared for this possibility and, *therefore, not unduly discouraged by it*, I think we ought to feel exceedingly grateful to him for his plain-speaking on what is not, unfortunately, a very popular subject. For I think the detection and putting down of *real* fraud ought to be as popular amongst us as the *supposed* detection of fraud, where our own ignorance alone is at fault, should be unpopular.

Unfortunately, I have never heard such a warning given in public—no matter how reliable the source from which it came—without an instant protest from someone in the room. I have no doubt that many were present at Mr. Colville's address who felt as grateful to him as I did. In fact, one gentleman—a perfect stranger—thanked me for what I said, and added that I had 'voiced the general feeling of the audience.' I only trust it was so; but, as usual, such remarks at a spiritualistic meeting were deprecated. A banker might just as well explain that he could not possibly prosecute publicly a defaulting clerk, because it would bring disrepute upon the bank to know that such clerks had ever been within its walls! Again and again people interested in psychic matters have given me as a reason for not joining either the London Spiritualist Alliance or the Society for Psychical Research, that the latter was too hide-bound, and the former too much afraid of demanding evidence or of speaking out where undeniable fraud was in question.

I do not say that I endorse this last opinion, but I do say that it will be very difficult for us to refute it, when we are told, as I was told by a gentleman in Mr. Colville's audience, that a spiritualistic platform is not the proper place from which to denounce fraudulent practices amongst 'mediums.'

whether the latter have any real power at all or are mere vulgar impostors.

E. KATHARINE BATES.

[There is no ground whatever for the suggestion that the London Spiritualist Alliance 'is afraid of speaking out where undeniable fraud is in question.' And the same disavowal, we confidently believe, applies with equal force to the great body of Spiritualists.—Ed. 'LIGHT.']

#### MODERN SYBILS IN FRANCE.

'L'Echo du Merveilleux,' for May, contains a few remarkable predictions made by different clairvoyants some years ago, and which the disaster in Martinique appears to verify. Two of these prophetic statements were made by a couple of seeresses who live and work under the protection of the Church in a small country town called Tilly-sur-Seulles (Calvados). They are known to be Marie Martel, religious ecstatic, and Louise Polinière, normal clairvoyante. In 1897 both of them made noteworthy predictions, probably influenced by the psychological effect induced through the terrible Charity Bazaar fire in Paris, and which gave rise to many cryptic utterances on the part of mediums and seers. Marie Martel at that time was known to have said:—

'The holocaust at the Charity Bazaar is but a first warning. If France does not grow penitent, another warning far more terrible will be given her. This will be an awful catastrophe in which fire again will play the chief rôle, and many more people will succumb than in the Bazaar calamity. If after this later sign man does not return to God, then further punishments will begin.'

Louise Polinière prophesied in still more precise terms. She said:—

'I see details concerning the second catastrophe. . . People in contortions engulfed in flames. . . An eruption appears to accompany this event. The name of the place or country where this happens begins with Mar—'

The third *voyante* to predict disasters which seem to foreshadow the one in Martinique, was Mlle. Coüedon, who some years ago was the sensation of Paris. Her oracular utterances at that time ran to some length in a species of doggerel rhyme, the sense being something as follows:—

'This fire (Bazaar) is nothing to what will happen. I see long crape veils—hundreds of them. One has no idea how terrible will be the next disaster. Human beings are roasted alive. I see more than a thousand, and near by I see bodies transfixed as though frozen to stone.'

'When the earth trembles a war between three nations is at hand.'

'Volcanos will become active, and from one high mountain surrounded by the sea something will happen. It seems to burst. Sulphur falls. This will take place in a foreign country. A city will be engulfed. All falls to pieces and the sea sweeps away the débris.'

Concerning the sad fatality which happened to the latest flying machine inventor, M. Severo, Madame Lay-Fonvielle, the well-known medium, predicted this misfortune on December 15th of last year, as follows:—

'And then, dear me, I see a man who wishes to raise himself from the ground, and fly with a machine. You will understand—he will fall—he is killed. It will cause a great stir.'

This same lady, on being asked what foreign sovereign would visit France in 1902, replied that she saw the Shah of Persia would arrive. He is now, or soon will be, at Contrexeville. J. S.

MR. W. J. COLVILLE.—On Sunday, May 25th, Mr. W. J. Colville resumed work in London after a brief but highly-successful trip to Jersey, where he delivered eight lectures during four days to large and highly-appreciative audiences. The advanced ideas proclaimed were quite a revelation to the Channel Islanders, and have provoked much thought and newspaper correspondence. Mr. Colville speaks on Friday, May 30th, at 10.30 a.m., at 22, University-street, W.C., and at 8 p.m., at 10, Cheniston-gardens, Kensington. He then goes for another provincial tour prior to commencing his last term of work in London on Sunday, June 15th, to terminate with his departure for America in July. All letters, &c., should be addressed 22, University-street, W.C.

#### THE BLIND CLAIRVOYANTE.

On Tuesday evening, May 20th, a number of friends assembled at the home of Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Wallis, at Finchley, to meet Miss A. Chapin, the blind clairvoyant and clairaudient medium, of New York, and her adopted sister, Miss E. L. Wightman. After a pleasant and interesting conversation with Miss Chapin in reference to her ability to see clairvoyantly, Mr. Wallis said that the guests of the evening came with letters of introduction from Mr. Harrison D. Barrett, president of the National Association of Spiritualists of America, who spoke of them 'as recognised workers in our cause in the metropolis of America,' and also from his friend Mr. J. Moorey, of New York; and it always gave him and Mrs. Wallis pleasure to welcome fellow mediums, and he trusted that the ladies would have enjoyable experiences during their visit to London. Miss Chapin replied briefly, and referred to the pleasant time that they had spent in Germany, and said that they hoped to be able to do good work in London for the cause which was so dear to their hearts. She then proceeded to give descriptions of several well-known deceased Spiritualists, and referred to their association with friends still on this side whose names were also given, in most instances correctly. Several other spirits were described in respect to whom inquiries will be made, and where possible their messages will be delivered.

#### JACOB BOEHME'S PHILOSOPHY.

In your issue of May 17th, Madame de Steiger wrote a notice of Mrs. Penny's introduction to 'Boehme's Philosophy,' in which occurred this sentence: 'I have no doubt, however, that the present unhappy trend of thought, that believes in an automatic evolution for good, and doubts the existence of any evil *per se*, except as a phantasy of the imagination, will object.'

Your readers will no doubt be pleased if the writer will explain further as to why the belief in an automatic evolution is an unhappy one, for some of us consider that the evolution of man is as certain as the sunlight, and that the biological development of man will progress as time permits or compels him—that this planet will in the distant future be a heaven of light, and not always be the disreputable place for man to live on that it now is.

If there are, however, any dangers ahead that we ought to guard against, it is well that we should know of them, and, therefore, I ask the above-named writer to kindly inform us.

