

Light:

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SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 1881.

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THIRTY-THREE YEARS OF DELUSION.

The *Times*, as we have seen, has thought fit to signalise the thirty-third anniversary of Spiritualism by describing it as "a waning delusion." A curious instance this of the purblind folly which characterises the present mismanagement of what was once a powerful organ of opinion. Blunder following upon blunder, in matters where to blunder is to provoke laughter, has sadly dragged the *Times* down from its once high estate. It is said that a clean sweep is to be made in Printing House-square, and that new blood is to be infused into the old body. It is high time. Let us hope the new blood may be accompanied by a new spirit, one not strange to the *Times* in old days—the spirit of discernment. There was a time when those who then guided its destinies were shrewd and sharp to catch the signs that told them of coming change. Always a little in advance of opinion, yet never countenancing the new until its establishment as an article of popular faith was assured, it caught, as if by instinct, the first indications of popular belief. A few leading articles prepared the way; excellent reasons were given, by people who knew what they were talking of, for a change in belief; "ready about" was the order; and away went the *Times* on its new tack with all neatness and celerity.

But they have changed all that now. Clumsy, bungling mistakes defile the pages once so proudly free from error, and the man at the wheel is apparently unable to see the length of his own nose. How the old management would have scouted such an article as that on Spiritualism which was lately published in the *Times*. We can easily see the line they would have taken. The special case under notice would have received merited condemnation. We should have heard of the danger that meddling with these matters entailed: of the risk of deception: of the opportunities for fraud: of the relations between charlatans and gulls: of credulity, and folly, and sin. And then the writer, having got rid of the necessary homily, and developed the proper amount of virtuous indignation, would have trimmed his sails and prepared his readers to go off on the new tack that his discernment would have foreseen as inevitable in the near future. While reproaching these frauds, it must be admitted (he would have said) that no system is free from them in some form or another, and Spiritualism lends itself specially to adventure. He would have dilated on this until he could conveniently slide away into the distinction that he wished to draw between the vulgar acceptance and the real significance of the term Spiritualism. He would here become philological, and repudiate the barbarous word altogether. He would have something to say about soul and spirit, and our ignorance of the interaction between them and the body. And here he would infallibly quote Dr. W. B. Carpenter. He would point out how scientific observers of eminence, while unanimously repudiating popular interpretations, had arrived independently at conclusions favourable to some of the saner pretensions of the Spiritualist. Having admitted him to be sane in a way, he would point out the prevalence of the belief, its good and bad sides, and wind up by demanding that it be rescued from the hands of knaves and fools, impostors and charlatans, and be put under the safe guidance of such a Solon as himself.

There would have been a little correspondence then; a judicious selection would have been made of favourable letters; some scientific snubs would have found insertion; perhaps a convenient "occasional correspondent" would have been

allowed to inform the world of what he considered Spiritualism to be, and of its claims on attention; and so, having felt the public pulse, the Thunderer would pen another leader reflecting exactly the impressions that it had skilfully gathered from the letters received. If the time were come, the leader would be dexterously favourable, judiciously persuasive in advocacy, while admonitory in a paternal sort of way. If, on the contrary, the balance of such opinion as the *Times* values were on the other side, nothing so easy as to take credit for having shewn up a delusion, which, even if there be in it, as probably there is in everything, a germ of truth, is evidently so overlaid with:—&c., as to be quite unworthy of:—so-on. And all would have been well any way. The game of "heads I win, tails you lose," would have received another exemplification outside of Spiritualism.

The present management has neither the wisdom nor the tact for this; and so they get a writer who flaunts his ignorance in the forefront of his criticism to dub Spiritualism a "waning delusion," and to call for its suppression by Act of Parliament. He little knows the force of public opinion, nor, we venture to say, the character of that statesman who now guides opinion. It is no part of his business to suppress and choke free thought, though he be, as he is, settled in his own profound convictions. His mind, at least, is open, his vision clear, and he is little likely to pay a passing moment's heed to such vapouring.

If the *Times* wishes to see a real "waning delusion" it need not look far from home. If it wishes to wipe it away, so far as our own subject is concerned, we will give it some insight into the method. There are many other subjects on which it needs similar advice from those competent to give it.

The Delusion was born 33 years ago, as most men say. We prefer to describe this immortal Delusion as having then entered on a new phase of existence. Always existent, wherever man himself exists; wherever there is a domain of consciousness and thought on which the realm of spirit can impinge; the Delusion too knew embodiment at that time in obedience to that all-prevalent law which adapts means to ends. A long course of delusion on the part of leaders of opinion as to man's real nature and destiny had resulted in the prevalence in scientific circles of a crass Materialism, varied but hardly improved in religious communities by an iron Dogmatism. The materialistic conception is as little like any true view of man as the Dogmatic Theological conception is to the true view of God.

Spiritualism, so-called, and badly called, came, by no means for the first time in the world's history, to evidence the existence of a state of being higher than our own; to prove that conscious, intelligent being is possible outside of a human body; to appeal to the scientific instincts of the age by offering, on lines of exact demonstration, scientific proof of what had hitherto been a matter of pious faith; to encourage and elevate the never-dormant instincts of humanity that cried in vain to human science for some answer to their holiest and most deep-seated yearnings. These are some of the "higher aspects" of the subject of which the *Times* writer needlessly avowed his very evident ignorance.

Beginning, as all things must, from a small germ, it has grown with a rapidity that is not equalled by any other Delusion, to whatever Truth that nickname may be ignorantly applied. It has appealed to the hearts of untold multitudes at times when, gathered round the family circle, in an act of solemn worship, they have realised a conviction of Immortality for their dead, and for themselves, which no mere Faith could give them, and no human Science or Nescience can touch. In that stronghold it flourishes, undismayed by the storms that howl around such Spiritualism as the *Times* knows of, if indeed knowledge in this connection be not an inapplicable term.

And if it be said that this emotional Spiritualism is no less a Delusion; that grief unstrings the reason, and upsets the mental balance; we may forbear the retort that those most intimately concerned may be expected to have more exact material for

judgment than confessed ignorance, and may content ourselves with pointing out that Spiritualism does not appeal solely to the heart. Phenomenal evidence, such as has brought conviction to many who have no scientific attainments on which to rely, has reached many a well-known scientist whose boast would be that in Science he has no heart, no imagination, no preconception, no theory, but simply a trained mind, educated to observe and record facts. Such men, once they have brought their intellects to bear on the evidence, have arrived, without, so far as we know, one lonely exception, at a conviction of *Reality*, as contradistinguished from *Illusion* or *Delusion*, in that section of the subject with which they have dealt. They may, they must, have met with sources and traces of error; they will probably have been bewildered by apparent contradictions; but we speak within knowledge when we say that they soon find that *Delusion* is a word applicable rather to such persons as the *Times*' critic than to the rational investigators of Spiritualism.

We say nothing now of the other points of contact which Spiritualism has with various types of mind. We are not concerned to do more than cast back that foolish word, *Delusion*. We will make our critic a present of all the various side-issues which, sooner or later, will have to be reckoned with—we will not insist on the millions, scattered over the face of the earth, who give the lie to this "waning delusion" craze. We will say only that if the past 33 years have done no more than give a hint—were it only a trace—of incorporeal intelligent being; if they have only established a presumption of perpetuated life after death; if they have only proven the existence, and in some measure shewn the action, of a new force; if that epoch had produced nothing in literature but works that bear the honoured names of Hare, Edmunds, Dale Owen, Sargent, Crookes, Wallace, Zollner, to say nothing of others not less worthy; if it had done but these things, Spiritualism, during these years, has at any rate vindicated for itself a claim to respectful consideration, has opened out a sphere of investigation wide enough to satisfy the most soaring intellect, and has already conferred substantial benefits on mankind.

Of one thing we have no doubt. Even if the *Times* writer be very young, and if he live out his allotted days, he will be able to satisfy himself in this life that Spiritualism is by no means *waning*, and when he, in his turn, joins the majority, he will know that it is no *Delusion*.

AN EXPLANATION BY "A KABBALIST."

