

Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

Some questions that have occupied attention in these pages find some elucidation from various modes of treatment. The school of which the views are set forth by Mr. F. F. Cook, of Chicago, in his striking paper on "The Philosophy of Embodiments," and of which Mrs. C. Tappan Richmond is the mouth-piece, finds no place in the economy of the universe for positive evil. This is one of the cardinal doctrines of their faith, and it may be well to bear it in mind in estimating the philosophy expounded by Mr. Cook. In an address purporting to be delivered by Adin Ballou through Mrs. Richmond at Chicago, as far back as October 5th, 1879, these views were propounded at length. The question under discussion was "Evil Spirits: What proportion, if any, communicate with mortals?" The speaker denounced as the bugbear of Christendom a belief in the devil and the power of evil. "The measure of evil is just the measure of man's conception of it: no more. As a negative it exists; as an affirmative it does not." Satan as an absolute entity is dying, because the moral tendency of an enlightened age is all towards the higher goodness of God. And so, just as we no longer regard tempests and earthquakes as signs of the Divine displeasure, so the time will come when we shall see in manifestations of moral evil nothing more than an essential condition of development and growth; regrettable *per se*, but inevitable, and beneficial if properly used.

When this idea was fixed in the minds of the audience the speaker went on to apply the principle to the communicating Spirits themselves. What proportion of human Spirits are evil? Not one in a thousand is criminal; and he (the chances are) does not perpetuate his evil, for his children often are pure and good. Not one in ten thousand is an abject criminal. Whence, then, comes the supply of all these evil Spirits who are assumed to be engaged in a deep and diabolical plot to deceive the very elect? The incentives to evil are to a great extent done away with in Spirit-life. There is nothing to steal, no motive to take life, no spur to any of the coarser crimes in a condition of existence where concealment is impossible; where the higher Spirits look through and through the very secrets of the heart, and where inferior Spirits, with unpurged proclivities to vice, can reach none except those congenial Spirits who attract them by community of thought and desire.

How few these are in proportion to the great mass may easily be imagined; how small a fraction of humanity they can reach anyone may calculate for themselves. Considering the large number of mediums under whole or partial control by Spirits, it is remarkable that so little disorder exists, that so little harm has ensued, when the methods of intercourse between the two worlds are also taken into account. It is a fact that any Spirits who perform works of power are not, and cannot be, evil. No class of evil Spirits can make voices, write messages, materialise, or do any other important works in communicating between the two worlds. Therefore when apparent evil comes, regard it as a test, and do not imagine that the source can be really what it seems.

I have done no injustice to a long and elaborate discourse by condensing such portion of it as bears on late subjects of

discussion. And I have thought it fair and right to set forth this view, because I have myself propounded one of an opposite nature; and I am so little dogmatic, so little persuaded that the truth lies in any special view, that I should like all to be considered. If there be no such thing as evil, save as a negation of good; if evil Spirits, if they act at all, have neither wisdom nor power, then we have got rid of a great danger. But if, as it seems to me, the elusive, not to say deceptive element enters into the phenomenal manifestations of Spiritualism to an unknown extent: if it be, as I think, those grosser Spirits who are nearest to the border-line who are most powerful, and most cunning (though surely not most wise): if the doctrine that I have received of two contending forces, of whom the adversaries are at times not the least powerful, be true: then the sponge is not so easily passed over the dirty slate. We will not split hairs about the existence of evil; nor speculate as to what its exact nature is, nor who and what are its ministers, if such there be. The thing, by whatever name we call it, is all around and within us; and if there be a devil, or an adversary, who may desire to delude and deceive us, taking us off our guard, such tactics as this utter denial of evil are admirably calculated to serve his purpose.

The doctrine of embodiments I am not prepared to discuss until I have more thoroughly mastered the foundation on which it rests. What is that foundation? Theory or fact? There is a very confusing use of the words Soul and Spirit throughout the paper: and the dark hints of what in undeveloped minds may be the result of the "longings and strivings after unrealisable ideals in the conjugal relation," of a wandering "spirit which is but half a soul," looking after its other half, cause one some anxiety. I have a dim suspicion that I shall not yet be able to agree in the abolition of evil: and that I should apply that word to some if not to all of those "longings and strivings." The paper will doubtless receive the attention that some of its statements deserve: but it is very hard indeed to give or refuse assent to what rests on a merely speculative basis, and apparently contradicts some of the generally received moral principles by which mankind agree to be governed. One thing I read with some gratification. "You, the present human expression [of a fragment of the Ego] will never return to this earth-bound prison." That is a comfortable doctrine, and true withal; but it is at variance with ordinary re-incarnation notions. And if little bits of one are always "expressing" themselves on this earth, whether as "kings, warriors, priests, beggars, thieves, murderers," or as "queens, amazons, matrons, ladies of leisure, or ladies of pleasure," my satisfaction is a good deal diminished.

The idea of the non-existence of evil is developed in the second part of Mr. Cook's paper. "That which is doomed is the belief in absolute evil." And to the reply that such existence is manifest enough, and is taught "generally by spiritual teachers," he rejoins with direct simplicity, "To be sure, and the fact that it is taught and made evident is the best proof that you have not out-grown the state that requires its presentation." We have the evidence of our own observation backed by the teaching of those who ought to know, and we are told that we have not out-grown the state that requires such a falsehood to be put forward. But why are we the victims of the lie? Why not Mr. Cook himself? What evidence does he offer that he has not entered into a state of illusion in which the convenient doctrine of which he makes himself the apostle is taught by "confirming spirits"? "All that we perceive of anything is in ourselves," says Mr. Cook, and his dictum may be applied to himself. It is indeed the pervading fault of an argument which contains much that is true, that it rests on an airy basis of speculation. And yet, contradictory as it is in many points of our resistant experience, the schema is laid down with an assumption of exactitude which nothing but absolute knowledge

could justify. As a speculative attempt to deal with some of the problems of Spirit-life it is interesting and worthy of attention, in spite of the plain denial of one of the most obvious facts that meets the observer at every turn. One of Mr. Cook's statements, and this the most philosophically true, receives some illustration from the consideration on time and space which I put forward in my recent notice of Proctor's enlarged edition of "The Stars and the Earth." No doubt the realm of Spirit is a realm of thought, "a pure thought-world," into which the limitations of our present state of existence do not intrude. It is "a state, not a place," as many of us have been taught long ago; surely not "a conception quite foreign to most minds." But the peculiarities of that state, as expounded by Mr. Cook, are certainly foreign to my mind in some of their presentations. It is, however, well that a protest should be made, not only against the material hell with its fire and brimstone, but against the crude and coarse conceptions current among some Spiritualists, whose interest is centred in the phenomenal manifestations, and who carry their desire to bring spirit down to the plane of matter so far as to create in imagination material "spheres of being." M.A. (Oxon.)

"THOUGHT-READING."

(To the Editor of the "Spectator.")

SIR,—In common, I dare say, with many others, I have of late devoted a good deal of time to the investigation of the phenomena known at present as "Thought-reading." As far, however, as my experience goes, it seems to me that the name, though not actually incorrect, is yet misleading, for the term "Thought-reading" certainly suggests an active, if not aggressive, faculty, where, as far as I can see, there is nothing but an enhanced receptivity. In all the experiments in which I have been engaged, those only have been successful in which I was conscious of exerting my will with great force and persistence to accomplish the desired object. In my view, this so-called "Thought-reading" is distinctly a branch of the magnetic phenomena and might less delusively be called the science of Will-impressions.