O. H. D.

#### CURE BY ABSENT TREATMENT.

We have received the following expression of gratitude from a lady resident on the Continent:—

'Some time ago I desired to consult a lady doctor with reference to my daughter's state of health, and you kindly forwarded the address of Dr. Ellen Colyer, to whom I wrote. Her reply was that she had given up the practice of medicine, and in its place had taken up "mental healing," and if I felt disposed to try that system for my daughter she would treat her on the psychological plane. My daughter accepted, and the result has been most satisfactory. Dr. Ellen Colyer has never seen my daughter, and it is marvellous how such a desirable change has been effected, both moral and physical, and I wish to express my deep gratitude for the success of her treatment. I thank you very much for sending such a help to me, and I would be glad for you to make this public for the benefit of those who do not understand and cannot believe in absent treatment.'

THE INFINITE.—'Under the starlit sky one perceives the unknown that exists within one's self fraternise mysteriously with the unknown which exists outside of self. This is the sublime announcement of death, to catch hold of the Infinite, to realise for one's self also a necessary Immortality. This is but a suggestion; enough, perhaps, to testify that, "Truly all men are to an unspeakable degree brothers."—VICTOR HUGO.

OFFICE OF 'LIGHT,' 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE,  
LONDON, W.C.  
SATURDAY, MAY 31st, 1902.

## Light,

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

PRICE TWOPENCE WEEKLY.

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.

### CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY.

It is difficult,—for some it is practically impossible,—to rid the mind of settled convictions and treat a great subject as an open question. As a rule, we believe because we hope, or because we shrink from one conclusion and take refuge more or less willingly in the opposite conclusion, often with pain. Some indeed hire themselves out to the hard taskmaster, known as 'Common-Sense,' and affirm or deny at command: but they are a small and dry minority, and seldom count for much: for beliefs, especially in relation to the unseen things, must always have a hundredfold more to do with imagination, longing, intuition and affection than with that crawler on the rind usually called 'Common-Sense.'

Belief in persistent life beyond the body's collapse is a thrilling case in point. 'Common-Sense' will have none of it: for 'Common-Sense' is simply a synthesis of our senses, as touch, taste, smell; and opinion based thereon: and, in turn, it has declined to believe most of the things that science has contrived to prove: and it is quite likely that, as time goes on, poor 'Common-Sense' will have to be no longer life's architect, musician and guide, but hodbearer, music-stand and umbrella, while the developed spiritual faculties take command and teach us what to sing and where to go.

It is in the region of this reflection that we shall find the major explanation of the rise of the belief in conditional immortality, or, may we add? of the denial to some of continued existence after death. A late writer in 'The Christian Register,' discussing a certain amount of excitement in the United States on this subject, says:—

When Dr. Parkhurst breaks loose from the doctrines of his church, and asserts the probability or possibility of extinction for human beings who have not cared for their souls, he is escaping from the horrors of the Calvinistic hell. He is shutting out from his imagination the cries of lost souls doomed under an implacable justice to torments that are eternal. It is a relief to a sensitive nature, never forgetful of the woes of others, to be able to say with any assurance of faith, It may be that the woes will not endure. When it becomes certain that they work no good, when the wicked soul is incorrigible and no doom lies before it but hopeless degradation and endless misery, then it is better that its days should be numbered. It is better that God and righteous human beings should be released from unavailing sympathy with the sorrows of those who lie in darkness, cursing their fate and incapable of repentance. As a half-way house between the old doctrine and the new, it is very likely that belief in conditional immortality may be sought as a refuge by large numbers, perhaps the majority of Christian people.

We very much doubt that suggestion as to 'the majority of Christian people.' As this writer points out, 'No argument and no evidence has ever been produced conclusive enough to hold the ground against the stubborn but generous instincts of the human heart. What Lincoln said, the people say, "it must be all or none." Mr. Gladstone, on the other hand, strange to say, seemed to strongly lean towards conditional immortality, but, in his case, it is fairly clear that an intense feeling as to the destructive tendency of sin dominated his other emotions, and constrained him to

see the possibility of a sort of spiritual suicide. And though, as we said at the start, many will find it difficult to contemplate this possibility, the thing is perfectly arguable. For our own part, we do not accept it, but we are conscious that, in not accepting it, we are falling back upon certain emotions, intuitions, hopes and confidences which have to take care of themselves as best they can.

And yet, after all, is there not a Common-Sense of our emotions, intuitions, hopes and confidences as well as of our bodily senses? and are not these at least as valid as those? The senses, we know, report nothing as it really is. Every sense, in fact, reports everything as in a foreign tongue, and it has to be translated by the mind; and, indeed, the mind is as much creator as translator, turning tremours into colours, music, odours, flavours and temperatures. But the mind itself seems only an instrument, subject and reporting to the master of the house who co-ordinates, contrasts, and understands. Well then, if the master of the house, using his own central reason (a blend, let us say, of emotions, intuitions, hopes and confidences), concludes that every man is on pilgrimage, and will sooner or later arrive, as the king has decreed, one would think that this conclusion has high value. But this is the conclusion the master of the house has arrived at, though there are dissentients: and, in the light of it, the failure and disaster, called 'conditional immortality,' are questionable.

In any case, if one is entitled to frame a faith, the Catholic doctrine of purgatory is very much to be preferred. It is more just, more economical and more merciful, and has much to plead in its favour,—much indeed that can be well commended to the master of the house behind the senses and the mind.

The writer we have referred to discusses another path by which belief in conditional immortality has reached us,—not the path of pity, but the reverse. Coming so, he says, 'it springs from no fine impulse of humanity, it furnishes no alternative to hopeless sin and endless sorrow, it gives no new hope to man, but takes away something of the universal expectation of life eternal. It is one of the by-products of the doctrine of evolution.' But if it is rightly entrenched in the doctrine of evolution we must face it, though we may mistake the significance of it, as we think this writer does, for evolution is ever and everywhere suggestive of hope; and yet there is always the hovering shadow of the great refusal which may stand between man and his birthright. We cannot absolutely deny that. Unless we attribute immortality to everything, there must have been a time when the human animal turned the corner, and just 'became a living soul' with power to persist; and, looking out to-day upon the human race, or even only reading the newspapers, one may well ask whether all men and women are so much better than the cat and the kine, or even the monkey and the bear. This writer says:—

The old doctrine of eternal punishment had in it some saving power, because it made a crime of any act or course of conduct which would put in peril a soul capable of enduring everlasting woe. But the contempt engendered by the downlooking of supercilious saints who lift their eyebrows in lofty disregard, not of the torments of the damned, which were once supposed to excite joy in heaven, but at the silent exit from the scheme of created things, of human beings no longer worth considering, is wholly ignoble. Temporarily the doctrine may be held as a warning for ill-doers, and as an incitement to sympathy; but the permanent effect of it is to deaden the sympathies, to reduce interest in human nature, and to make life a scramble in which nonentity takes the hindmost.