Soul is the only thing eternal in man. Spirit and body are merely temporal casings of this eternal principle, the Soul, which by self-will has fallen from its divine estate. As long as Spirits and men live in self-will their volitional being compels the divine being to become latent, and they live unconscious of God, who, as infinite ocean of life and love, surrounds the straying soul-atoms. Man, however, being doubly encased in a spirit-self and in a physical sensual self, is doubly unconscious of God's loving omnipresence, and ignores even the divine life that is latent within him.

Thus the unregenerate "Soul is a stray atom of God," while God is the magnet that draws the Soul back to Himself, and "God is an infinite ocean of life," but is only known as such to those who *know* Him; namely, to Souls, that is, to regenerate Souls.

All those who have attained to the absolute state consider that the Soul, and not the Spirit, is the eternal principle in man.

I have used the word *Soul* advisedly in opposition to *Spirit*, for Spirit is mortal, but Soul is immortal. "The Spirits" all shall die although they may not know it, and man may die in spirit while he is in the body, and may thus become a perfect, that is, a regenerate being. But the Soul shall never die, no matter how it may be degraded and depraved. The Soul is the innermost kernel of our being, the Soul is God, and becomes God in the regenerate state. Spirits are imperfect beings, merely disembodied men and women. Angels, to use a spiritualist term, are advanced Spirits, but still imperfect beings.

Souls, in the commencement of their volitional career, are not cast out, but by self-will tear themselves away from the Divine Being, God, in whom they had their conscious existence, and then fall to the planes of spirit and matter. No more living by the law of love, they become subject to laws of thought and force. In the end these beings are only too happy to regain their original state of purity, and these are the *Souls*, namely, regenerate, perfect, and divine beings, who, having re-arrived at their primitive state of innocence and goodness, return to earth out of pity for those who are in self-inflicted darkness, to become the teachers of humanity. It is one being throughout, though a million of years may be the intervening period when the Soul fell from God, until her final return when she becomes again a pure Soul. One must be more than "an ordinary reader" to understand that which is, which was, and which ever will be the eternal law of existence.

Spiritualists may not have that training which qualifies one to understand the plain truths of the Kabbalah, but whoever has arrived to the soul-plane will not absolutely condemn my views.

J. K.

THE RELATIONS OF SPIRITUALISM TO SCIENCE.

By Mr. F. F. Cook, of Chicago.

Read before the British National Association of Spiritualists, April 21st, 1881.

An effort is making to place Spiritualism under the authority of Science. Could the intention be realised the outlook for the new dispensation would be indeed gloomy. Fortunately, there is not the least cause for alarm.

Did the phenomena represent the totality of Spiritualism—were no consequences involved in establishing their claims to scientific recognition other than would follow their relegation to an origin like, let us say, Psychic Force—this posing on a scientific pedestal would probably result in no great harm. Happily for the world, Spiritualism is a law unto itself, and its truths lie below any depths soundable by the plummet of self-sufficient "authority." The cause will ever be immeasurably in advance of the effect.

Spiritualism and Science represent different orders of activity and progress. Practically, they are in conflict. I do not mean by this that Spiritualism opposes Science—however hostile the attitude of scientific minds may be towards Spiritualism—but that they differ radically in the mode of presenting their distinctive truths; and as there will be no lack of injudicious persons seeking to make them yoke-fellows, there is likely to continue trouble between them until Science shall give up the contest. Spiritualism is not afraid of Science for the reason that it is in no sense amenable to its formulas. It is above Science. Spiritualism would employ scientific methods in all investigations where the subject admits of their application; but the attempt to apply physical methods to spiritual manifestations with a view to ascertaining their source, is not only a waste of time, but, if persisted in, is destined to result in most baneful consequences.

Science, as an expression of the mind, is authority; Spiritualism is its antithesis. One is *soulless knowledge*, the other a *living experience*. One is almost wholly associated with matter; the other relates as exclusively to spirit. Both are based on *facts*—and this is their only kinship—but while the one is able to reduce the phenomena with which it legitimately concerns itself to laws—because the activities producing them are *spontaneous*, and obedient to inherent principles—the other is restricted to hypotheses, inasmuch as its phenomena are in no sense *spontaneous*, but the result of a *volition* that must forever elude mortal cognition. We may observe these phenomena and become convinced of their spiritual origin, but we can neither cause nor predict the effects. Spiritualism, as represented by its manifestations and social activities, is a *super-science*. To mundane science it must forever remain *terra incognita*.

While *facts*, or phenomena, underlie both Science and Spiritualism, it is blindly assumed that they run parallel to a common destiny. No assumption was ever more misleading. A thousand *facts*, nor a million *facts*, do not necessarily make a science. They are simply a mass of material from which a science may or may not be evolved. I will go further and affirm, though every scientist on earth, through careful observation, became convinced that spiritual phenomena are verities, still a science of Spiritualism would, on that account, be not one jot advanced. The result would represent nothing beyond an aggregation of individual convictions—to the individual minds verities, deductions from observed phenomena—but not scientific deductions.

In the presence of spiritual phenomena a scientist has no advantages over ordinary mortals. He may use scientific instruments, so-called, in pursuing his investigations, but this only goes to prove that he has a method of his own, and in no wise leads to other results than in the case of a person who relies on simpler modes of observation. Either the investigator is convinced or he is not convinced. Neither can follow the manifestation to its source.

Spiritual phenomena are *mentally conditioned*. All other phenomena are in some sense conditioned, but, as a rule, only by the processes of spontaneous nature. Spiritual phenomena, however, are conditioned by environments wholly unknowable to man, and adjusted by a wisdom and insight almost omniscient.

Spiritual truths are exclusively an individual possession, and can under no terms be transferred. Each comes to this living fount with his own cup, and, according as it is large or small, he receives much or little. From this cup you may drink the knowledge of everlasting life freely; its contents renew themselves after every draining, and now and then you are rejoiced to discover that the measure has grown somewhat, and that you may drink deeper draughts. But the moment you pass your cup to a parching neighbour, he declares that you are deluded—the cup is empty; and in no wise may you exchange cups. In the Churches the cups are pretty much after one pattern, and it is a matter of indifference out of whose you drink. In Science all individual limitations are cast aside, and its devotees drink from a running stream, with no thought of personal possession. But in Spiritualism you cannot pass beyond the measure of your *spiritual growth*; the moment the cup, whose waters are so soul-refreshing, passes out of your possession its contents turn to vapour.

That spiritual truths meet with tremendous resistance is by no means to be deplored. That they come as individual pos-

sessions is their distinctive attribute, and determines their unscientific quality. Spiritualism is above all things a religion. It comes to sustain the soul, not to feed the mind. For the latter, Science is all-sufficient and its noblest form of expression. For the soul it has nothing, and takes away the little that may anywhere remain.

Let us consider for a moment what a scientific Spiritualism implies. Does it not mean that the world shall be convinced whether or no? That all individual religious standards shall be destroyed and those only accepted that are approved by a scientific hierarchy, independent of their fitness for individual ends? "We ask no more than that Science shall determine the basic truth"—I imagine I hear some one exclaim. Granted that you ask no more. The basic truth involves all the rest. Once give Science authority over this domain to never so small an extent, and it will retain its hold to the bitter end. Its determination to be an arbiter and infallible guide in the religious field is daily becoming more apparent. It pretends not to be concerned with religion, but nevertheless makes unceasing war upon it. This is quite natural. Science instinctively feels that religion is the one activity in the known universe that has independent sources and modes that elude all definition. The antagonism is not an accident—a misunderstanding. It is fundamental. In the individual, however, these antagonistic forces may run parallel without clashing. Man has dual perceptions—more or less developed—one adapted to scientific and the other to spiritual truths. If he insists that the spiritual shall subordinate themselves to the scientific, he must not be surprised to find the spiritual vanish altogether. Science is a spiritual straitjacket.