It may interest some of your readers to hear that I have found that the "Willing Game" can be played without actual contact. Last night I made three experiments of this kind, all perfectly successful. Two were to find blindfolded an object previously hidden, which was accomplished by the sensitive without any difficulty, if I remained within about a foot of him. In the third, I sent him round the room, and by a mere effort of the will at a distance induced him to stop and take up the particular object on which I had fixed in my mind.

I take it that it is easier to get a sensitive to *do* what you wish, than to *see* what you wish; but both are moods of the magnetic state, and come under the head of "Will-impressions."—I am, Sir, &c.,

A. EUBULE-EVANS.

New Athenæum Club,
August 8th.

THE EVIDENCE OF EXTRAORDINARY EVENTS.

(To the Editor of the "Spectator.")

SIR,—*A propos* of remarks in your paper on "The Evidence for Extraordinary Events," I may relate the following unusual coincidences:—My eldest brother went to New Zealand. One morning my sister Emily came down to breakfast, looking very white and queer, and directly she entered the room, said,—"Ben has met with an accident." Disregarding our incredulous amusement, she declared she had seen him with his arm bandaged up, lying in a room where there were other beds. We were longer than usual in hearing from my brother; he explained the delay, saying his arm had been broken, and that he had been for some time in the hospital. Comparing dates, we found he was injured the day my sister had her vision. My eldest sister married, and went to Australia; one night she saw her mother-in-law, Mrs. R—, enter the room; go and kiss the baby in a cot, come to the foot of the bed, and say,—"I'll wish you good-bye now," and glide out. My sister felt so nervous and impressed she awoke her husband, and related the affair to him. He laughed it off, saying, "It was only a dream," &c. Next mail brought news of Mrs. R—'s death; she died in England, at the moment Agnes saw her in Australia (times, &c., since compared). What is the explanation?—I am, Sir, &c.,

ANTHONY ASHLEY.

3, Burton Villas, Stratford, August 7th.

Mr. and Mrs. Tebb are sojourning at Conishead Priory, near Ulverstone.

THE COUNTESS OF CAITHNESS ON "THE DOCTRINE OF EMBODIMENTS," AND "THE PERFECT WAY."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In accordance with your expressed desire to receive the views of your readers respecting the two papers lately contributed to your journal by Frederick F. Cook, of Chicago, I feel bound to write and say that their perusal has afforded me very great pleasure and satisfaction; and so earnestly do I respond to the views set forth by your admirable contributor that if you are able to oblige me with his address, I would like very much to communicate with him direct, concerning views so perfectly in accordance with my own writings, and those set forth in that most admirable book, "The Perfect Way," which embodies the latest, highest, and most important revelations given to humanity, constituting a new Gospel, which thousands would thankfully receive could the work in question be brought to their notice; for thousands are at this time literally starving for want of the spiritual food adequate to the needs of their present spiritual growth. This further supply was promised by the One who could not give them more until they were prepared and able to receive it, in these words: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot hear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth."—*John xvi.*, 12, 13.

This promise is now very beautifully fulfilled in the book entitled "The Perfect Way." And being perfectly cognisant of the way in which it has been given and received, I have no hesitation whatever in pronouncing it to be the new Gospel of interpretation of the mysteries of God kept secret from the beginning.

MARIE CAITHNESS.

51, Rue de l'Université, Paris.

A NARRATIVE.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The following narrative I had from the writer himself, a clergyman in Staffordshire, and shall be glad if you will give it a place in your columns.

H. WEDGWOOD.

31, Queen Anne-street.

"About the year 1876 I took lodgings with a friend in an old farm-house in Staffordshire. The house had originally been the seat of one of the county families, but a new residence had been built in the park, about a mile away. Part of the old house had been pulled down; the other part remained, in which we lodged.

"My friend and I occupied the same bedroom, a very large one, and the same bed, a large four-poster. One Sunday night in August we retired to bed about 9.30, as usual on a Sunday. About 1 a.m. I awoke. The moon was shining brightly. I could see every article of furniture in the room, and the trees waving outside, for the blinds were not drawn, and I lay perfectly awake for about five minutes on my left side. I then turned to my right side, and was startled to see the form of an old man apparently between sixty and seventy years of age lying on the middle of the bed between my friend and me. He seemed to be calmly sleeping. I immediately turned back very much frightened. I lay for about ten minutes, trying to persuade myself that I had been dreaming. After that time I decided to look again. I did so, and found the figure still in the same position. I could distinctly see his face, and the outline of his form under the bed clothes. I shall never forget it. I turned back again for another ten minutes, thinking the matter over and trying to account for it. I felt very much alarmed and unable to speak. (I could see my friend sleeping on the other side.) At last I took another look, and it was still there. My tongue seemed to become unloosed, and I shouted loudly my friend's name, Tom! Immediately the figure vanished. I need scarcely say I had very little sleep afterwards. The next morning I related the circumstances to my landlady, and described the figure to her. She was visibly agitated, and at last told me that my description corresponded exactly with the previous tenant of the farm, who had shot himself in that very room. Others had seen the same figure, and the room was commonly reported to be haunted. She had not told me previously for fear I should decline to occupy the room. I slept there again for some time after an interval of a fortnight, but saw nothing more. My friend saw nothing at all. Of two things I am positively assured: (1) that I was perfectly awake, and (2) that I saw the figure exactly as I have described. It happened to me six years ago, but is as vividly impressed upon me as if it was yesterday. Before that time I had treated the idea of supernatural appearances with contempt. Since then I have changed my opinion."

Mr. Trübner is about to bring out a series of essays under the title of "Attempts at Truth," by a well-known student of psychological science.

INSANITY AND BELIEF IN THE SUPER-NATURAL.

Those who disbelieve entirely in the supernatural have no difficulty in deciding to their own satisfaction where realities end and delusions begin. To those, however, who believe in the existence of phenomena and facts called "supernatural," of as real a character, if not more so, than the external facts of ordinary life, it is very different. With regard to the senses of touch, sight, and hearing, the greatest difficulty is often experienced in deciding between realities and delusions. As we have said, where there is no belief in anything beyond outward touch, sight, or hearing, the difficulty vanishes; but if we believe that there are inner senses as well as external ones, that clairvoyance is a fact, and that the hearing of inward voices is an actual occurrence, we soon find ourselves face to face with problems of great difficulty.

A strong tendency is almost sure to manifest itself to attach too little importance to the possibility of absolute delusion, which it is especially necessary that Spiritualists, and students of psychology who approach the subject from a point of view more or less biased on the Spiritualistic side, should be on their guard against. We can call to mind some persons who, while they realise the untrustworthiness of the external senses, seem to think that the internal senses, or rather what they believe to be the perceptions of their own internal senses, are almost infallible. Such are in a very critical state of mind, even if they are not on the borderland between sanity and insanity. Such ought for their own sakes to convince themselves that the most vivid impressions may be, and sometimes are, utter delusions.

We cannot be surprised at the conclusion which many scientific and professional men have come to, that the hearing of internal voices, and analogous phenomena, and even a belief in their possibility, is of itself sufficient evidence of insanity.