We do not see that: we think we see the contrary. As above indicated, we do not accept conditional immortality: but, if we did, we should be inclined to set it forth as the mightiest conceivable incentive to effort and action on behalf of others. We do not know whether Paul believed in conditional immortality or not; but his strenuous utter-

ances might well be adopted by those who do:—this, for instance:—

What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. . . . That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death: if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.



W. J. COLVILLE.

From a photo by]

[Dana, Brooklyn, N.Y.]

## THE QUESTION OF SPIRIT IDENTITY.

### SOME PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.

Address delivered by W. J. Colville to the London Spiritualist Alliance, in St. James's Hall, on May 15th, 1902.

MR. COLVILLE said: The vexed question of spirit identity is one which is always liable to occasion considerable discussion, chiefly by reason of the fact that what appears thoroughly conclusive to some types of mind seems inconclusive to others. It is, therefore, necessary to approach this immense and vital subject not only entirely free from prejudice, but also fortified with clear understanding of the actual worth of the various theories now submitted for popular acceptance as substitutes for what is often termed the spiritualistic hypothesis.

A very friendly correspondent in 'LIGHT' (May 17th) asks whether it is possible for us to explain clearly how we discriminate between telepathic and spiritistic messages—to use the exact words of the courteous truthseeker who raises the inquiry. Frankly, we admit that it is often quite beyond our present ability to discriminate completely between them, but this lack of ability always to discriminate, far from weakening the testimony favourable to simple Spiritualism, only necessitates a reconsideration of the entire problem of our human constitution before we attempt to formulate an inclusive theory to explain the entire bulk of our diversified psychic experiences. A very large number of thoughtful readers have been much impressed by Thomson Jay Hudson's three celebrated books: 'The Law of Psychic Phenomena,' 'A Scientific Demonstration of the Future Life,' and 'The Divine Pedigree of Man,' in which the hypothesis known as the dual theory of the human

mind is very fully and forcibly expounded. Professor Hudson, in common with many other able writers, labours to some extent under a burden of preconception adverse to Spiritualism, which often mars the beauty and consistency of his otherwise excellent literary work. The evidence for telepathy which this author puts forward is very strong and in some instances unimpeachable, but the alleged evidence against Spiritualism is rationally inadmissible, because it is of a singularly negative and supposititious character. We must face our problem bravely, not attempting to disguise the fact that during the past several years much evidence has accumulated in favour of simple telepathy which some over-enthusiastic Spiritualists may have been liable to undervalue because it has been erroneously supposed that, if accepted, it would tend against the interests of the cause which is nearest of all to their hearts. A better understanding of telepathy, and a fuller comprehension of what is logically involved in Hudson's 'two minds' theory, may serve to set many doubters at rest. We must not forget that the title of Hudson's second book is utterly misleading and an entire misnomer; if the evidences of telepathy prove communion between friends on earth but throw no light on the condition of those who have 'crossed the border.' The author persistently claims that of our two minds, which he consistently designates *objective* and *subjective*, the former perishes at the time of physical dissolution, but the latter lives on and finds a sphere for fuller and more perfect functioning than it ever enjoyed on earth. This theory accounts for telepathy as a sort of foretaste of the method of communion between friendly entities which will prevail unceasingly in the future life. The only flaw that we have been able to detect in Hudson's chain of reasoning is the poor opinion he seems to entertain of the moral integrity of the subjective mind, coupled with the utterly foundationless assertion that overwhelming evidence of unrestricted telepathy will drive Spiritualists, ere long, even out of that 'last ditch' in which they are now desperately fighting (according to Hudson) to save a lost cause and rescue a forlorn hope.

Reasonable identification of telepathy with direct spirit-communion, instead of introducing a new perplexity and further complicating an already complicated situation, introduces us for the first time to an orderly, harmonious, and easily comprehended interpretation of many analogous facts and parallel experiences which have long perplexed the average student of psychic phenomena, though there have always been singularly luminous exponents of mental and spiritual science and philosophy, who have gone a long distance on the road which must lead eventually to universal understanding of man as a spiritual being.

We have frequently been asked to define clearly wherein consists the difference between a message received from a friend yet on earth, and a similar communication from one who has 'passed over.' Spiritualistic literature has largely been encumbered with two oft-repeated phrases, 'spirit return' and 'spirits coming back to earth.' These phrases are to a large extent misleading, for, though there are instances where such language may accurately and adequately describe the nature of certain manifestations, such expressions do not by any means correctly serve to describe the actual experiences of the great majority of seers and seeresses of ancient or modern times. *Intromission to the spiritual state* is a phrase full of deep significance, and, were it used more frequently, it would serve to elucidate many a problem of clairvoyance, clairaudience, clairsentience, and psychometry. Professors Denton and Buchanan, in their learned dissertations concerning psychometry, illustrated by numerous recitals of personal experience, have insisted that a true psychometer perceives the aura of an object, and can at times distinctly see into the spirit-world and become consciously *en rapport* with denizens thereof. Such quickened perception may fairly be considered as in some degree an anticipation of the means of intercourse we shall enjoy one with another when we have bade farewell to our robes of flesh.

If at this point we are reminded that the question of spirit identity is specially our theme at present, we may surely claim that if we are called upon to identify those intelligent beings with whom we are in communication, we

must apply the same laws of evidence to this matter as to questions of individual identification when only mundane matters are involved. To identify a fellow-being in any world is not always easy, and indeed it often is found to be extremely difficult when we rely solely on outward tests. 'The hands are the hands of Esau, but the voice is the voice of Jacob' is a vivid Scriptural instance of the extreme difficulty experienced by an ancient patriarch in deciding which of his two sons was actually in his presence. The blindness of Isaac is easily typical of the condition in which most people are found when some sort of deception is successfully practised upon them. Evidences of two kinds are presented together. One set of evidences appeal to feeling, the other to intelligence. We judge people very often by outward appearances which we subsequently find to have been altogether deceptive, and if it be admitted in any degree that there are deceiving spirits who sometimes visit us, we are obviously placed in precisely the same position with reference to them as with regard to persons yet on earth who play us false because we are open to deception. The difficulties attending spirit identification are not necessarily greater than those surrounding the identity of persons who are yet encased in mortal garments.

No purely external tests are always valid. Indeed, to place extreme reliance upon such alone is to encourage swindling, and play into the hands of forgers who are usually very capable of simulating perfectly the outward garb of those they seek to personate. Testimonials, references, and letters of introduction constitute no infallible criteria, as these may all be counterfeit or stolen. The only sure way to identify anyone absolutely is by cultivating psychic perceptiveness, and this is more apt to be strongly developed in highly sensitive persons than in any others. Deception is, however, less likely to be practised on the spiritual than on the material side of existence, because the motive to deceive is far less strong. Expectation of worldly gain urges most deceivers on earth to ply their nefarious vocation, and it may be safely assumed that at least ninety per cent. of all deception would vanish from the earth if no financial or other ulterior gain could accrue from it. To palm oneself off as another would be objectless folly in which very few people would care to indulge did they not think they saw in such deception a means for self-enrichment or aggrandisement.