At this point I desire to draw support from a notable example. Few names in the scientific world are to-day more distinguished than that of William Crookes. As a private individual, forming conclusions only for himself I have no doubt this gentleman is a confirmed Spiritualist. However, as a man of science, following strictly inductive methods, without substituting belief and hypothesis for demonstration, he would be guilty of an almost unpardonable blunder were he to affirm the manifestations he has witnessed had a spiritual origin. In a scientific sense this point can never be proven, though one may rest with absolute certainty in the belief.

Mr. Crookes' experiments are among the most careful on record. While giving his attention to spiritual phenomena, he had associated with him other scientists, all specially qualified for the duties assigned to them. The results were recorded with scrupulous accuracy, and if any trust whatever is to be reposed in the senses and human testimony, these experiments fully establish the validity of the claim of Spiritualists.

Some of these experiments were made with the mediums known as Eva Fay and Mrs. Florence Corner, *née* Cook. The reputation of both these ladies as mediums has since been seriously compromised, at least from any scientific point of view, and to rehabilitate them, even in the estimation of most lay investigators, involves that the whole ground be gone over again. After that, any subsequent "exposure" will again resolve the experiments into "scientific" chaos.

These "exposures" have in no valid sense undermined the truths of Spiritualism; nor have they affected the genuineness of the manifestations placed on record by Mr. Crookes, or their value as personal possessions; but as scientific factors they are irreparably damaged, and this the caterers to Science in our ranks are forced to admit.

Let me pause here a moment to state the position of those in our midst who are straining for "scientific" Spiritualism. They insist on what they are pleased to call "fraud-proof conditions." They do this on moral grounds, and also that the observations of the manifestations may achieve a "scientific" standing. And finally they lay down this rule—which is eminently sound from a scientific point of view—that a medium once detected in tricking is for ever discredited. In other words, Science cannot condone a moral lapse. Common facts may kick over the traces once in a while, but scientific facts or data are vestal virgins, and the merest breath of suspicion casts them out of the temples.

It is to the logic of this position that I propose holding our scientific servitors. We have finally reached the marrow of the bone. According to their own canons the experiments of Mr. Crookes are wholly vitiated by the detection of fraud—or at least of something that lent colour to the charge—during other experiments, by other persons, with the same mediums. I am entirely in accord with this position, and am prepared to go further, and affirm that Mr. Crookes' experiments possessed no scientific value, even when Eva Fay and Mrs. Corner bore unspotted reputations as mediums.

Manifestations of Spirit must ever rest upon two uncertainties. One is the Spirit, the other the medium. In the beginning I drew a distinction between phenomena having their source in spontaneous nature and phenomena the result of volition. Spontaneous nature never tricks you, never deceives. All aberrations are due to your ignorance, not her duplicity. But in the realm of phenomena of volition it is far otherwise. Here the element of uncertainty overbalances all others. Now, with regard to Spirit phenomena, the uncertainty is two-fold. If you escape the Spirit Scylla you are sure to go to "scientific" destruction on Charybdis medium. Wherever you turn you are confronted by volition. I see but one escape from this dilemma.

It is to strangle the medium after every successful séance. Such a course would put an end to all "exposures."

"Conceding the difficulties in the way, cannot Science overcome them?" may be asked. Science cannot overcome herself. The difficulties in the way are scientific, not spiritual. As laymen, scientists may eliminate the last vestige of doubt, and stand on certitude that shall be as rock-rooted as the everlasting hills; but as scientists they are as reeds shaken in the wind, with foundations of treacherous quicksand.

It does not follow that we may not be intelligent observers, and so order our conduct and attitude towards the phenomena as to increase their force and beauty; but this only as individuals. A circle of nicely adjusted elements may make marvellous progress under intelligent adaptation to the modes of the movement; but the moment the attempt is made to force the results outside of the "conditions" under which they are vouchsafed, they will certainly diminish if not entirely fail.

Spiritualism is a truth divided into as many parts as there are persons to be benefited, and its modes never will be other than those of differentiation, each investigator, without formula, receiving the light as in spirit wisdom it seems adapted to him. Such a method is unquestionably wise.

Investigations undertaken to astonish the world never fail of their object—but not always according to the intention of the sitters. The Spirit-world ever pays in its own coin, and after its own manner. Self-sufficiency is ever humiliated. If you seek personal victory you find defeat. For applause they substitute ridicule. Your failure they turn to serve as lesson for the world.

Some of our friends talk as if the development of mediumship was to any appreciable degree under the control of mortals. It is, indeed, "many are called, but few are chosen." Development for active service is wholly by Spirit selection, and in accordance with the requirements of the situation. The time spent in developing home or private mediumship is almost a sheer waste. It often comes unsought, but of those who seek it the efforts of not more than one in a score are rewarded. The reason is obvious. Nine out of every ten seek mediumship for purely selfish ends. In the last analysis, self-gratification is at the bottom of the desire. Mediumship is not a plaything to be taken up or laid aside at pleasure. Along the entire social gamut, from the highest to the lowest, there is adaptation of mediumship. But as nine-tenths of the public are below the line denominated cultured, so fully that proportion of mediums are of a corresponding grade. In fact, the supply for the so-called upper classes narrowly escapes being invisible. The reason is plain. This is a seed-time. It is a period for giving the movement breadth and direction. There will always be time enough to give it a literary finish, but not to shape its social and religious destiny. It is easy enough to change the decorations of a house, but its structure is fundamental.

Why this haste to force the truth on the world against its desire? All men know by this time what it purports to be. Let them dig for this gold as we have dug. Without the effort it will not be appreciated—it is doubtful if it be worth the having. That Spiritualism ever exhibits its most repulsive aspects to the world is no accident. It is a part of the ordeal of acceptance. While you are "testing" Spirits with such intelligent and progressive devices as ropes, and chains and padlocks, Spirits, perchance, are doing a bit of "testing" on their own account. That you say you come for the truth counts for nothing with them. They are watching to see if you mean it—whether you are capable of recognising truth when you see it.

(To be continued.)

THE KABBALAH.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—It has become generally believed that I am the author of papers in the *Spiritualist* on the Kabbalah.

I find further that certain individuals insist on giving me that honour notwithstanding my denial.

I wrote to the *Spiritualist* last week stating that I was not the author. This letter, by oversight, has not been inserted, and I will therefore beg permission through your paper to state distinctly that I am not the author of these papers; that I have not the remotest idea who the author is; that I know very little indeed about the Kabbalah, and that I often fail to understand the meaning of these papers by "M.D."

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

12, Great Cumberland-place, Hyde Park.

April 25th, 1881.

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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 séances.

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may be obtained of E. W. ALLEN, Ave Maria-lane, London, and of all Booksellers.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

At the Fortnightly Discussion Meeting of the British National Association, on Monday evening next, May 2nd, the proceedings will comprise narratives of personal experiences, by members and others. Visitors are cordially invited to attend and take part in the discussion.

We continue to receive the kindest words of commendation from representatives of every section of thought within the ranks of Spiritualism. In a letter just received, Dr. Eugene Crowell, the accomplished author of "Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism," pays a high compliment to our venture. "You may justly be proud of 'LIGHT.' Its tone is unexceptionable, and its character in all other respects, so far as I am qualified to judge, is above criticism. I read nearly or quite all the contents of each number, and invariably gain from my reading new and useful ideas." Coming from such a source, these are to us encouraging and animating words. Dr. Crowell worthily represents the school of Christian Spiritualism in America, and no one throughout the movement deservedly stands higher for sincerity, earnestness, and simplicity of aim. He has devoted himself to the Cause, to the detriment, we regret to learn, of his own health. All will desire that he should be restored—we, especially; for, when he has regained his usual health, he has promised the valuable support of his pen. Epes Sargent would have aided us with American news had he been spared. His interest in "LIGHT" was very keen. We are thankful to know that his surviving friends share his opinion.

There would seem, according to the most recent number of *The Theosophist*, to be now residing in St. Petersburg a highly uncanny young woman of the name of Pelagueya. Her parents seem to have abandoned her in childhood to the tender mercies of what corresponds to our Foundling Hospital, whether from experience of her antics, or in a moment of prevision of the trouble she was to cause, we are not told. She seems to have been taken into the service of a German lady who lived near Petersburg—Mrs. Beetch—and to have lived blamelessly in that position until she attained the age of 17. It was at this juncture that she became, as the report of the police, who were sent to investigate the case, declares, the victim "of the weird doings of some incomprehensible, invisible agency."