If a person tells us, for instance, that he hears voices speaking to him in the house, or in the street, such voices being inaudible to others, we are not justified in concluding without investigation, whether it is a delusion or a reality. But when a person says, as an acquaintance of ours told us lately, when the dinner bell sounded, that it was the voice of invisible beings speaking to him in Greek, we must recognise that as a delusion, and believe the individual is, to that extent, insane.

Spiritualists, and especially those who are to any extent developed as "mediums," cannot be too careful for their own sake and that of their friends, to be always on their guard against delusion, and rationally to weigh the evidence in favour of and against that which they think is presented to them.

In a paper which appeared recently in the *Journal of Mental Science* entitled "Some Observations on the State of Society, Past and Present, in Relation to Criminal Psychology," there are some interesting remarks on insanity and a belief in the supernatural. They are the more valuable coming as they do from a medical man, David Nicolson, M.D., Deputy-Superintendent of the Criminal Lunatic Asylum at Broadmoor.

After sketching the history of the witchcraft prosecutions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and which continued until the latter half of the seventeenth, the writer says:—

"Under such circumstances it is not surprising that it is to the criminal records of this period that we have to go if we would find out anything about the insanity of those fated to live in such times. I intend to try, with the aid of such records as I have at hand, to identify, and in some measure to isolate from among the social phenomena of a bygone age, some illustrations in practical psychology."

Further on the writer says:—

"I must not be taken as implying that a mere belief in witchcraft is an evidence of insanity—that subject I shall enter upon later on. . . . But whatever the psychological peculiarities of the commissioners, inquisitors, kirk sessions, and communities generally may have been, we must at all events start with them as the practical outcome of the mental life of the period. The people of the time had to carry out the law of the time, just as it is our duty in our time to carry out, so far as we can, the law as it now is. It is not for us in such matters to judge the people of a bygone age by our standard, any more than it is for us to estimate ourselves by what we believe or know to have been their standard. If it was an essential part of their accepted creed to believe in witchcraft, and if they said that those who did not accept this belief were heretics and atheists, and deserved death, it is not for us who do not believe in witchcraft to say that believers in witchcraft are insane, and ought to be locked up in asylums, any more than it is for us to say that whoever believes in supernatural agency is insane, and ought to be so locked up. There are sane as well as insane who believe in witchcraft, just

as there are insane as well as sane who do not believe in witchcraft. The belief in witchcraft is not the measure of insanity; nor yet is the belief in supernatural agency in any form."

We hope to return again to a consideration of the concluding part of Dr. Nicolson's article. The experiences of many who are unquestionably more or less afflicted with insanity and insane delusions are frequently so similar to genuine Spiritual manifestations, that their mutual study cannot fail to aid the investigation of both classes of phenomena.

E.T.B.

REVIEW.

SONG-SPRAY.—By George Barlow. London: Remington and Co., 1882.

We have had the pleasure of noticing several of the volumes of poetry brought out by George Barlow, and our readers may remember a few verses under the title of "Death," which we reprinted in our columns when "Song-Spray" first came out, and which seemed to us the gem of the book. There is a great deal in the volume which the lover both of poetic description and of spiritual aspiration, may turn to and be well repaid—although we cannot but regret, not only the dross but the absolute clay which, to our thinking, has been allowed to remain mixed up with the silver and the gold and the precious stones.

Through the finer poems—such as "Art's Martyrs," "What Shall Be: A Song of Weariness," and others which might be named, runs a constant perception of the "discord" pervading all earthly surroundings, but consoled by faith in a future. As the "trance-communication" in another column says:—"To those who have marched onward into the realms of spirit, there is always to be carried in front of the crown, the cross." The following "Hymn" embodies the same thought in the perfect language of which Mr. Barlow is master, and is the only selection we can now make from this, his last volume.

"Along the blood-stained road that Christ's foot trode
We follow hard,—
Watching the sweet eyes of the Son of God
And His brow scarred.
Along the weary, lonely, devious way
We follow Him,
Through midnight blackness till the morning grey,—
Till stars wax dim.
Not on His head love's star-crown shone alone;
Nay! all may share
His glory who will share His sorrow's throne
On Calvary bare.
If any man will watch throughout the night,
Though wild winds roam,
And on the savage beach the only light
Is light of foam,
He shall partake the deathless crown that He,
The Christ-King, wore;
An honoured guest at His high table be
For evermore.
But first must all his hair be wet with dew,
And he must stand
Lonely beneath the roof of midnight blue
In his own land.
And each upon his special cross must hang
True till the end;
Each pierced by his own individual pang,
Without one friend.
Then shall the morning that beheld Christ free
See us too rise,—
Pure as the white air, strenuous as the sea,
With deathless eyes."

Mr. William S. Godbe, the leader of the Liberal movement in Utah, and one of the corresponding members of the Central Association of Spiritualists, is expected in England in October, on business connected with a highly important mineral discovery.

Mr. Cornelius Pearson left the Metropolis last Thursday "with a light heart" for that favourite haunt of the artistic brotherhood, Hungerford-on-the-Kennet. A portfolio replenished with charming sketches will no doubt be the fruits of his industrious pencil, to the delight of his many friends.

Mr. T. P. BARKAS, F.G.S., will deliver an address before the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society on Sunday evening next, his subject being, "Ancient and Modern Evidence of a Future Life for Mankind, with thoughts respecting the probable nature of the Future World, and the Occupations of its Inhabitants." This topic has recently attracted much attention in the above town, and many who know Mr. Barkas have announced their intention to attend his lecture.

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

TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post free to any address within the United Kingdom, or to places comprised within the Postal Union, including all parts of Europe, the United States, and British North America, is 15s. 2d. per annum, forwarded to our office in advance.

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may be obtained direct from our Office, and also of F. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and all Booksellers.

The Editor of "Light" is out of Town, and correspondents are therefore asked to exercise a little patience if their communications have not in every case immediate attention.

Just now news of special interest is not very abundant, and therefore for the next few weeks—that is, until the dull season is over—we shall print fewer pages than usual.

TEST CONDITIONS IN RELATION TO THE SEANCES OF MISS WOOD.

[The importance of the question of test conditions in relation to the higher orders of Spiritualistic phenomena is so great, that we gladly insert the following communication, only asking our readers to consider the matters referred to in the same impartial and impersonal manner in which the writer has treated them.—Ed.]

I trust that it is not too late to refer to Mr. Collingwood's letter, quoted by "M.A. (Oxon.)" in "LIGHT" of the 29th ult. I had hoped before now to have offered some remarks upon the subject of that letter, after confirming by a somewhat fuller investigation the hasty observations made at one séance by myself. But, unfortunately, since the séance which I attended on Wednesday, July 26th, Miss Wood has, I am informed, been too unwell to sit more than once, and I have had no further opportunity of witnessing the phenomena described by Mr. Collingwood. But, even in Miss Wood's absence I have been able to confirm my observation in one important particular. Mr. Collingwood has described the precaution employed to satisfy the sceptical portion of the circle. Miss Wood was placed in a small closet, the only door of which was removed. The doorway was laced across by a piece of endless pipe (or piping) cord—such, I understand, is the name by which ladies will recognise the material employed—passing through eye-headed screws: the threads going obliquely from side to side, and vertically from top to bottom. The cord, I may add, is about half the thickness of ordinary blind cord, and very much less substantial. For the further satisfaction of the sceptical mind, the junctions of the cord—at least, the principal junctions—were fastened by threads of green silk. If the description has been followed, it will be seen that the doorway presented the appearance of an irregular network, having two different kinds of meshes, viz.: a small triangular, and a relatively large rhomboidal mesh. I measured the rhomboidal meshes, and found them to average about ten inches in the longest side, five inches in the shortest side, and seven inches in the two intermediate sides. I may further remark that the curtain, which Mr. Collingwood describes as being "dropped before the door," was suspended from the ceiling at a considerable angle to the doorway, so as to enclose between itself and the doorway a triangular space, having a maximum breadth of some two feet.