It may with some fairness be assumed that when communicating intelligences who display only very meagre intelligence profess to be very celebrated and illustrious personages, they may be hankering for the incense of adulation, but when no great names are given and no pretentious claims are made, it is difficult to see what reason could be fairly given for simply stupid masquerading or deliberate misrepresentation of any sort. We know from experience that auto-suggestion on the part of the alleged recipient of a spiritual communication may account for some instances of falsification, especially when such self-deception tends largely to self-glorification or the gratifying of personal vanity. A great drawback to untainted spirit-communication is the prejudice and vanity of many sensitives, but this very foolishness on their part sometimes serves to reveal an aspect of truth which is frequently neglected, *viz.*, that there may be perfect sincerity and frankness on the side of the unseen communicator, while the person to whom the communication is made may be the sole suggestor of the deceptive element.

A lady in one of the Southern States of America declared that she was in direct communion with George Washington, the first President of the United States; but her friends as a rule laughed at her claim, because by means of automatic writing through the lady's hand, and by means of trance speaking through her lips, 'George Washington' expressed himself most ungrammatically and in negro dialect. On a notable occasion when 'George Washington' was speaking through this lady's mediumship, he was distinctly seen by a fine clairvoyant who had been invited to a séance, and at the conclusion of the address this seeress described what she had witnessed during its delivery, which was the presence of a very decided African of Ethiopian tint and cast of feature, and who appeared strongly attached to the lady through whose mediumship he had been able to deliver a lengthy message.

On being requested to describe all she saw, the seeress went on to give particulars of a venerable old servant who had been named 'George Washington,' who had been a faithful retainer of the family prior to the Emancipation Proclamation issued in 1865, and had in that year steadily refused to accept his freedom, as he dearly loved the old estate and was devotedly attached to his master and mistress, parents of the lady through whom he was then able to communicate and whom he had often nursed during her earliest girlhood, ere he passed to spirit life, when she was not over eight years of age. That simple incident served to explain the entire problem, and it afforded a thoroughly rational explanation of a phenomenon belonging to a class, by no means uncommon in America, which have led to denunciations of fraud where none existed—theories of wicked personating spirits, and many other vagaries of

unbalanced judgment—to say nothing of the would-be clever remark made by people who were more 'smart' than wise, that it must be a terrible thing to die if in our *post mortem* condition we so quickly and sadly deteriorate. An instance like the foregoing will bear thorough sifting, and it is surely much easier to explain such an instance in the light of direct spirit communion than by straining an auto-suggestive or telepathic hypothesis to the breaking point to invent an improbable, in place of a probable, interpretation. Had the lady referred to suggested the matter to herself she would certainly have been fairly grammatical, as she was a comparatively well-educated woman, and not being a negress she would not have clothed an imaginary message from George Washington, as she conceived of him, in negro dialect. Admitting telepathy, mental telegraphy, or telephony, or aught else that is in any measure psychical, nothing can well be more likely than that a good old negro who had been for many years a faithful servant to the family residing on that particular estate, should seek an avenue of communion with it through the agency of a member to whom he had been greatly attached just before he passed into the realm of spirit.

It is doubtless true that many spirits leave the earth and all pertaining to it, very shortly after the demise of the physical body, while others remain closely connected with the scenes of their earth existence, not because they are earth-bound in the sense of being unhappy creatures who cannot, on account of their sensual vices, rise above the mundane level, but because their affections still cling to persons and places with which they have enjoyed pleasing associations up to the latest moment of their terrestrial existence. Andrew Jackson Davis, as well as Swedenborg, and many other gifted seers, have said much concerning the many spheres in this solar system encircling the various planets, which have often been numbered from one to seven, and then again divided and sub-divided into circles within circles, like wheels within wheels in Ezekiel's visions; and those who have become strongly attracted to such teaching—and their name is legion—have brought forward the revelations of these prophets to disavow the declaration, made from a somewhat different standpoint, that multitudes of spirits cannot return to earth as they have not yet taken their departure from this planet's im-

mediate atmosphere, or even from the exact localities where a large portion of their earthly days were spent in work or amusements in which they took a decided interest.

While indulging in personal reminiscences, and not desiring to repeat a record of experiences already published and circulated, I will narrate a very recent instance of what seems to me clear evidence of spirit identity. When I was in Australia about eighteen months ago, in Sydney, I frequently employed the services of a bright, enterprising young man, who was an excellent typist, and to whom I dictated portions of several books and numerous magazine articles. Before taking my last earthly farewell of this young gentleman, on the eve of his departure for New Guinea, whither he went to occupy a post of trust and influence, he said to me that he hoped when I returned to England he might accompany me on the ocean, as he much desired, though by birth an Australian, to visit the Mother Country, which, though twelve thousand miles distant, is invariably called 'home' by Australasians. My reply was that though I could not definitely foresee my own plans for the near future, and could, therefore, promise nothing, I held myself in full readiness to fall in with his wishes should opportunity occur to favour the carrying out of the project. Shortly after his arrival in New Guinea in full possession of health, and seemingly of vigorous constitution, he caught the local fever, and in three days he had made his exit from the mortal body. I cannot say that he was very frequently in my thoughts, or that his loss would seem to me irreparable; still there was a link of sympathy between us which evidently made it possible for him to manifest his presence to me on more than one occasion during three distinct stages of my voyage from Sydney, *via* New Zealand and across America, to England. The first time he attempted to make himself known to me was between Sydney and Auckland, but as I was seldom alone during the four brief days that voyage occupied I cannot remember any very definite evidence of his identity, though I was fully conscious of his presence. The second visit which I know he made me was *en route* to California, when I had a large cabin to myself on the 'Sonoma,' and not being much acquainted with any of my fellow passengers I had many opportunities for quiet silence and uninterrupted meditation. I well remember distinctly feeling the presence of my young friend with me, just as I had known him in Australia, and so real and tangible was the sense of that presence that it seemed exactly as though another person was sharing the cabin with me. I was quite awake, perfectly calm, and fully able to determine all he said to me, and yet I am certain I heard nothing with my external ears except the motion of the vessel passing through the water. Not only did I feel, or sense, his presence, but he gave me information concerning his situation in New Guinea, and the circumstances of his life there, which I subsequently learned, through correspondence with a mutual acquaintance, were correct in every detail. On the third occasion, when I as strongly realised his presence, I was nearing Plymouth on my voyage from New York last February, and on that occasion he gave me information concerning his present state and occupation, and told me several things in regard to my own near future, which have since been fully verified. Such definite, direct, and truthful communications certainly do not proceed from lying spirits, nor do they emanate from my own sub-self, whose reputation for veracity and sanity I am naturally interested to maintain; and when I speak a good word for my own subjective mind—which is to live hereafter when my objective mind has perished—I stand up equally for the corresponding sub-selves or subjective minds of all my neighbours. It is immeasurably more rational to maintain a reasonable spiritualistic version of such facts as I have just related than to invent, and uphold at all hazard, a contradictory and extremely complicated theory of the mysteries of telepathy, which serves to befog far more than to enlighten rational inquirers. In seeking to reply definitely to the very natural inquiry whether there is any marked difference in appearance between the psychic, or astral, body of a person yet on earth, and of one who has parted company with earthly raiments, I venture to suggest that only when the factor of clairvoyance is added to telepathy is this clearly deter-