The records of these doings are "reprinted in every Russian organ of note," and are attested by the report of the police, as well as by abundant evidence of eye-witnesses of the "phenomena, which took place, not in darkness or during night, but in the day-time, and in the full view of the inhabitants of the hamlet." These phenomena were of the kind familiar to observers who have watched the early development of a powerful physical medium. Accompanied by a farm-servant, she goes to the cellar to get some potatoes, and is pelted with them; her basket being also filled as it rested on her head. A strict search revealed no concealed neighbour who could have done this. Billets of firewood fly about; crockery becomes animated; water is instinct with motion. Her bedstead "is seen levitating to the very ceiling, then turns upside down and tosses off the intruder" who has ventured to occupy Pelagueya's place. "The cows and pigs seem to become suddenly possessed; the former, frightening the whole village with the most infuriated bellowing, tried to climb up the mangers, while the latter knocked their heads against the walls, running round as if pursued by some wild animal. Pitchforks, shovels, benches, feeding-trough, snatched

away from their places, pursue the terrified girls." Such are the uncanny accompaniments of this most uncanny person.

It is interesting to note that these phenomena "were always preceded by an extraordinary noise, as if of a howling wind, a cracking in the walls, and raps in the window-frames and glass." A priest could (very naturally) make nothing of it. Men and women flocked from the whole country-side to gaze at the marvels; and at length poor Pelagueya was packed off back to the Foundling Hospital. Since that time full investigations have been carried out by the police, and the girl is in the hands of a "rich nobleman of Petersburg, who is a Spiritualist." We trust that he will protect her from unduly rapid development, and prevent her from becoming the mere sport of these tricky Spirits. No Spiritualist of experience will find in the narrative, which we have barely summarised, anything beyond his knowledge. There is always some difficulty in knowing whether a narrative of such phenomena, even if drawn up by the police, is exact. It needs a certain familiarity with such things to enable a man to keep a level head when they are going on, and to give an exact record of what he sees. It is your stranger, your novice, not your experienced Spiritualist, who usually gives way to exaggeration and hyperbole. But assuming the record to be fairly true, we have a case—another among very many—of powerful physical mediumship in its earliest stage of development. Guided by wise and affectionate treatment it will tone down, and lose its erratic vehemence. Improperly treated, it may end in obsession, or in injury to the mental or physical health of the medium.

The writer in *The Theosophist* considers that poor Pelagueya "simply evolved an excess of the one instead of the other of the forces which together form what is commonly known as magnetism." Well, well! the potatoes, and the bed, and the cows, and the pigs seem all to have been most abnormally charged.

As we were going to press last week a copy of *Truth* came to hand, and we had just time to notice the fact that it devoted two columns and a-half to Mr. D. D. Home, "who pronounces his name Hume." The writer is pleased to say that Mr. Home is "sincere in his belief," though a little inclined to the doings of Simon Magus. Every reigning sovereign, "except the Queen of England and the Pope," has consulted him, and the Emperors of France and Russia especially favoured him. Had it not been that the jealousy of the Church was aroused, he would have continued to influence the Empress Eugénie and her husband. Of course the Lyon case is touched on; and the writer concludes that "he may be an impostor"—though he has just before conceded that he is "sincere in his belief"—"but he has certainly converted atheists and materialists to faith in God and the immortality of the soul." We do not know about immortality; but that boast, if greatly discounted, is more than most dare make.

How often do we find the ruling instinct strong in death! It is recorded of Lord Beaconsfield that immediately before his death he made as though he would address an assembly. He lay on an invalid bed, so arranged that he was almost in a sitting posture. A paroxysm of coughing had left him in the extremity of weakness, and those about him were watching anxiously for what might happen, when he suddenly raised himself, threw back his arms, and inflated his lungs, with a gesture very familiar to those who have seen him rise to reply in debate. His lips moved, and he fell back motionless, and so the spirit passed. No doubt in the supreme moment his spirit had gone back to the scene of its many triumphs, and was living them over again. It seemed, indeed, during the 30 days that the old statesman lay in his solitary grandeur, that his mind was occupied in lonely reverie. He was absolutely self-contained; "desirous to live, but not afraid to die," a solitary man, independent of accessories, needing no external aid or even sympathy, a spirit lonely and self-sufficient, made of the stuff that works out inflexibly the purposes of an indomitable will. It was a dramatic ending to a most dramatic life.

The *Religio-Philosophical Journal* usually contains a record of some phenomena worth preserving. The last issue narrates an excellent séance held recently with Mrs. Simpson, of Chicago. The narrator is Payton Spence, of 138, East 16th Street, New York, and he is extremely careful to describe the circumstances under which the experiments were made. It may be sufficient to say that these, as respects light, and precautions against error

of every kind, left nothing to be desired. The table was of the simplest kind, without harbour for trick; the day was bright and clear; the time near noon; and Mr. Spence was alone with the medium, who invited and courted every conceivable test.

Three experiments were made. At the first, Mrs. Simpson sat with her right side toward the table, her feet 18 or 20 inches from it. The two slates were provided with cloth covers, and, having been carefully examined, were stitched together by Mr. Spence. Mrs. Simpson held them in one hand close to the under surface of the table, her other hand being in full view. Mr. Spence was requested to mention aloud any name, and he chose "Geo. M. B. Martin." When the slate was presently withdrawn the fastenings were found intact, and on the inner surface of one of the slates were the letters G. M., each about three-quarters of an inch long.

In the next experiment Mrs. Simpson put on the table a goblet, containing about an inch of water. The sleeve of her right arm was then bound round with a handkerchief sewn securely to the dress, so as effectually to prevent any object being taken from it during the experiment. Mr. Spence placed himself between the medium's feet and the table, so as to be able accurately to watch what occurred. The goblet was then placed on a slate and pressed closely against the under surface of the table by Mrs. Simpson's right hand. In a few seconds it was withdrawn, containing a full-blown carnation, which Mr. Spence carried away with him.

In the last experiment of the series, the goblet was again placed on the slate, and beside it a piece of pencil, which Mr. Spence was requested to identify. This was placed, as before, close to the under surface of the table. Mr. Spence asked aloud a question about a gentleman *whose name he did not mention*. When, in the course of a few seconds, the slate was withdrawn. Mr. Spence found on that part of the slate covered by the stem of the goblet the initials of the name and a pertinent answer to his question. The pencil, previously identified, was found *within the goblet*.

It seems to us that error is excluded by the precautions taken in these experiments. Mr. Spence draws attention to "the air of open frankness and honesty that courted the light," to the absence of all "meaningless conditions," as well as of anything that might tend to divert the most concentrated attention from the experiment, and adds these weighty words: "It is very evident from the above description of my séance with Mrs. Simpson that it is possible for a medium to be placed under the most rigid tests without being in the least humiliated and without the slightest diminution of the variety or impairment of the distinctness of the manifestations. If all genuine mediums were in the same way to submit their manifestations to the requirements of exact and reliable experiment, the days of fraudulent mediums would soon be numbered." We may be permitted to add that not only would deception on the part of a fraudulent medium be impossible, but possible error in observation would be eliminated. It seems to us that this latter is a more fruitful source of mistake than the former. In very many recorded experiments it is not possible for the observer to say accurately what did take place. It would be well that no experiments should be recorded for public use except such as were conducted under circumstances that absolutely preclude mistake.

The thirty-third anniversary of Modern Spiritualism was celebrated, we learn from the *Banner*, with enthusiasm in Boston, U.S.A. Mr. Colville delivered a fluent address on "What has Spiritualism done for the World in the past Thirty-three Years?" and then the audience shewed their earnestness by voting no adjournment for dinner! The programme seems to have gone along its varied course till the manager announced that he had secured the hall for the celebration of the thirty-fourth anniversary in 1882. That is the way our American friends shew us how to march onward.