On the night when I was present we sat down, twelve of us, in a horseshoe, surrounding the doorway, the light being turned low: though, at first, not so low but that I could easily discern the outlines of the faces and figures all round me. After an interval of not less than a quarter of an hour, which was filled up chiefly by singing, a full-sized woman's figure appeared from behind the curtain, and advanced some two feet from it. The figure had some white drapery business about its head and shoulders, revealing in the action its head and bust to a certain extent. So far as the dim light would enable me to discern, it was a well-developed woman's figure. There was no half-materialisation here. I saw, or thought I saw, that the head

rested on a fully-materialised neck and chest, and, from the manner in which the nether drapery was disposed, it seemed to me that the body was supported on legs not less incarnated than usual. After this figure had retired, there was a further interval, during which the light, at the request of "Pocha," was considerably lowered, before the appearance of the second figure—"Pocha" herself. This figure was quite small and childlike, and draped, like the other, in white; and, as it threw the drapery about, I and others fancied that we saw a dusky-skinned body, with the breast and shoulders bare. This figure, despite our repeated solicitations, could not be induced to leave the friendly shelter of the curtain; it remained for some little time fronting us, with its back against the folds of the curtain, and then it also disappeared.

I can, of course, only speak of what I myself actually saw on the occasion referred to. Mr. Collingwood and one or two other gentlemen, whom I believe to be neither partial nor credulous witnesses, assured me that at a previous séance the smaller figure had advanced some considerable distance from the curtain; that it was quite small and child-like in form; and that it actually kissed them. One gentleman—than whose word I could desire no better evidence, save only that of my own senses—told me that the little form touched him with its hands, and kissed him; adding, that the kiss was not like the touch of any human lips, but was soft and "cottony." But, of course, I can only speak of what I saw; and I saw nothing to induce me to believe in materialised figures. But before proceeding, I should like to enter a caveat. I have no desire to bring any charges against Miss Wood personally. I know nothing against that lady. I have heard her highly spoken of, and I have no reason to believe that she is other than a genuine medium and an honest woman. Furthermore, so far am I from denying the possibility of materialisation, that I am not prepared to deny that the figures which I saw were actually disembodied Spirits materialised through Miss Wood's passive agency. But I have not the smallest proof that they were so; and if I were to put myself in the position of a complete outsider, I should say definitely that they were not. Were I to speak of them as one of the *profanum vulgus*, I should say that the triangular space between the curtain and the doorway was necessary to enable the medium to get through the meshes of the network unobserved; that the quarter of an hour's interval after the séance had commenced, was required to enable her to complete her preparations; and that the singing was designed to drown the noise of the preparations. The first figure, I should say, was the medium herself, divested of her outer garments, and with a band of white muslin, which she had introduced under her dress, wrapped about her. The second figure would also be the medium, in a close-fitting black body, kneeling down with her legs behind the curtain, from which position, be it noted, it never moved during the séance at which I was present. As regards the little figure seen by Mr. Collingwood and others at a previous séance, I should, still in my assumed role, suggest the agency of a fishing-rod, and some sticks and muslin, from which a very respectable lay figure would readily be improvised. And I should find an undesigned confirmation for my hypothesis of the strongest kind in the casual admission, by a most trustworthy witness, that the lips of the child-figure felt almost like cotton. The occasional "collapse into a small heap of white drapery" on the ground would be to me also an indication of failing strength, not in a muslin doll, but in the medium's arm, which would be supporting a considerable weight at the end of a long lever. "Pocha's" voice would be the medium's in disguise; and the movements of "Pocha's" arm would be due, partly to the imagination of the sitters and partly to dexterous manipulation of the fishing rod. In short, my case as a sceptic would be tolerably complete, and would only require proof that the medium could escape from the cabinet undetected.

Now, at the conclusion of the séance on the 26th ult., I shewed Mr. Collingwood and others that, by removing the silken thread from two only of the points of junction, the size of the rhomboidal meshes referred to could be so much increased that it would be comparatively easy for an ordinary-sized man to crawl through. It is true that, as the silk was cut short, it would have been difficult, but by no means impossible, for a woman's deft fingers, aided, perhaps, by a needle, to have unfastened and refastened it again. Nor would this operation have necessarily consumed all the allotted quarter of an hour. But Mr. Collingwood was sceptical as to the possibility of Miss Wood's getting through the mesh, even under these conditions,

and in my eagerness to convince him, I blundered. I went in feet foremost, and I omitted to take off my boots. Consequently, in lifting the second foot through the opening, the boot heel caught, and, before I could disengage it, the fragile cord had snapped. But finding it uncertain when Miss Wood would be able to sit again, I requested Mr. Blyton, the secretary of the C. A. S., yesterday afternoon to lace up the doorway exactly as he had laced it up for Miss Wood—with this exception, that two of the principal junctions and four of the secondary ones (the latter, to the best of my recollection, were not fastened at all on the 26th ult.) were left unfastened. I then took off my coat, waistcoat, and boots, and in Mr. Blyton's presence I crawled through the meshes and back again with considerable ease. Furthermore, as Mr. Blyton willingly admitted, the cord was not appreciably stretched, or the appearance of the network altered, by my passage through it.

Our sceptic's case may now be considered fairly complete, for it can hardly be seriously maintained that the difficulty of untying and retying two or three threads of silk in the dark, by a person whom we are at liberty to suppose a professed and trained trickster, is sufficient to overthrow the rationalistic hypothesis. Such a thread is surely too slender to bear the weight of proof for such a stupendous phenomenon as materialisation. But let me not be misunderstood. In all this I have not sought to prove, or to imply, that Miss Wood is herself an impostor. I should even be prepared to admit that when once a circle of private inquirers is thoroughly satisfied of the medium's honesty, it is permissible, or even desirable to sit without imposing any tests at all. But then the results obtained under such conditions should be reserved for their mere private edification: they must not be used in evidence of the reality of the phenomena observed. If Mr. Collingwood is satisfied of Miss Wood's honesty, he is, of course, justified in holding the phenomenon, which he describes, to be genuine materialisations. But as no test,—or, what is worse, a wholly inadequate and misleading test—was imposed, I cannot but think that his excess of missionary zeal is to be deplored. He should have been content to work out his own salvation, and to leave the unregenerate to the darkness of their own unregenerate hearts—and heads.