minable. Usually the appearance to psychic vision of one who has left the flesh is more ethereal than that of one who is still connected with it, but when only a sense of presence is realised, and intelligence is inwardly communicated, it is often impossible to decide whether the despatch in question is being received from a friend yet on earth or from one who is more frequently designated a 'spirit.'

Unnecessary difficulties in the way of rational spiritual identification are created by many persons who evidently mistake identity which pertains to abiding individuality for the most external incidencies of ever-fluctuating exterior personality. Such questions are often raised as, 'If you see my father can you describe his appearance? does he wear a beard? how is he dressed?' and much else of the same almost ridiculous character. A little sober reflection must convince the veriest tyro that such questions, answered one way or another, cannot determine identity. We all know that fashions alter and habits change with wonderful rapidity, and it is by no means difficult for a man to remove a full beard in a few moments, or to let one grow in a few weeks, thereby completely altering one aspect of his appearance. Black hair easily turns white, stout persons grow thin, and slender persons become stout, very frequently, while changes wrought by passing years and varying emotions frequently suffice to render old photographs, once speaking likenesses, no longer discernible, unless to the acutest students of physiognomy. It is, however, continually declared that clairvoyants see our spirit friends as they were when we last beheld them or as they appeared when we were most intimately associated with them. And such testimony, founded as it often is on actual fact, needs to be interpreted in the light of other knowledge than that obtainable by simple and often mysterious clairvoyance. Astral pictures are often beheld in the air of old houses, where certain people have lived for long periods, and to which they have become greatly attached, and these psychic photographs are often mistaken for the actual presence of departed spirits by persons who rely on sight as evidence apart from feeling or manifest intelligence. A fact in my own experience may serve to illustrate two features of this portion of the subject of spirit identity.

Some years ago I was sojourning in an old country mansion in America, which had been the abiding place of a single family ever since its erection. The room assigned me as a sleeping apartment had, as I afterwards learned, been for many years the special working and reading room of a maiden aunt who had been quite a second mother to the family. In that room she had spent a great part of her time during her latest years on earth, and one of her favourite occupations was knitting stockings by the fire. For four nights in succession, during my occupancy of that room, did I see that quiet elderly lady, with knitting in her hands, seated before a fire in the grate, which was at that season of the year filled with a summer ornament. At first I thought I must be actually in communion with the kindly, placid dame, and that she might have a message to convey through me to some member of the household; but, concentrate my thought and attention intently as I could upon the vision, I could detect no animation, nor could I receive even the faintest intimation of intelligence. The people with whom I was residing were not at all averse to Spiritualism, and when I told them exactly what I had seen four nights in succession in that particular bedroom, they all agreed that it was an exact description of their aunt, even to the smooth bands of brown front hair, and the cap with lilac satin ribbons tied under the chin; but they, in common with myself, wondered why, if I could see their aunt so clearly, I never saw her move and could obtain no impression of her intelligence. On the fifth night of my occupancy of that apartment I experienced a totally different sensation in connection with the same apparition, which I again beheld stationary and unresponsive as before; but on this occasion, hovering over the astral picture I beheld a radiant, youthful form bearing a certain family resemblance to the abiding simulacrum, but instinct with the fire and energy of active life and operating intelligence. Contemporaneously with this new additional experience, information clearly flowed into some receptacle of my consciousness, causing me to become aware that the original of the portrait desired her nieces and nephews to

find in her old writing desk certain papers she had written long ago and which she desired should be revised, edited, and published. Following the minute directions given me by this guiding intelligence, I accompanied several members of the family to a lumber room in which many discarded articles of furniture had long been stored; and there among them stood an ancient *escritoire*, in which we found a completed story setting forth a romantic and highly edifying history of marvellous episodes in what the world would doubtless have looked upon as a secluded and uneventful career. After this startling confirmation of the veracity of my vision, we formed a private family circle for further investigation, and thereat, by means of automatic writing, supplemented by clairvoyance, we verified many extraordinary statements made to me by this living relative of the family, who assured us that she was no longer sitting by a fire engaged in knitting, but most actively employed in spiritual occupations, which did not, however, alienate her in the least from her old associates but, on the contrary, kept her in close vital touch with all of them, though in a subtler and more ethereal manner than before she had quitted the material frame.

Another interesting experience of my own dates back only to the autumn of 1899, shortly before my departure for Australia. I had long known Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, but my first interview with her was in 1877, at a lecture delivered in Manchester, when she was a middle-aged woman, dressed in much the same style as she continued to adopt till she finally withdrew from the public platform. Since her passing to spirit life, this earnest worker has occasionally made herself distinctly known to me, both on and off the platform, and in November, 1899, I distinctly saw, in connection with a most forceful realisation of her close proximity, the likeness of a radiant maiden with light golden curls, somewhat resembling the earliest pictures of Mrs. Richmond when she was Cora Hatch, but in no way suggesting Mrs. Britten to me by the appearance. I never could have understood that vision had I not visited Mrs. Wilkinson (Mrs. Britten's sister), about a month later, and, while her guest in Manchester, been shown a picture taken many years ago, representing Emma Hardinge in youthful costume as 'Queen of the Fairies.' This picture represents the young lady who afterwards became Mrs. Britten with flaxen ringlets, and in every way precisely as she showed herself to me on the occasion of my vision. Had I suggested to myself a similitude of Mrs. Britten, I should certainly have conjured up from depths of memory a likeness of her as I had known her; and when I interrogated her spiritually through the mediumship of automatic writing, subsequent to beholding the portrait at Mrs. Wilkinson's, the following message was communicated: 'I knew you were going to my sister's; therefore, I wished to give you a singular test of my identity, which I find I have succeeded in doing; and there is another reason why I showed myself to you thus I wished to impress you with the knowledge that I can now show myself in various forms to my friends, and my present appearance far more closely resembles that of my youth on earth than that of my later age.'