There is abundant evidence in his "Life" that Bishop Wilberforce lived in the full consciousness of the presence of those whom he had loved and lost. Replying to a question as to the communication permitted with those who had departed from this world he says: "I think it is left quite free to us to believe that they see us, that they are so possessed with seeing that Christ is upholding us that they can be at peace, even in our trials and danger. I often and often believe in their presence,

oversight, and real (though suspended as far as perception goes) ministry of love for us; but I do not think we can say that we know anything on this subject." It was with the Bishop a pious belief. His instincts were true, but his theological training had somewhat warped them, or, at least, had dissuaded him from relying implicitly upon them. Had he had the opportunity that we have of verifying the presence of the departed about us, it is more than likely that one whose instincts were so true, and whose insight and spiritual perception were so keen would have found his own eyes opened so that the "perception" of these spiritual visitants, whose presence he sensed, would have been no longer "suspended."

Dr. Slade, we learn with pleasure, has received a cordial invitation from Professor Zöllner and Baron von Hoffmann to revisit Germany at the earliest opportunity. "The cause of Spiritualism," they say, "has gained much ground, and your advent among us would be hailed with joy." So they have not found second thoughts best. Zöllner should ask Lankester to join the party in order that his second thoughts may have a chance.

Mr. F. F. Cook's paper on "The Relations of Spiritualism to Science," read before the British National Association, excited considerable interest, and Mr. Cook's use of the term "Science" was freely criticised. On this point we have a letter of explanation from Mr. F. Podmore, which will appear in our next issue.

Mr. Edward Dillon Lewis, solicitor, has applied to Sir James Ingham, at Bow-street, for a summons against Mrs. Hart-Davies for perjury alleged to have been committed during the recent trial; and the summons has been granted. We do not know at whose instance this step has been taken; but one thing is clear—that it requires very strong grounds to justify the dragging of this very disagreeable question again before the public. The charge, moreover, is a very serious one, and if it is made by friends of Mrs. Fletcher their failure to substantiate it will damage her more than ever. On the other hand, if they are sure of their facts, nobody can blame them for attempting to shew that Mrs. Fletcher has been convicted on the evidence of one whose testimony was unworthy of credit. Nay more! all who know, or think they know, that Mrs. Davies did not speak the truth will be moral cowards if they do not come forward and say so. If Mrs. Fletcher is really innocent, it is cruel that she should be allowed to suffer because some of those who profess to be her friends have not the necessary courage to give evidence in her behalf.

A "LONG-SUFFERING" SPIRITUALIST.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am considerably vexed by persons who attack me on the subject of Spiritualism. I am now visiting friends in the country, and among them are some who are puzzled about it, and who puzzle me in turn. They know nothing of the subject but what they gather, in common with the world at large, from various public prints, or from such expositors as Mr. Stuart Cumberland.

I was calling the other day on a good Evangelical who had evidently arrived "by leaps and bounds" at a diabolic solution of the mystery. This devil-theory had, however, been upset by Bishop's *Leisure Hour* papers. It could hardly be that the Devil had gone into partnership with Bishop as a conjuror—though more unlikely things have been suggested as explanatory of Spiritualism.

My friend took up the last number of the *Leisure Hour* and attacked me:—

"You know this man?"

"Petticoat Bishop? I know of and about him."

"What do you mean? Is he a conjuror?"

"No! He is a contortionist with an abnormal body, and still more abnormal mind. If you want further particulars, Glasgow is the place to get them, or New York."

"You don't like him. But is what he says true?"

"Hardly. His accounts of Spiritualism 'seldom deviate into truth,' even by accident. But I don't blame him in any such degree as I blame the Religious Tract Society, who allow him to impose on the ignorance and prejudice of their readers. These things are misleading in fact and in intention, and give a totally false impression. Maskelyne and Cook did the same. There is no Spiritualism in all that."

"Well, then, what do you make of the other form of Spiritualism that we have had in the daily papers? Is that more to your taste—more accurate?"

"Certainly not. I do not admit for a moment that Spiritualism had any necessary connection with that case. And if it had, how is a great system chargeable with the sins of one of its professors more than Christianity and your pet preacher are responsible for the unsavoury revelations of this Barnwell case?"

"But the system, as you call it, produces this. When not fraud, it is diabolic."

"By no sort of means. It is hampered with fraud, no doubt. So is everything human, and you cannot avoid it. There is no such thing as exact truth in this world; and the more strange and novel a thing is, the more it is concerned with the unseen and the unknown, the more it will be adulterated, especially if any money is to be made out of it. Tom Tiddler's Ground is always open, and all sorts of people rush to it—by no means Spiritualists only."

"No. But surely you must admit that there is a strong diabolic element in it."

"I don't know. My acquaintance with the Devil would have to be enlarged before I could say that. I have seen (which you have not) various manifestations of Spirit-power that are what you would call diabolic. Many of them are very much like what the incarnated spirits who have lived in the New Cut, or other such places provided for the adulteration of humanity, would produce if they tried their hand at a manifestation. Are they devils?"

"No, no! I mean THE DEVIL."

"Never came across him; and cannot say what he might do. But if he is the sort of omnipotent person I have heard you describe, I should expect something much more serious from him than the antics I have witnessed. They are referable rather to Puck than to Satan. There are falsehoods, no doubt. Is this world free from them? There are follies. Are you always wise? There are things inexplicable, which are therefore put down to the Evil One. People of your type of mind have always charged every new and unknown thing—every discovery, no matter how beneficent—every new development—on the Devil. That is nothing new."

"At any rate, you admit that the whole thing is mean and base."

"I do nothing of the kind. I do not even feel able to call anything 'mean or base.' You ought to know enough of your Bible to avoid such terms in connection with what you know nothing about. I have seen much that I know to be of spiritual origin that is ennobling, pure, and good, according to the only standard I have to go by. If I meet that which according to that same standard is impure and unholy, I avoid it. Read your Bible. It is full of Spiritualism from cover to cover. Is all you read there diabolic? Read Mr. S. O. Hall's 'Letter to a Clergyman' on the subject—I will lend it to you; Dale Owen's address to the clergy; and the evidence adduced in his 'Footfalls and Debateable Land,' and then say as a candid person whether Spiritualism is not something very different from what it appears in the courts of law, or in the gymnastic exhibitions of Mr. Bishop."

And yet I feel quite sure that my friend would put me down as a deluded mortal—quite unamenable to reason—prejudiced, flighty, looking at things from a false standpoint. And I have no doubt, when I return, the first question that will greet me will be, "And do you still think there is any truth in Spiritualism?"

It is on such lines that human opinion is framed. No need to look into facts. "It is a dangerous thing, sir, and diabolic—a sign of these latter days. I, who know nothing whatever about it, and do not want to know, I tell you so."

A LONG-SUFFERING ONE

MY ACQUAINTANCE WITH MR. AND MRS. FLETCHER.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I wish to state some facts relating to Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher, which I should have been glad to have given under oath at the recent trial had the court been willing to receive such testimony.

Nearly four years ago I went, a perfect stranger, and asked for a séance with Mr. J. W. Fletcher. He had never seen me and knew nothing of my name or nationality. I simply called on him and said, "Can you give me a séance?" He said, "Yes," and at once went into a trance. Then, speaking in a voice quite different from his usual one, he said, "I am a little Indian girl." "I want no little Indian girl," I replied; "I want my own Spirit friends." "It is my mission," she gently replied, "to magnetise my medium and bring your friends to you. If you had known that you would not have said, 'I want no Indian girl.'" I apologised

and said I should be glad to have her bring any of my Spirit friends. In a moment, speaking through Mr. Fletcher, she said, "There is a young girl here; not a woman; not a child, but just a young girl." Our only daughter had died twelve years before at the age of 14. "This girl has a boy's name. She is Willie, and yet she is a girl." Our daughter's name was Wilhelmina, and we always called her Willie. "This girl with a boy's name says you are her mamma. There is a gentleman with her, who says he came to this country with the Brothers Davenport. He is Dr. Fer—Fer—, yes, Dr. Fergusson." Dr. Fergusson, who came from America with the Brothers Davenport, was our dear friend and very fond of our daughter. He died six years after she did. I had then a long conversation with my daughter and my friend, full of the most convincing tests. After this I had several séances with Mr. Fletcher full of tests of the most remarkable and satisfactory character.