In a letter to me "M. A. (Oxon.)" writes:—"I shall be very glad to hear that you have obtained results under conditions that you think good, and I should like to know what those conditions are." Well, I am rather inclined to agree with "M. A. (Oxon.)" himself, that *no conditions* short of full light can be considered satisfactory. If I had to secure Mr. Maskelyne in a cabinet or cupboard, under such conditions of light, distance, &c., as are in vogue at most materialisation sésances, in such a manner as to preclude all possibility of deception on his part, I must frankly admit that I should not know how to proceed. I feel my untrained common-sense is no match for the ingenuity of a professional conjurer; and I should feel no security that any bonds I might tie could not be untied, or that any tests I might employ could not be evaded. And I fail to see, in dealing with mediums, if we admit the possibility of fraud at all, that we can assume they are any less accomplished in this one special line than Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke. We know perfectly well that a long and tedious manœuvre, which a bungler could scarcely perform in an hour, can be done with practice in five minutes; and we know also that a conjurer can perform in the dark, and with considerable rapidity, delicate operations which a novice could not even imitate at all. If I could not have slipped through the meshes of the network it would by no means follow that a medium could not have done so. And though I may be unable to see how any test which I or others may devise can be evaded, I should by no means be justified in feeling secure that I had effectually baffled either medium or conjurer.

In a word, I am not pleading that more stringent tests should universally be employed at materialisation sésances, or that all mediums are clever impostors. I know well that either position is readily assailable. But I am strongly of opinion that if tests are employed at all, they should be, like Caesar's wife, above suspicion, and that nothing can be more mischievous than the publication of results obtained when precautions against fraud, were in appearance, and in appearance only, complete.

FRANK PODMORE.

London, August 13th.

Generosity, wrongly placed, becomes a vice; a princely mind will undo a private family.

SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

A large portion of our number for the 22nd ult. was devoted to a report of the general meeting of the Society for Psychical Research. It will be remembered that in the paper presented by the Thought-reading Committee the cases noticed were divided into four groups. The fourth group consisted of cases "where similar ideas have simultaneously occurred, or impressions been formed in minds far apart." Under this head the two following narratives were given. Full particulars as to names and addresses were placed in the hands of the writers of the paper.

The first is in the form of a letter.

"DEAR SIR,—The circumstance about which you inquire is as follows: I had left my house, ten miles from London, in the morning, and in the course of the day was on my way to Victoria-street, Westminster, having reached Buckingham Palace, when in attempting to cross the road, recently made muddy and slippery by the water cart, I fell, and was nearly run over by a carriage coming in an opposite direction. The fall and the fright shook me considerably, but beyond that I was uninjured. On reaching home I found my wife waiting anxiously, and this is what she related to me: She was occupied wiping a cup in the kitchen, which she suddenly dropped, exclaiming, 'My God, he's hurt!' Mrs. S., who was near her, heard the cry, and both agreed as to the details of time, and so forth. I have often asked my wife why she cried out, but she is unable to explain the state of her feelings beyond saying, 'I don't know why, I felt some great danger was near you.' These are simple facts, but other things more puzzling have happened in connection with singular intuitions of my wife.—Yours truly, J. SMITH.

Haylen Green, Ealing, W., 10th October, 1876.

The report of the Committee proceeds:—

"The next case is more remarkable; our informant is a medical man, Mr. C. Ede, of Guildford, to whom the incident was related both by Lady G. and her sister.

"Lady G. and her sister had been spending the evening with their mother, who was in her usual health and spirits when they left her. In the middle of the night the sister awoke in a fright and said to her husband, 'I must go to my mother at once. I am sure she is taken ill.' The husband, after trying in vain to convince his wife that it was only a fancy, ordered the carriage. As she was approaching her mother's house, where two roads meet, she saw Lady G.'s carriage. When they met each asked the other why she was there. The same reply was made by both—'I could not sleep, feeling sure my mother was ill, and so I came to see.' As they came in sight of the house they saw their mother's confidential maid at the door, who told them, when they arrived, that their mother had been taken suddenly ill and was dying, and had expressed an earnest wish to see her daughters."

The following interesting letter from Mr. Ede accompanied the narrative:—

"DEAR SIR,—The foregoing incident was told me as a simple narrative of what happened, both by Lady G. and by her sister. The mother was a lady of strong will, and always had great influence over her daughters.

"I myself have been persuaded that impressions and thoughts might be transmitted by the action of a powerful will upon sensitive brains at a distance, by some experiments which I made in mesmerism, being at first a strong disbeliever in all these things, and only convinced when testing the assertions of others. There must, it would seem, be some previous relation between the two brains, as in states of anxiety for the absent, or powerful longing. May not a material vibration in a strong brain affect another by its vibration, as light at a distance acts upon the retina of the eye, or sound upon the ear. We know that many sounds escape us if our attention be not directed to them, and likewise many objects may not be perceived. It is curious in the case of Lady G. and her sister that both impressions were made in the night, when the attention was not diverted by surrounding sights or sounds.

"This may have had some connection with the following incident which happened to myself lately. There is a house about half a mile from my own inhabited by some ladies, friends of our family. They have a large alarm bell outside their house. One night I awoke suddenly, and said to my wife, 'I am sure I hear Mrs. L.'s alarm bell ringing.' After listening for some time we heard nothing, and I went to sleep again. The next day Mrs. F. called upon my wife and said to her: 'We were wishing for your husband last night, for we were alarmed by thieves. We were all up, and I was about to pull the alarm bell, hoping he would hear it, saying to my daughters, I am sure it will soon bring your husband, but we did not ring it.' My wife asked what time was it. Mrs. F. said, about half-past one. That was the time I awoke, thinking I heard the bell.

"I could also give you many instances of this communication to another of a strong wish on my part, although unuttered, and unaccompanied by any gesture or hint by look or action. I have often been amused at a concert, or other place of meeting, to single out some person who had their back to me, and will them to turn their head in a given direction towards me, and

generally I succeed. It is common enough to have the same thoughts spoken by two people simultaneously, but though the previous conversation might often suggest like ideas, I think it would not be difficult to sift out the cases of direct mental impressions from those of coincidence, suggestion or sequence of thought arising from surrounding causes. When I have been strongly wishing to see a friend, it constantly happens that he appears. May not the many extraordinary cases of apparitions be but the mental pictures produced by other minds on a sensitive subject? There is a well-known case recorded in the colonial papers which supports this view. A murder had been committed in Australia by a convict upon a settler, who had disappeared. An officer of justice was sent to try and discover the perpetrator. He, for this purpose, went to watch the house of the convict, and while doing so the convict came to the window, and looked very hard at the officer, who then fancied he saw the murdered man dragged from a post near the house and thrown into a bit of water close by. This impression was so strong upon the officer that he fetched a native tracker, who came to the post and said—"Blood, man's blood," and immediately seemed to follow a trail to the pit of water. This was reached, and the body of the murdered man was found. The convict was arrested, tried, and condemned. Before execution, he confessed that he had killed the man at the post, with a blow of an axe, and had then dragged him to the pit of water and thrown him in. He also said that when the policeman looked at him through the window the whole scene of the murder was vividly present to his mind.

"Here, I think, was a case of direct transmission. The officer's mind was open to the slightest impression, while the convict's was intensely occupied with the recollection of the deed. The impression on the officer's mind was so vivid as to appear real. The officer had been over the same ground before, but had no suspicion of the body being so near until the time he saw the convict looking intently at him, and beheld, as he asserted, the apparition of the man being dragged from the post to the pit.