'How do we know each other here?' is quite as grave a question as 'Shall we know each other there?' I remember some years ago, in New York, being asked by a mutual friend to meet a gentleman who was returning to America after ten years' residence in Germany, and who was described to me from a portrait as a slender man with jet black hair. And such he doubtless was when he embarked for Germany, but during the decade of years he had spent in Europe, he had grown decidedly corpulent and his hair had become positively white. I nevertheless knew him by instinct, though I had never met him previously, and I accosted him by name, greatly to his surprise, directly he had left the steamer. Had I been slavishly governed by my physical senses instead of trusting to some surer and subtler faculty of discernment, I should certainly have failed to acknowledge him, so greatly did he differ in appearance from the description I had been given of him. We cannot expect that when we change in outward aspects thus rapidly on earth, we shall remain stationary in external aspect in the world of spirits. There is, however, this to be said concerning relatively fixed appearance in the life beyond. We are not

there, as here, so greatly affected by outward climate, and outer appearance changes only as it indicates alterations in our interior state. Such is the unanimous and unfaltering verdict of spiritual testifiers wherever they have made their presence known.

And now, finally, concerning the weighing of evidence in the scales of reason. We may certainly maintain in the face of all opposition that every individual communication should be judged on its particular merits, and neither be accepted nor rejected on the merits or demerits of any other submitted message. We cannot believe, unless we part company with reason, that we are victims of stupid or wicked deception in cases where the teachings given are of the highest moral import, and where the information offered is proved correct in every detail as far as we can possibly verify it. The crude and intricate theories now afloat to discredit evidence of spirit intercourse are far more difficult and far less probable than the plain satisfactory conclusion long ago reached by all intelligent and dispassionate inquirers that we do on many occasions receive convincing proof of the identity of communicating spirits. In conclusion, let us look for an instant at the mental characteristics of a few of the typical students of psychic phenomena who during recent years have become thoroughly satisfied that in many instances, though not in all, proof positive of spirit identity has been obtained. Professor Hodgson and Mr. Myers were thoroughly satisfied at length, through Mrs. Piper's mediumship and that of other sensitives; and so were Miss Lilian Whiting and the Rev. Minot J. Savage, as well as many other representative and cautious investigators. These famous persons had nothing to gain and possibly something to lose, by outspoken advocacy of Spiritualism; and in the case of Dr. Savage it is well-known that his tendency of thought was decidedly agnostic, and for many years during his popular ministry in Boston he was largely a champion and exponent of the philosophy of Herbert Spencer. It is difficult to see why people should prefer the Devil to their own friends who have passed beyond the mystic portals, and it surely cannot be easier for normal intellects to believe in imaginary evil demons, of whom we know practically nothing, except on unsupported hearsay, than in the presence and activity of the very people whom we have known on earth as real personages, and who reappear with their own well-known characteristics. Telepathy and all other demonstrable phases of psychic phenomena must be freely admitted by every student of psychic science, and it has now become the imperative duty and solemn privilege of all who have knowledge in this direction to elucidate as far as possible the truthful doctrine of the close resemblance and intimate relation of telepathy to Spiritualism. Simple telepathy throws much clear light on our present spiritual abilities, and spirit communion transcends mundane telepathic experience by carrying telepathy across the unseen border into those sympathetic realms of spiritual activity where the powers and functions of our 'sub-selves' or 'subjective minds' are more fully unfolded and more freely and extensively exercised than they seemingly ever can be during terrestrial embodiment. Let us be open to all classes of evidence, and construct theories to account for facts, but never seek to squeeze facts into grooves of premeditated theory. (Applause.)

Following the lecture, a number of questions were asked and answered. Among the replies the following were conspicuous. The lecturer said, in reply to an inquiry concerning telepathic intercourse with spiritual beings who might be occupying positions in the solar system far remote from this planet's immediate atmosphere, that it was easily possible to hold communion with sympathetic intelligences without coming into local contact. It was also stated that intermediary intelligences often serve as connecting links between two spheres which have some measure of affinity with each other, though they cannot be described as actually near together. And the further declaration was made that *space* plays a far less important part than *state* in all spiritual interblendings. And it was yet further insisted that higher spheres can commune at will with lower planes of activity, but lower circles cannot rise into full conscious communion with higher circles except through such interior growth as proceeds from continued aspiration.

Regarding elemental and elementary spirits and the future existence of animals, the speaker said that this is a living universe; therefore, every element is in essence psychical. Life is everywhere, and all forms of animate existence are organised expressions of a universally diffused life principle. Magicians may command the lower forces of Nature and employ them in magical productions, but elemental influences cannot simulate human intelligence, at séances or elsewhere, any more than animals can speak with human voice or display such attributes as pertain only to the human species. Many clairvoyants have had some evidence of the temporarily continued existence of certain animals in the *post-mortem* state, but their actual *immortality* cannot be demonstrated.

In reply to a question concerning the likelihood of 'astral shells' producing the phenomena of Spiritualism, the lecturer argued with much decision against the supposition that galvanised reliques of the departed could display intelligence, and the utmost that could be rationally conceded to that theory would be the bare possibility—and that an improbability—that some human intelligence might use a 'shell' as a vehicle or utensil in the production of a phenomenon, but in that case the source of the manifestation would *still be an intelligent entity*.

Some ladies questioned the lecturer concerning the legitimacy or desirability of perpetuating such elementary modes of spirit communion as table-tipping and other rudimental phases much in vogue in the early days of the Modern Spiritualistic movement, to which the following reply was given :—

There is always a place for elementary phenomena, which are well adapted to the present requirements of many truth-seekers who are as yet unprepared to appreciate or comprehend more advanced phases of psychic demonstration. For that reason it is far better to encourage than to discourage home circles and select friendly gatherings of congenial sitters, where the simpler forms of phenomena recur. Wherever two or three, or any larger number of friendly, harmonic persons unite to seek enlightenment, the response they win from unseen spheres is far more a result of their interior states of thought and feeling than of the method employed externally by those who are seeking to pierce the psychic veil. If the chief attention is always paid to aspiration, motive, desire, and all that constitutes the inner side of psychical investigation, the outward means employed may well be extremely diverse, to suit the varied needs of the great multitudes who are now knocking at the portals of the House of Wisdom.