Mrs. Fletcher was not then in England. When she came I heard that some persons thought her not equal to her husband in character and gifts, and I was somewhat influenced by such opinions; but one day I was sent for by one of the Spirit guides of Willie Eglinton, then living with us, to come into the séance room. This Spirit I have found a wise and good counsellor. I was glad to listen to him, but had not the least idea of what he wished to say to me. Speaking with his own direct voice—not by the mouth of Mr. Eglinton—this Spirit said he had sent for me to tell me what he knew of Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher. He said he knew them intimately, and that they were two of the best people and best mediums in the world. He said:—

"They do not live in self-indulgence, but in marital purity and continence that they may devote their vital force to their mediumship. They are people after your own heart, living the life that you have loved to live and that you have taught others to live."

I said: "I wish to know such people," and he expressed his desire that I should make their acquaintance. Accordingly, I soon called upon Mrs. Fletcher, and from that time she and her husband visited us. At our house they met many persons of character and ability, and made a good impression upon our friends. I felt sure, and still feel, that my Spirit friend had told me the truth about them.

I had only one séance with Mrs. Fletcher before they left for America last summer. At this, one of Mrs. Fletcher's guides gave us a rule for an inner circle, which prescribed abstinence from flesh diet, and nervous stimulants, and intoxicants; and other conditions of the higher forms of Spirit manifestations.

After Mrs. Fletcher returned from America to meet the charge of swindling by means of pretended Spirit messages, brought against her by Mrs. Hart-Davies, she spent a good deal of time at our house, and I came to know her most intimately. I found her brave and honest, very gifted as a medium, and of great truth and purity of character. I am sure she would not commit what she knew to be a mortal sin to save herself from prison or from death. I came to love her tenderly and reverently as a gifted and devotedly good woman—made of the stuff of which saints and martyrs are made—one who could brave the storms of the Atlantic in mid-winter, and all that she has suffered since, out of devotion to the truth of Spiritualism. Her effort to clear the cause she loves of this stigma seems to have failed, but the end is not yet.

Great stress has been laid upon the letters to Mrs. Hart-Davies. Her letters to them and to others have not been published. Granted that Spirit communion and Spirit messages are verities, and that brotherly and sisterly affection can fill the hearts of men and women, what do these letters prove except much love and unity between the four persons—Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher, Mrs. Heurtley and her daughter?

I have had what I feel sure are veritable messages from my Spirit friends through Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher—messages as affectionate as those to Mrs. Hart-Davies. I have letters from Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher as tender and loving as theirs to Mrs. Hart-Davies. I am sure that mine were true, and I see no reason why those to Mrs. Hart-Davies should not be as true as my own. I have believed through much of a long life that I could discern the character of Spirits—that I knew intuitively what manner of men and women I had dealings with. I think I know intuitively, and I certainly know by intimate acquaintance, Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher. I have found him always simple-hearted, honest, pure-minded, and affectionate. I have never seen a married pair more affectionate and devoted to each other. Their mediumship differs, but both are greatly gifted. I have seen no manifestations through Mr. Fletcher but trance speaking and clairvoyance. Mrs. Fletcher has these and also form manifestation.

I saw Mrs. Fletcher through her trial. She was uniformly cheerful and resigned. She believed, against all assurances of sanguine friends, that she should be condemned. I had a letter from her, written the night before her sentence—such a letter as a Christian martyr might have written. I will give it hereafter for the solace of her many friends, and also some account of manifestations I saw with her, and others of which she told me while her trial was progressing.—Faithfully yours,

MARY S. G. NICHOLS.

32, Fopstone-road,
South Kensington.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

"The Spiritualist."

Copies of the letters sent by the Fletchers to Mrs. Davies are given at length with connecting comments. G. Atkinson, F.G.S., writes on the subject of "Clairvoyance and the Laws of Perception." "J. K." contributes an article criticising a communication by "M. D." on "The Genesis of the Soul." The writer considers that "M. D." has been radically wrong. "Occultism" he describes as having become "Olcottism," and he denies that theosophy, as taught by the Theosophical Society, is the correct and true system. "J. K." questions if "there is any one among the so-called Theosophists who is really an adept."

"The Medium."

Mr. J. Kinnerley Lewis sends a letter he has received from Mr. Adolphe J. Lyons, professor of languages at Rhyl, which narrates the following incident: "About two years ago I had a gilt seal which I kept in my pocket. I had been under the impression that it was gold until I had it tested with aqua-fortis by a jeweller at Rhyl. On returning home I thought—'As this seal is only brass I will no longer burden my pocket with it,' so I immediately threw it over a wall into a waste plot of ground. About two or three weeks afterwards I again saw the jeweller, and our conversation turning upon the seal, he said, 'It was a pity you threw it away, as it was worth several shillings, being well made and thickly plated.' I then thought no more of the seal till the 24th inst., on which day Mrs. Lyons told me that on opening her work-box she saw a seal of mine, and was puzzled to account for its appearance there, as no one had access to the box but herself. On requesting her to shew it me, I was startled and bewildered to see the identical seal I had thrown away, and which I was as sure I had thrown away as I am sure of my own existence. At a private séance on the Saturday evening following, my faithful Spirit-guide 'Emma' informed me that she had, as a test to us of invisible agency in human affairs, picked up the seal, and conveyed it to Caroline's (my wife's) workbox.—Yours faithfully, ADOLPHE J. LYONS."

In an article upon "The Duty of Spiritualists in regard to Bad Laws," by "Cambor," it is urged that it is for Spiritualists to shew themselves a power by agitating for the repeal of such monstrous and scandalous laws. Good Spirits will help them in their endeavours to overthrow oppression, and to usher in the age of peace.

"The Herald of Progress"

The question of "Christian Theism" forms the subject of a discourse delivered by Mr. J. C. Wright, of Liverpool, who defines "Christian Theism as a belief in one God, uncaused and eternal, consisting of three Persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—co-equal and co-eternal." The "scheme of revelation," possessed by Christian Theists, is pronounced "inconsistent with modern science." Whether Christian Theists would accept the presentation Mr. Wright sets forth is an open question.

"Mrs. Hart-Davies v. Mrs. Fletcher" is the title of an article devoted to the illustration of the fact that it is unwise to unreservedly trust to the dictates of Spirits, a proposition no sensible Spiritualist would dispute.

"Volvox" contributes a curious case of possession, of which one John Fox, living near Nottingham, in the sixteenth century, was the subject, as recorded by the Rev. Stanley Gower, of Dorchester, from the personal narrative of Richard Rothwell, soldier and chaplain under the Earl of Essex in Ireland, at the above period. The narrator tells the story clearly and well, but it is unfortunately too long to be more than referred to here.

A subscription is announced towards defraying the expenses of Mr. E. W. Wallis' impending visit to America. Mr. Wallis, according to our contemporary, has received so little support in England as to compel him to leave "home and country to obtain the bare necessities of life."

"The Cornubian"

Dr. Maurice Davies' letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury is described as a "letter deserving not only the consideration of Church folk, but of Christians generally."

"Deus" gives the following account of a visit to the Spiritualists' service, conducted by the Rev. Mr. Ware, at Plymouth, on Easter Sunday: "I embraced the opportunity of hearing Mr. Ware. Although anything but fastidious in regard to modulation, and not one of those who play at oratory, he is nevertheless an earnest, effective speaker, but the fact of his having the courage of his convictions, which the recent relinquishment of his position as a minister shews, adds weight to his pulpit utterances. The hymns were really charming, while the discourse on 'Preparing the way of the Lord,' was deeply interesting and instructive. After the evening service a Séance was held, the inner circle being composed of warm sympathisers with the medium, Mr. H—, who was controlled by a kindly spirit calling himself 'Frank.' Then followed an address by the same spirit, full of sublimity and holy unction."