"All chemical action produces vibration. Our senses are simple registers of those vibrations. We detect light, heat, and electricity at indefinite distances by our nerve system and record them in our brain. Why, then, may we not detect the vibrations of the brains of others during thought? The chief reasons why we do not notice these vibrations is that our own brains are pre-occupied, and we require to have our minds in a passive state of reception before detecting the action of those of others. We shall, I think, ultimately arrive at the power of placing our minds in a receptive state, and then we shall receive impressions from those minds strongly acting near us. When we see a crowd watching for the words of a well-known orator we perceive their faces evidence the mental state of expectation, and the minds of all are attuned or ready for the thoughts of the speaker. Hence the powerful effect he exerts. An unknown man is not so received, and has to fix, by a great effort, his auditors, before he can lead them away by banishing from their minds their own thoughts. —Yours truly, CHARLES EDE.

Womersley Lodge, Guildford, 29th August, 1877.

The report of the Committee continues:—

"It is obvious that any conclusions worth recording must rest upon a large induction of cases that cannot be obtained at will. We are, therefore, in a large measure dependent upon the testimony of correspondents, and would invite further information, which may be sent to any of us, or to the secretary of the Society for transmission to us.

"We cannot pretend that this inquiry is as yet more than in its infancy, and we would deprecate the premature formation of theories on the subject."

SINGULAR PREDICTIONS RESPECTING ENGLAND.

At the Beckford-Hamilton sale recently there was sold a very fine copy of a singular book: "Allœi (Francisci, Arabis Christiani) Astrologie Nova Methodus et Liber Fati Universi, cum Disceptatione in eundem a P. Ivone Parisino Capucino, 1654." The author of this extremely rare and curious work (burnt at Nantes by the public executioner) was, according to Leibnitz, the famous Capucin Father, Yves de Paris. The original edition, which was printed at the sole expense of the Marquis d'Asserac, is much sought after, as in the reprints the predictions respecting Europe, the sole cause of the work being condemned to the flames, were entirely omitted. Amongst the predictions to England are, in 1666, "Magna Calamitas" (the year of the Great Fire of London); in 1691, "Magna Republicæ turbatio" (General Ginkel's wars in Ireland); in 1705, "Adversa omnia" (a mistake; witness the successes of the Duke of Marlborough and the Earl of Peterborough); in 1756, "Minatur maximum excidium" (war declared against France); and in 1884, "Maxima adversitas!" For the truth of this latter one we shall not have long to wait. We are informed that Mr. Quaritch was the purchaser of the work in question.

Every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle.

"GOD IS A SPIRIT."

The following is the substance of an address given through a "trance medium" at a private circle, and taken down in shorthand at the time. The name which was given was that of a clergyman well-known as a preacher and writer.

"God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." This is so, and yet it is not so. To those who know that God is a Spirit, it is given to worship Him in spirit and in truth. If not thus, then not at all, "For the Father seeketh such to worship Him." How He seeketh such to worship Him is only feebly known even in this state in which we are. But we are cognisant of a drawing upwards of the spiritual aspirations of which on earth we knew hardly anything.

"God is a Spirit." Most men have not reached even thus far in the school of life. They can only worship God through outward means. They cannot sail upon the ocean of His love without boat, rudder, compass, captain, and crew. They cry like Peter—"Lord, I sink!" God is a Spirit. But the naked soul, the unclothed soul only, can reach out to Him. The spirit clothed with much encumbrance of mortal things must go to Him in some sort of conveyance. Thus it is good for man to worship God in temples made with hands if he cannot have his mind attracted unto Him without the building and the accessories of worship. How large is the number of those who are only just raised above the purely animal, I had no idea until I came out of earth-life. I thought all men knew that God was a Spirit. I thought all men knew that the spirit of man was the man. I thought if I could but reach man with my voice and pen that they would leave off sin and wicked works, and worship God, who is a Spirit, apart from creeds and services which, so hampered my own life.

I was happy and yet unhappy. I was in ignorance of the state of mankind. Humanity in its lowest form finds its highest pleasure in eating and drinking, and lying down to sleep. This is beautiful in the animal. Why is it not beautiful in the man? Because man is just beyond the boundary where animal life is beautiful, and life alone, exclusively animal life is right. "God is a Spirit" has begun its work. Man simply as an animal is not beautiful to his fellow man, as an animal simply the animal is. The law of upwards, upwards to the skies, or to man's loftiest ideal, is the will and law of God. So, man the animal is sorrowful, not beautiful, to man the man.

We see man joining with his fellows in rude forms of worship, believing in doctrines which to the spiritual mind are comparable to doctrines of devils. The "Blood of the Lamb," spotless innocence, satisfies the justice of God. God is a Spirit; let it work. As man grows clearer and purer in his conception of God, we see a purer form of worship arise. But man must still in great part adore the outward. The soldier would not go to battle without his chief. All outward forms, to the mind educated only to receive such, represent, for the time, its Deity. Still the form of worship advances. There are those who need the pleasures which a cultivated taste engenders; the love of sound, the love of outward beauty. The chief official must have his official robes. How could some of them hear the Word of God preached by a gentleman in civilian's clothes? But God is a Spirit—let it work.

I say to all who hear my voice through your transcribing, there is beauty in your man with his outward garb, in your music, in your altars, in your heavy, cumbrous religious systems, if you keep your soul upward through it all. But you must listen, now or presently, to a voice which never yet passed itself through human lips. There is a voice which shall shake mightily the earth, which has shaken it through all time, and which will sound as never man's voice sounded, saying—God is a spirit, and they that worship Him in the awful purity which He will have finally, must worship Him in spirit and in truth. For the Father seeketh such to worship Him.

Such are few. But I say to you who hear my words, they might be many. If during your times of outward worship, your singing of hymns, your sounding of your organs blown with wind, your postures of devotion, if at such times the thought steals in like an icy wind, to some carnal natures, that God is a Spirit; if this thought comes to some of you who worship in these outward ways; if this icy breath says to you: "Death is written on all your delight;" if this voice strikes upon your spirit, then listen and look up. If you heed not, and if you bury

your spirit yet deeper in delights of earth which are *dammèd* of God—you know what I mean—you shall yet hear in thunders through your spiritual body, which survives the material form, you shall yet hear and know (for knowledge once is knowledge ever)—and you knew the voice and disobeyed—you shall, I say, hear this voice—God is a Spirit.

This is known to man the animal only very feebly,—known more and more as he rises upward. But often, oh, how often, through creeds, and forms, and ceremonies, owned and blessed of God, only because (we think because) He sees the end from the beginning. Then,—this is the end—the whole compass of it to the spiritual man—"For the Father seeketh such to worship Him."

I had grasped this idea in my earth-life. I did not know to how many of God's children the school of doctrines which are doctrines of devils was as a gateway through which man had to pass upward, outward, onward, to the ocean of perfect freedom and love. I have looked over that great sea which so often comforted my weary spirit, and I have thought, Why will not *all* mankind trust to the Father, to His infinite goodness, and leave all the bewildering doubts regarding the birth and life and death of His Son? But I did not see that the strife of party in religion is as the polisher who polishes even granite, until it can reflect the sharpest and most clearly defined effect. I see now that if I had sent all the people in that great town out upon the waters, they would have been drowned. I had been greatly blessed in spiritual education. I could swim. I forgot how many toiling men, thrown into the sea, the sea of God's infinite Truth even, would sink to the bottom.