Replying to a question concerning fraud practised during séances, the lecturer said that during extensive travels in various parts of the world he had witnessed much genuine phenomena of many varieties, and also much that was ambiguous, but actual fraud was comparatively rare except in cases of persons who did not actually claim any mediumistic gifts when they were freely conversing with their cronies, and who undertook to simulate phenomena when they thought it would redound to their financial interest. Such persons, particularly in America, where they had been sometimes numerous, were turncoats in profession, for they invariably felt the pulse of a neighbourhood and adapted their trickery to the largest prevalent demand. Many church officials had employed these tricksters to expose Spiritualism in one place, while they had quickly gone to another and posed as ardent Spiritualists and faithful mediums devoted to the cause of Spiritualism. It has been largely owing to impostors of that stamp that phenomenal Spiritualism has been at times under a heavy cloud and honest mediums have been exposed to assault and persecution. When phenomena are sometimes fraudulent though usually or frequently genuine, in the presence of certain public sensitives, something can be said in support of the plea that such mediums are sometimes greatly influenced by the immoral calibre of sitters, and being often not particularly strong morally in themselves, even when their sitters are not deceptive persons carrying a deceiving sphere with them, there is strong temptation to produce imitations of genuine manifestations when the demand for phenomena greatly exceeds the supply. The chief cause of fraud in America has been the insatiable demand of a voracious public for twenty or more

full form materialisations every night in the week at circles where a dollar per head has been the price of admission. It stands to reason that genuine phenomena of so marvellous a character cannot be doled out to order for just so much money whenever payment is forthcoming, and it is the height of folly to patronise and encourage such proceedings and then vehemently denounce the people who have only catered to a vociferous demand. A great deal of alleged fraud deserves careful, unexcited scrutiny, and it is not likely that fierce denunciation will ever effectually prevent it, as people will probably always be taken in more or less frequently until they have reached a plane of clear perceptiveness where they are no longer deceivable. Fraud may occasionally emanate from the spirit side of life, but that is an obscure problem and a remote contingency. Mind-reading and unconscious thought-transference will account for much seeming deception in connection with mental phenomena; but as this consideration opens a particularly wide field for psychological investigation, we should be extremely chary of condemning anyone without overwhelming evidence of guilt. Mediums certainly should not be prejudged unfavourably, and we cannot reasonably expect to remove deception by surrounding hyper-sensitive persons with a blighting atmosphere of suspicion.

At the close of the proceedings a cordial vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Colville for his very interesting and instructive address.

## 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.*

### Assistance Needed.

SIR,—May I ask through your columns for a little help from Spiritualists, in paying the expenses of a blind girl and her mother to London for a week, to allow the former to be under the treatment of Dr. Silva, the healer? If he be successful in restoring her sight, it will not only benefit the patient, but be a triumph for spiritual healing, as she is well-known to ladies here, who take an interest in, and care for, the blind. The parents, when better off, spent a great deal on doctors and medicines but with no good result, and now that their circumstances will not allow them to do so any more, I am appealing to sympathetic Spiritualists for help. I should also be glad of any information as to a cheap but clean and respectable hotel or boarding-house, where they could put up, in the neighbourhood of Earl's Court. The Rev. J. Page Hopps very kindly promised to meet them on their arrival and take them to the doctor's, so that the only thing required is money. I am giving a guinea, and any other subscriptions will be gratefully acknowledged in 'LIGHT.' I may mention that no operation has been performed on the eyes, which are perfect to look at; but it makes one sad to think of the years yet to be spent in darkness by this young girl.

ELNOR OLDHAM.

60, Clarendon-road,  
Whalley Range, Manchester.

### 'The Union of London Spiritualists.'

SIR,—Kindly allow me through your valuable columns to return thanks to all the friends who so fervently supported the recent London Convention with their presence and admirable addresses. The executive also esteem highly the valuable services rendered by all those who acted as stewards and helpers, both ladies and gentlemen, and who, by their self-denying zeal to make others happy and comfortable, must have missed the bright and beautiful remarks of the speakers. I have much pleasure in announcing that this May Convention was a crowning success.

On behalf of the Executive of the above Union,

HENRY BROOKS,  
General Secretary.

55, Graham-road,  
Dalston, N.E.

The next Monthly Conference will be held on Sunday next, June 1st, at the Forest Gate Centre, 32, Daines-road, Forest Gate, at 3 p.m. The subject for discussion will be 'The Work Before Us.' Tea 6d. Evening service, at 7 p.m., Union speakers.

H. BROOKS,  
Hon. Secretary.

## Psychic Phenomena.

SIR.—Will any of your readers kindly inform me if any special book or pamphlet has been written in reply to T. J. Hudson's theory of 'The Phenomena of Spiritism' in his book of 'The Law of Psychic Phenomena'?

H. F. T. B.

## The Indian Maxim.

SIR.—Permit me to remark that Mrs. Stannard, in a footnote to her able review of Dr. Encausse's new book, has omitted the first item in 'the Indian maxim.' That maxim runs thus: 'Know, will, dare, be silent.' If any one of these four can be said to be more important than the others, it is 'Know.' The Initiate is 'One who knows.'

RICHARD HARTE.

## SOCIETY WORK.

ISLINGTON.—111, ST. THOMAS'S-ROAD, FINSBURY PARK, N.—On Sunday last, Mr. Brencley gave an interesting address on 'Spirit (Guidance).' Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. Brencley, clairvoyance.—E. COATES.

MANOR PARK.—TEMPERANCE HALL, WHITEPOST-LANE.—On Sunday last, Mr. Walker gave a very interesting address, followed by some splendid psychometry and clairvoyance. On Sunday next, Mr. J. Kinsman will deliver an address, and on Friday Mrs. Webster will give psychometry and clairvoyance.—A. JAMRACH, Hon. Sec.

CLAPHAM ASSEMBLY ROOMS, FACING CLAPHAM-ROAD STATION ENTRANCE.—Last Sunday we had the pleasure of a scholarly address by Mr. Cole on 'The Gods of All Nations.' Miss Emery kindly recited 'How Prayer is Answered.' Mrs. Boddington presided. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. and Mrs. Boddington: subject, 'Gifts of the Spirit.' Fridays, at 8.15 p.m., psychometry.—B.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH SPIRITUALIST SOCIETY, 73, BECKLOW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last, Mr. E. Burton gave a very fine address on 'Some Thoughts on Spiritualism as a Religion.' Mr. Middleton followed with clairvoyance, which was most satisfactory. Tuesday, at 8 p.m., discussion class; Thursday, at 8 p.m., circle; Sunday, June 1st, at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., Lyceum; and at 6.30 p.m., Mr. Fielder. 'LIGHT' on sale.

THE LONDON PSYCHIC SOCIETY, 3D, HYDE PARK MANXIONS.—Mr. Colville lectured last Sunday evening to a large audience in the rooms of the society, and treated his subject, 'How to Awaken Dormant Will and Latent Faith,' in a most scholarly way. He was never heard to better advantage, and the improvised poem on the 'Future of Spiritualism and Spirit Return' was a masterpiece. For next Sunday see front page.—E. J., Hon. Sec.

HACKNEY.—MANOR ROOMS, KENMURE-ROAD.—On Sunday last, Mr. Ronald Brailey gave a fine trance address entitled 'Builders and Buildings,' which was listened to with sympathetic interest by a very large audience. Mr. Brailey afterwards gave clairvoyant descriptions and also messages, which were fully recognised. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. H. Boddington will occupy the platform. Members are asked for suggestions as to what new books they would wish to be purchased as an addition to the library.—N. RIST.