Most certainly such deliverances were infinitely beyond the power of the medium, who is only a working man. More singing, and a few appropriate words by another spirit, brought to a close by far the best religious service I ever attended."

A SPIRITUALIST DISCUSSION.

On Sunday night, at Goswell Hall, where a full house listened to a lecture by Mr. Holmes, the Leicester Secularist, who has become a Spiritualist, on "The Existence of God proved by the Facts of Spiritualism," a gentleman present challenged the lecturer to a public discussion with him, offering to pay half the expenses.

Mr. Holmes had argued that the facts of Spirit manifestation and intelligence which he had observed, and which had converted him from Atheism to Theism, proved the predominance of mind over matter, and that a Supreme Mind in the universe is a logical necessity.

But the gentleman who proposes to discuss this question with Mr. Holmes denies the facts of Spiritualism; and here is the difficulty of all such discussions. There can be no discussion on what is proved by spiritual manifestations until the facts are admitted. Hence it is necessary to keep to the facts, accumulate facts, verify the facts, repeat and insist upon the facts, until they are admitted. Then we can draw conclusions. It is for this reason that I contend that the great function of Spiritualist journals and lecturers is to make known the phenomena of Spiritualism, rather than its philosophy.

"How can we reason but from what we know?" How can a man reason upon the teachings of Spiritualism when he has no belief in its phenomena? We accept every fact of Mr. Darwin and Mr. Wallace in the domain of natural history, however extraordinary it may seem to us. We never think of denying one of their observations, though we may hesitate to accept their philosophy. But when Mr. Wallace publishes a book of his equally careful observations of Spirit phenomena, his facts in a higher region of the domain of natural history are instantly rejected as impossible and absurd.

A large portion of the world has set itself in predetermined and resolute opposition to the recognition of such phenomena. Protestant Christians, partly to oppose Roman Catholic miracles, adopted some time ago the doctrine that the age of miracles is past—that it ended with the apostles, and that everything since which seemed supernatural has been fraud or delusion. Men of science or intelligence have taken the broader ground that there never were miracles or manifestations out of the ordinary course of nature, and any communications or manifestations of the Spirits of the departed were superstitious absurdities, delusions, or fraudulent impostures.

It was in this spirit that Mr. Flowers, most worthy, good-natured, and tolerant of police magistrates, at Bow-street, brushed aside an overwhelming mass of testimony as "contrary to the known laws of nature," and condemned Dr. Slade as a rogue and vagabond. It was in the same spirit that Mr. Justice Hawkins rejected all testimony for the defence at the recent trial of Mrs. Fletcher.

When Mr. Wedgwood bought a new alate, cleaned it, wrapped it in paper, sealed it up, carried it to Willie Eglinton, and got writing on it while holding it in his hands, and told the fact to one of our hard and fast scientific materialists, the answer he got was: "Mr. Wedgwood, if my own father told me that story I would not believe it." The whole spirit of the scientific world of our day scorns every such fact and rejects all such testimony. Where would Tyndall, and Huxley, and Carpenter be if they accepted testimony or examined facts? What would become of the whole mass of materialistic writings? What would become of Mr. Bradlaugh, M.P., if he were to investigate spiritual phenomena like Crookes, Wallace, and Zöllner!

In a discussion involving the reality of the phenomena called spiritual, the first question is as to the facts. If they can be settled by testimony, witnesses must be called. If men cannot, on this particular question, take the testimony of honest and careful observers, as they do on other important matters, involving life and death, then there must be personal investigation, which must extend to every person concerned in the inquiry. When the facts are in some way proved and admitted on both sides, then we may have fair discussions and arrive, it may be hoped, at just conclusions.

T. L.

We often speak of being settled in life,—we might as well think of casting anchor in the midst of the Atlantic, or talk of the permanent position of a stone that is rolling down hill.

HEALTH IN RELATION TO MEDIUMSHIP.—Mr. J. J. Morse is preparing a paper to be read at the B.N.A.S. Discussion Meeting, on May 16th, and he would be obliged if all who are mediums would correspond with him as to their experiences of mediumship in relation to health, both of body and mind. For convenience Mr. Morse has prepared a tabulated form, which will be sent post free on application. Address him at "LIGHT" office.

GOSWELL HALL.

Mr. J. Holmes, of Leicester, occupied the platform of this hall on Sunday last, both morning and evening. The subject of his morning lecture was, "The Facts of Spiritualism and the Theories of Science; a Reply to Critics." By way of introduction he read a letter which he had written to a Spiritual journal in London, in reply to some articles from the pen of Mr. Irving Bishop in the *Leisure Hour*, but which letter was rejected. In dealing with the subject of his morning's lecture, Mr. Holmes displayed great ability, the facts he quoted being mostly those which he himself had witnessed under the most strict conditions. He also effectively exposed the hollowness of the theories of science and their inefficiency to account for one single spiritualist phenomenon. Several questions were asked, and courteously replied to by the lecturer. In the evening his subject was, "The Existence of God as proved by the Facts of Spiritualism." When he used the term God he desired his hearers to bear in mind that he did not in the slightest degree refer to any personal God, or to any of the thousand and one gods which exist in the ideas of sects, and creeds. The God he referred to was Mind, and that Mind was independent of, and vastly superior to, Matter. The earnest manner in which Mr. Holmes treated his subject won for him the sympathy of a large audience, which was amply demonstrated by the frequent and hearty bursts of applause which greeted him. At the close of the lecture questions were propounded, and readily replied to. Mr. Holmes having resumed his seat amid loud applause, the following motion was submitted and carried unanimously: "That this meeting of representative Metropolitan Spiritualists desire to express their entire satisfaction and appreciation of the earnestness and ability of Mr. Holmes as an advocate of our cause; and further desire to recommend him with confidence to all other societies and committees." Mr. Holmes briefly replied, and moved a vote of thanks to our good friend Dr. Nichols, for the kind and genial manner in which he discharged the duties of chairman at both meetings. This was carried by acclamation, and suitably responded to, thus concluding a most satisfactory day's work on behalf of Spiritualism.—J. N. G.

LADBROKE HALL.

On Sunday evening last, the congregation meeting at this hall had for speaker Mr. J. J. Morse, who delivered an inspirational address upon "Spiritualism, the Friend of Religion, the Hope of the Sceptic, and the Guide of the Spiritualist." The ideas inculcated were expressed with much clearness and force, and the conclusion reached—that the principles contained in Spiritualism being in harmony with what was true and what was right, it was thus far fitted to be the guide of its adherents—was fully endorsed by the loud applause of the numerous audience present.

Mr. F. O. Matthews then gave clairvoyant demonstrations of Spirit Identity, which, in all cases but one, were recognised as correct. This feature of the services at this hall is one worthy of every attention, especially as Mr. Matthews is the only medium of the kind on the English platform at present.

Miss Knight Smith efficiently presided at the harmonium.

The friends were much pleased to hear that Mr. Morse had agreed to come over every month to help Mr. Matthews in his work; and to judge by the warmth with which Mr. Morse was received on Sunday last, his services are much appreciated.

QUEBEC HALL.

"Our Christian Mission" was the subject of Mr. Mac Donnell's address on Sunday evening. He reviewed what he considered to be the monster evils of the day—drunkenness, war, &c. These evils ought to be opposed as a positive duty by every true Christian, and their antidotes—total abstinence and non-resistance—be adopted. A lively discussion which followed shewed that the speaker had not everything his own way; and the good-humoured and friendly spirit in which the debate was conducted, made the evening not only a profitable but a pleasing one. We believe if the character of these Sunday evening meetings were better known, a larger hall would be found necessary.—J. M. D.

CARDIFF.

On Sunday evening last, at the usual weekly meeting of the Cardiff Spiritualist Society, a paper was read by Mr. Windoe on the progress of Spiritualism since the Rochester knockings. Dr. Nichols, M.D., of London, has kindly presented to the Society a parcel of his pamphlets entitled the "Gift of Healing." Notwithstanding the abuse levelled at Spiritualism and its professors by the Press since the close of the recent trial, a spirit of inquiry is rife in this vicinity, and private circles of investigation are being held with good results. A dissenting preacher having announced his intention of "exposing" Spiritualism by addressing the employés of a railway during their dinner-hour one day this week, some friends of the cause intend availing themselves of the opportunity, and will distribute literature of the movement among the audience.