The carnal man perceives that God is a Spirit only as an icy wind, or as a sword, the blade of which is sharpened so keenly that he will not let it touch him. Therefore, this truth is not known to him, as it is to him whose way has been the way of conflict, whose path has been among the ice and snow of rigorous self-denial. God blows warm to the spiritual man, but He blows cold and blighting and blasting upon the carnal nature. And so I want to say I was mistaken in my way of work in as far as I discouraged, by my own deep baptisms, the spiritual among men. I thought I had to drag the whole car of God's humanity alone. I would rather now say:—Leave much, very much, to God alone. Say to the world what God, who is a Spirit, teaches thee. But do not try,—do not agonisingly try,—to do that which God Himself sees fit to leave undone. Rather, comfort those who mourn; sound ever in thy life, and in thy words, and in thy whole outward being, the bugle note of aspiration. How can they worship God acceptably who are a long way off upon the barren mountains of sin and wicked works? To those who have marched onward into the realms of spirit, which are high and wide, there is always to be carried in front of the crown, the cross. To those who are full there is now no hunger. They eat, they drink. But to those who rise up and follow the Spirit, not weighted in the race by cumber of any kind, there must be seasons of cold and nakedness, and hunger and thirst. But again, the voice of the Spirit wrote once, and writes to-day, that the time shall come when those who now spiritually hunger shall hunger no more, for all tears (not tears of sorrow, *they* are tears of joy) of doubt, perplexity, and discipline, and those tears which are wrung from agonising spirits, who fight daily with a sort of spiritual despair, shall be wiped away. The strong swimmer strikes right for the open sea. Lost is he often in his battle with the waves, to those who watch him through glasses from the shore. If his spirit is purely towards God, he reaches the other side ready for the heavenly garment. But how many are unready! These come to Spirit-life in boat loads,—cargoes full of men and women. Then there is work, and education, and often bitter discipline. It must be so. But if God is willing to work out His own redemption of His people, and if He is willing that it should cost Him infinite pains and ages of time, why should man murmur? Only, I say again—God is a Spirit; and if in worshipping Him in your outward way, you hear the Voice: Deny thyself, take up thy cross and follow the good, the pure, and the beautiful, unto death if necessary, I say unto you, Listen and obey. For in the life to come, if not in your life, that voice shall speak, and its commands must be obeyed. And so I say again, Man the animal is coming up gradually to the beautiful station of man the spirit, for the Father seeketh man the spirit to worship Him. And what the Father seeketh He will surely find.

INCIDENTS INDICATIVE OF SPIRIT AGENCIES.

Mr. A. S. Hayward writes in the *Banner of Light* on the above topic, as follows:—

"Allow me to narrate some facts and manifestations of spirit-power which have occurred by and through the mediumship or spiritual gifts of a highly respectable lady living a retired life in Boston. I have obtained the consent of the lady and her husband to make them public, with the understanding that their names shall not be printed at this time—not that they are ashamed to speak of it to their friends, but there are obvious reasons why they do not care to be made public in the matter—though I will assure your readers that the parties are perfectly reliable, as well as being highly connected with some of the old as well as of the present residents of Boston. Abundant proof can be obtained outside of their testimony of the truthfulness of what they state, if required. For convenience, I will call their names Mr. and Mrs. Blank. The facts are as follows:—

"Just before President Lincoln was assassinated Mrs. B., while passing through a severe sickness, and under the care of a prominent physician of Boston, in a semi-conscious trance or dream, related what she saw spiritually in the Green Room at the White House. Said she, 'I see a fine subtle net being woven for the purpose of catching someone, and it looks so high that it does not seem to be for anyone but President Lincoln.' She had previously seen in vision a shaft representing a monument, and on its four sides was the name of *Booth*, in large letters. These scenes were publicly stated, and taken down by her attending physician (who is still living in the material form), hours before the sad telegraphic news came that Booth had fired the fatal ball. Mrs. B. then seemed to become exhausted, and to be labouring hard, like a person on a chase, until Booth was captured; and before the news of his capture arrived in Boston, she had described minutely the entire transaction, which soon afterwards was verified to the letter by telegraph. This seems to be a late day to make this statement, but I have not a doubt of its truthfulness. The doctor who took down the statement desired to have it made public at the time it occurred, but until this time the lady and her husband have never been willing to have it printed, even if the names were not used.

"Another singular experience the lady has passed through, that of finding foreign books, that were out of the trade. She was the owner of several copies of an author's works, and desired the balance of his productions. She sent to one of the principal publishing-houses in New York, and was informed that they could not be found in the city. Not satisfied with the report, she and her husband visited New York, and personally looked for them. She called upon the publisher she had written to, and he said they could not be obtained. Mrs. B. asked another person in the store if she might examine the stock? He gave her to understand that he knew what books there were in the stock, but allowed her to go behind the counter; she then and there placed her hand upon the book she was in search of, to the astonishment of the firm, they declaring that they did not know how the book came into their possession. She took the book, paying the importer's price and duties, 2,300 dols., and subsequently asked for another book, which they stated was *not* in their stock, but allowing her again to go behind the counter, she put her hand upon the book and brought it forth. She took this book also, paying 1,300 dols. for it. There was no mark upon the book, nor mention of it in the catalogue, and it was a great mystery to the firm how the two books came into their stock.

"Mrs. B. had three similar experiences to the preceding with Boston bookstores. She called at one of the most prominent bookstores in Boston, and asked for a certain book; she was informed that it was out of print, and that they had not had a copy for years! 'But,' said Mrs. B., 'I think you have a copy, and if you will open the bundle of books on the shelf,' pointing to the bundle, 'You will find a copy.' They did so, and to their astonishment and her delight, they brought forth the book desired. There is much more connected with this book-hunting and finding, but this must suffice, as I do not want to use too much of your space."

Mr. Hayward says:—"The more I see of these spiritual manifestations the less I feel to blame persons for not accepting or seeing them, as I do, in all their significance. The parties connected with the incidents above related, are all well-known citizens, and above and beyond sensational reports, fraud, and deception. Mr. B. is a thirty-five years' member of a well-known firm that has been in existence for fifty years, and, as there is no money involved in Mrs. B.'s mediumship, she being in a pecuniary position where she is not obliged to take a fee or make merchandise of her gifts, those that know the facts cannot help having unbounded confidence in her statements respecting the exercise of them. Since writing this report I have called on Mrs. B. and read it to her, and she declares it to be true, and much more of a mysterious nature has transpired."

The difference between those whom the world esteems as good, and those whom it condemns as bad, is in many cases little else than that the former have been better sheltered from temptation.

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES.

GOSWELL HALL.

On Sunday morning last, the members' monthly séance was held, at which a large and harmonious company gathered together. The mediums were Mr. and Mrs. Frank Herne, who generously gave their services on this occasion. The results were highly satisfactory. Three particularly good tests were given, the first to the writer, who came in company with Miss Wood, who was unrecognised by the mediums. Mr. Herne, after the hymn was concluded, addressed me, saying that a little black girl was beside me putting sweets into my mouth; this, I may mention, is what one of Miss Wood's controls used to be very fond of doing for me in years gone by. The next was through Mrs. Herne, who, under control, went all round the circle. On taking hold of Miss Wood's hands, she, in a joyous manner, called on "Pocha." Now these two ladies were absolute strangers and totally unknown to each other until after this morning's meeting. The third was similarly striking, and given to a most genial lady from the Antipodes, viz., Mrs. Durrant. Mr. Herne, under control, began making inquiries as to matters spiritual in Australia, with special reference to the 'children's' Lyceum, and best of all to the silk banners which this lady had in reality made, her friend, Mr. Thomas Walker, providing the silk. Mrs. Durrant confirmed every particular, and said Mr. Herne had no possible chance of knowing these things. Mr. and Mrs. Herne were heartily thanked for their kindness in coming. In the evening, Mr. Goss occupied the platform, and delivered one of his usual interesting lectures; subject: "The Prelude and Advent of Mankind." Dr. T. L. Nicholls is expected to speak on the "Prospects of Spiritualism," on Sunday evening next.—RES-FACTA.