TOTTENHAM.—193, HIGH-ROAD (NEAR SEVEN SISTERS CORNER).—On Sunday last, Mr. E. Whyte gave a general summing up of his previous addresses, and showed how Spiritualism is modifying the old beliefs and rapidly becoming the religion of the future. At the close of the address the audience testified:—by standing a few minutes in silent prayer:—their sympathy with one of our committee, Mr. Firth, jun., whose two children have just passed on to the higher life.—W.T.L.

NEW SOUTHGATE—HIGH-ROAD SPIRITUAL CHURCH, THE INSTITUTE.—On May 18th and 21st, Mrs. Powell-Williams was eminently successful with clairvoyance. Interesting short addresses were given by Mr. and Mrs. Jones and Mr. Davis on Sunday last. These meetings will be discontinued during the summer months. An inquirers' class (open to the public) will meet every Thursday, at 8 p.m., at 15, Woodland-road. Medium for clairvoyance and psychometry on Thursday next, June 5th, Mr. Davis.—A. CLEGG, 9, Leslie-terrace, Pembroke-road, New Southgate.

GLASGOW ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS. On Sunday, the 18th inst., we were pleased and benefited by a visit from our old friend, Mrs. M. H. Wallis, on which occasion we had two splendid discourses on 'Spiritual Affinity,' and 'The Outpouring of the Spirit: a Whitsuntide Address.' On Sunday, the 25th inst., we were delighted to welcome to our platform Miss Florence Morse. Her discourse in the morning on 'Spiritualism: What is the Use of It?' was indeed a great treat, and her answers to questions in the evening were both clear and convincing. Miss Morse has assured for herself the sympathy of a Glasgow audience on any future visit.—G. F. D.

CLAPHAM COMMON. OPEN-AIR WORK.—On Sunday last, Mr. and Mrs. Boddington and Mr. Fielder took for the subject of their addresses, 'Spiritualists and God,' showing the people that we did not wish to erase their idea of God, but merely to enlarge their appreciation of His goodness and power. We shall take questions on the subject from 3.30 to 4 p.m. next Sunday, prior to the addresses which will follow on 'Holy Ghost: Person or Power?'—B.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—CHURCH OF THE SPIRIT, SURREY MASONIC HALL, S.E.—At the morning public circle on Sunday last, striking clairvoyant descriptions were given by Mr. W. E. Long, and gratefully recognised by the recipients. In the evening an 'In Memoriam' service was held to commemorate the recent passing on of one of our younger members. Helpful and cheering words of sympathy and solace were spoken by Mrs. Checketts and Mr. Long. On Sunday next, at 11 a.m., public circle; at 6.30 p.m., Mr. W. E. Long; subject 'Seers and Prophets.'—J.C.

BROCKWELL PARK.—On Sunday last Mrs. Holgate delivered an able address in Brockwell Park on the 'Truths of Spiritualism,' to a very large and appreciative gathering. Many interesting questions were asked and ably answered. In the evening Mrs. Holgate gave a trance address on 'Faith, Hope, and Charity,' at 8, Mayall-road, followed by excellent clairvoyance and psychometry by Mrs. Miller. On Sunday next, at 3 p.m., in Brockwell Park, Mrs. Holgate and others. In the evening, Mr. Bishop. Circle on Thursday, at 8 p.m. 'LIGHT' on sale.—S. O.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—SPIRITUALIST CHURCH, HENLEY-STREET.—Mr. Gwinne's address of last Sunday evening was a spiritual feast which could not fail to be of the utmost value to his listeners. As an introduction to his remarks, Mr. Gwynne read a section of Tennyson's 'In Memoriam,' and a splendid address followed. Mr. Imison presided. Sunday, June 1st, at 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 3.30 p.m., meeting in Battersea Park; at 7 p.m., Mr. Davis. Tuesday, at 7 p.m., Band of Hope. Thursday, at 8.30 p.m., public séance. Saturday, at 8.30 p.m., social evening.—YULE.

STOKE NEWINGTON.—SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVE CHURCH, BLANCHE HALL, 99, WIESBADEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last, Mr. J. J. Morse gave a trance address, 'The Shadow of a Mighty Rock in a Weary Land.' This may be published later on, together with the address which we look for on June 29th (the occasion of Mr. Morse's farewell visit). Copies of the address 'Does Death Destroy what Life Creates?' (J. J. Morse) may be had on application to the secretary (fifty for 2s. 6d., postage extra). On Sunday next, Mr. Edw. Whyte will answer written questions.—A. J. C. (Cor. Sec.), 51, Bouverie-road, Stoke Newington, N.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—A large and appreciative audience assembled, on Sunday last, to welcome Mr. W. J. Leeder, of Nottingham, who occupied our platform and delivered a stirring and interesting trance address, the subject being: 'The Light of Spiritualism upon the Problem of Immortality.' Mr. T. Everitt, president of the association, occupied the chair, and in a few well-chosen remarks thanked the control for the intellectual treat thus afforded. Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., Mr. J. J. Morse will deliver a trance address—subject, 'Has the New Religion Come? Yes.'—STANLEY J. WATTS, Hon. Sec., 2c, Hyde Park-mansions.

PECKHAM.—THE SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALIST MISSION, QUEEN'S HALL, 1, QUEEN'S-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last Mr. Brooks delighted a large audience with a fine address on 'The Beauties of Spiritualism.' At our after-circle we had Mrs. Powell-Williams, a well-known medium, from Manchester, who gave us most distinct and undeniable proofs of the 'gift of discerning spirits' (clairvoyance). Sunday next, service as usual at 6.45 p.m., with an address by Mr. McDonald, and at 8 p.m. a public circle will be held. Thursday, June 5th, Coronation Social and Concert. Will the lady who kindly sent us the complete volumes of 'LIGHT' from the year 1895 accept our sincere thanks, and be assured that good use will be made of the same! This paper is always on sale.—VERAX.

BATTERSEA SPIRITUALIST LYCEUM AND BAND OF HOPE.—AN APPEAL.—Practically the closing words of Mr. Morse at the recent Convention were 'Help the children.' Now is an opportunity for the friends to do so. We have here some one hundred and fifty children in our Lyceum and Band of Hope, the majority of whom are the children of non-Spiritualists. Our church is in a purely labouring-class district, with little but bricks and grime all round. We want to take them out of this for at least one day, into the open air, where park keepers are an unknown quantity. Will our friends help us? It is only those who, day in and day out, work amongst these surroundings who can fully appreciate the necessity for doing something to relieve the terrible monotony of existence amongst these little ones. Contributions thankfully received by Mr. Imison, conductor, 8, Glycena-road, Battersea, or G. Wyndoe, Cor. Sec., 12K, Victoria-buildings, Battersea.