QUEBEC HALL.

On Sunday last the usual evening service took place, there being a good attendance. Mr. MacDonnell's lecture was on the "Religion of Health." His course of argument was entirely on the same lines as Combe's famous work, "The Constitution of Man," with the addition of his own views on the application of those principles to the affairs of life. The debate which followed proved highly interesting from the number of speakers and the points of discussion raised, and gave the lecturer quite enough to do to hold his position on several points, and in some respects we think his opponents had the best of the argument. The question of the demonstration of Spiritualism was warmly discussed; and the definition of happiness elicited much profitable subject for reflection.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

NEWCASTLE.—On Wednesday evening, August 9th, the adjourned quarterly meeting of the N.S.E.S. took place at Weir's Court, to consider the annulling of the agreement with the proprietors of the *Herald*, as before stated. Mr. Jno. Mould, president, refused to take the chair, because, as he stated on the previous Sunday night, they had publicly given notice from the platform that they would relieve the Society from the responsibility of taking the 200 copies at full retail price, as they could get another channel for them. There was, therefore, no necessity for the present meeting, the object desired by it being gained. Several of the members considered the meeting to be necessary, inasmuch as the said statement was unofficial, and needed to be considered there. However, Mr. Mould would not officiate, which led to Mr. Hare, Mr. Hunter, and Mr. Blake being called upon in turn to fill the chair. Each of these gentlemen firmly refused to officiate as their president had done before them. Hereupon Mr. Thompson was called upon to preside, which he did. The three local proprietors of the *Herald of Progress*, Messrs. Mould, Hare, and Hunter, then declared the meeting illegal, and left the room. This was a piece of high-handed absurdity which the members would not brook, so they proceeded to business. They requested Mr. Frost to go for the minute book to record their transactions, but the gentlemen who had retired (and who apparently think the Society their own) refused to let him have it. The members meeting, however, proceeded without it, and it was resolved by an overwhelming majority to accept the offer of the proprietors of the *Herald of Progress*, releasing the Society from the agreement of six months ago. Thus the Society is free from an incubus that has tended to strangle its usefulness. On Sunday evening Mr. John Hare occupied the chair, and several gentlemen gave their experiences in Spiritualism. An editorial paragraph in the *Herald* of last week charges me with false and malicious statements about the N.S.E.S. In support of the truth of the reports, I may state that my information is the result, not only of my personal observation, but is regularly confirmed by several well-known gentlemen in the movement, whose characters are unimpeachable.

GATESHEAD.—At the rooms of the above Society on Sunday last, Mr. Hall lectured on "Jesus: His Mission to the World." Mr. H. Burton occupied the chair. NORTHUMBRIA.

WALSALL.

Not having had the services of Mr. J. J. Morse for some time, our Society made an engagement with him to deliver two

inspirational addresses here on Sunday last. We have recently had a very vigorous discussion here, in the local press, and it was natural that good attendances at the meeting on Sunday last should be the order of the day. The morning subject dealt with by the "controls" was "The Spirit Circle: Its Laws and Lessons," Mr. Washbourne conducting the preliminary exercises. The controls dealt in an able and exhaustive manner with the nature of the Spirit "circle," describing it in its physical, psychical, mental, and moral aspects, and detailed the various conditions needful for success. It was intently listened to, and much appreciated as a lucid exposition of its subject matter. In the evening Mr. J. Smith, the president, occupied the chair, and the subject of the Spirit controls, selected by a secularist friend, was "The Bible God." This address was an eloquent appeal for more devout and liberal definition of God than that supplied by sectarists, and many illustrations were given of the poor and inapt ideas of God that many bowed down to and worshipped. Our Society is in excellent condition, clear of debt, and has a balance in hand. Our meetings are fairly attended, and, taking all things, we have much to be thankful for. The audiences on Sunday last were the largest we have had for many months, drawn together, no doubt, by the merits of the medium, who is deservedly popular with us.—COR.

WORK OF THE COMING WEEK.

LONDON.

Sunday, August 20.—Goswell Hall. 11.30 a.m., Healing Séance. 7 p.m., Lecture, Dr. T. L. Nicholls.

" August 20.—Quebec Hall. 7 p.m., Lecture, Mr. Veitch.

Tuesday, August 22.—Quebec Hall. 8.30 p.m., Lecture, Mr. Wilson.

Wednesday, August 23.—Central Association. Members' Private Subscription Séance with Miss Wood, 7.15 for 7.30 p.m.

PROVINCES.

Public meetings are held every Sunday in Liverpool, Manchester, Oldham, Leeds, Bradford, Gateshead, Newcastle, Glasgow, Leicester, Nottingham, Belper, &c., &c. See our list of Societies on advertisement page.

Societies advertising in "LIGHT" will have attention called to their advertisements, as above, without extra charge.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. E. F.—We should still be glad if our correspondent would let us have some comments on the subject she refers to.

W. EGLISTON.—Thanks for contribution, but not received in time for present issue.

INVESTIGATOR.—We have heard that arrangements are in progress for a series of séances in the autumn with Miss Wood, of a kind which, if carried out, would be of the greatest value. We hope shortly to be able to give definite information.

THE WAY OF SALVATION.—There is but one salvation for all mankind, and that is the life of God in the soul. God has but one design or intent towards all mankind; and that is to introduce His own life, light, and spirit in them. There is but one possible way for man to attain this salvation or life of God in the soul. There is not one for the Jew, another for the Christian, and a third for the heathen. No! God is one, human nature is one, salvation is one, and the way to it is one; and that is the desire of the soul turned to God.—WILLIAM LAW.

THE WANT OF THE AGE.—In proportion as miracles have declined, scientific method has risen, in credit. Why should it not, then, be capable by this time of doing what in old times only miracle could do? Ah, but unhappily science refuses its testimony on the very points which are most essential. We want a future life, a heaven which will atone for all our sufferings here, and science will not give us one.—"Natural Religion." By the Author of "Ecc Homo."

MR. ALGERNON JOY, well-known to many readers of this journal, was married on Tuesday last to Mrs. Stair Douglas, whose name is familiar in connection with several philanthropic committees in London, especially those connected with female education, and also as having lately edited a memoir of her uncle, the late Dr. Whewell, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, which has been most favourably reviewed by all the best literary journals. The attachment is, we understand, one of many years' standing. Mrs. Algernon Joy is not a Spiritualist, in so far that she has never taken any part in the movement, and has only a modified belief in most of the phenomena, but she takes an intelligent and open-minded interest in the subject.

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—PLYMOUTH: August 20th; FALMOUTH: August 27th; BRISTOL: August 30th; BATH: August 31st; GATESHEAD: September 10th and 11th.—For terms and dates, direct Mr. Morse, at 53, Sigdon-road Dalston, London, E.—[Adet.]