DARLINGTON.

Our dear and much esteemed friend and brother, John Hodge, left earth-life on the 19th inst. "His end was peace." I have no doubt he will be well-known to many of the readers

of "LIGHT." He was the promoter and secretary of the first national conventions of Spiritualists in this country, and, since his retirement from the ministry of the Gospel in 1853, has been a zealous worker in our cause. Mr. Hodge filled, for upwards of nine years, the office of minister in the Wesleyan denomination, but not finding in that body all that his mind required, he turned his attention to the principles enunciated by Robert Owen, and became an ardent student of Sociology, as taught by that gentleman. He was an intimate friend of Joseph Barker, and for a time entertained materialistic views of life, but, subsequently, encountering Spiritualism, he accepted its facts and adopted its teachings. As a practitioner of "eclectic medicine" he was well-known in Darlington, and his many friends outside the ranks of Spiritualism, as well as within, will feel his departure as the loss of a friend whose integrity and honesty were beyond dispute, and whose kindly nature ever had a word of sympathy for sorrow and distress. Ever standing manfully by his convictions he commanded the respect alike of friends and opponents. We consider that we have received indisputable evidences of our ascended brother's continued life since his departure from us, which satisfies us that, though departed, he is not dead.—ALFRED C. CLARK.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

On Wednesday, April 20th, the quarterly meeting of the Spiritual Evidence Society was held in their rooms at Weirs Court, Mr. Jno. Mould in the chair. The secretary's report shewed that during the quarter 26 public meetings had been held, at which Messrs. Morse, Wallis, Wright, Lambelle, Westgarth, and others had more or less ably officiated. The sances of Miss Wood shew an attendance of 517 members and visitors, being an increase of one-half over the last quarter. Her valuable mediumship is, after a lull for some few months, giving signs of fresh and wonderful manifestations which in a short time will excite renewed interest in, and increased attendance at, the sittings.

The library, containing 257 volumes, is much appreciated by those who make use of it. This institution might be of great utility, and beget a deal more appreciation with the members, if a little more energy and attention were bestowed upon it. The report shews that, including life, honorary, and paying members, there are 150 names on the books, which is a loss of 42 members since the annual meeting in January last. But the most interesting item of the report is the balance-sheet, which shews a growing deficit, amounting at the present time to upwards of £46; but as the chairman pleasantly informed the meeting that there were gentlemen present who would soon clear off the debt, should it be necessary (!), I suppose we may not wonder if another quarterly meeting may present a clean balance-sheet!

A proposition was made to enlarge the committee by the addition of four vice-presidents, making six in all. This, I am glad to say, was rejected by the members; for, when the influential powers of any order begin to reciprocate favours, depend upon it there is something rotten in the "State." The members shewed a healthy judgment in putting their veto upon it. Spiritualism has no room in its great commonwealth for vain dignities, and if she would live a vigorous life she will do well to strangle such at the outset.

A discussion took place upon the engagement of Mr. Morse on the terms offered by him to the country some time ago, viz., railway expenses and accommodation only, and which met with hearty applause from the members assembled at the annual meeting. Some ingenious brain has conceived a far-fetched idea to the effect that to accept him on those terms would be to place the Society under an obligation to that gentleman! Those views, apparently, had been enforced upon the majority of the committee, which led to the minority laying their protest before the members against such contemptible and ungenerous consideration of the oldest, ablest, and one of the most generous platform workers Newcastle, or the country, has possessed. The minority after their protest tendered their official resignations as committeemen. We sincerely hope that ere another quarterly meeting comes round the newly arranged committee will have come to a more sensible and unprejudiced condition of mind, and that we shall have the opportunity of once more listening to the unique moral and spiritual philosophy of Tien-sien-Tie.

On Sunday and Monday last, Mr. W. Wallis, the well-known trance lecturer, delivered three excellent discourses before the members of the N.S.E.S. We are sorry to inform his admirers that another visit from him in June will be the only other opportunity they will have of listening to him, as he is about leaving this country for America. NORTHUMBRIA.

MR. S. C. HALL announces the publication of a series of 188 short poems, entitled "Rhymes in Council: Aphorisms Versified." They are written in his eighty-first year, and he bequeaths them as a legacy to his kind; the result of knowledge based on experience and matured by thought, "the proceeds of a long life." The work will be published by Messrs. Griffith and Farran early in June.

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—Belper, Sunday, May 1; Goswell Hall, Sunday, May 8; Liverpool, Sunday, May 15; Northampton, Sunday, May 29; Keighley, Sunday, June 19; Stamford, Sunday, July 24.

WHO ARE THESE SPIRITUALISTS ?

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

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

The late Abraham Lincoln, President U.S.A. ; the late W. Lloyd Garrison ; the late Hon. R. Dale Owen, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Naples ; the late Hon. J. W. Edmunds, sometime Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New York ; the late Professor Mapes, the eminent chemist, U.S.A. ; the late Dr. Robert Hare, Professor of Chemistry at Harvard University, U.S.A. ; Bishop Clarke, of Shooe Island, U.S.A. ; Darius Lyman, of Washington.

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

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Professor Friedrich Zöllner, of Leipzig, the eminent physicist, author of "Scientific Treatises," "Transcendental Physics," &c., whose recent researches in this subject have attained a world-wide fame ; Gustave T. Fechner, Professor of Physics in the University of Leipzig, also the author of many volumes bearing on the general subject of Psychology ; Professor Scheibner, the renowned teacher of mathematics in the University of Leipzig ; W. E. Weber, Professor of Physics in the University of Göttingen, and known as one of the main workers in connection with the doctrine of the Conservation of Energy ; Immanuel H. Fichte, Professor of Philosophy at Leipzig ; Professors Wagner and Butleroff, of the University of St. Petersburg ; Dr. Maximilian Perty, Professor of Natural Science in the University of Berne ; Dr. Franz Hoffman, Professor of Philosophy, Würzburg ; Dr. Robert Friesel, of Breslau ; Mons. Camille Flammarion, the well-known astronomer ; and many other members of learned societies in this and other countries, and a vast number of persons eminent in literature, science, and art, and in the ranks of social life, whose names we are not at liberty to mention.

Is it Conjuring ?

It is sometimes confidently alleged that mediums are only clever conjurers, who easily deceive the simple-minded and unwary. But how, then, about the conjurers themselves, some of the most accomplished of whom have declared that the "manifestations" are utterly beyond the resources of their art ?—

ROBERT HOUDIN, the great French conjurer, investigated the subject of clairvoyance with the sensitive, Alexis Didier. In the result he unreservedly admitted that what he had observed was wholly beyond the resources of his art to explain. See "Psychische Studien" for January, 1878, p. 43.

PROFESSOR JACOBS.—*Licht, mehr Licht*, in its number of May 16th, 1880, gave a letter from the well-known professional conjurer, Jacobs, to the Psychological Society in Paris, avowing himself a Spiritualist, and offering suggestions for the discrimination of genuine from spurious manifestations.

SAMUEL BELLACHINI, COURT CONJURER AT BERLIN.—I hereby declare it to be a rash action to give decisive judgment upon the objective medial performance of the American medium, Mr. Henry Slade, after only one sitting and the observations so made. After I had, at the wish of several highly esteemed gentlemen of rank and position, and also for my own interest, tested the physical mediumship of Mr. Slade, in a series of sittings by full daylight, as well as in the evening in his bed-room, I must, for the sake of truth, hereby certify that the phenomenal occurrences with Mr. Slade have been thoroughly examined by me with the minutest observation and investigation of his surroundings, including the table, and that I have not in the smallest degree found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations, or by mechanical apparatus ; and that any explanation of the experiments which took place under the circumstances and conditions then obtaining by any reference to prestidigitation, is absolutely impossible. It must rest with such men of science as Crookes and Wallace, in London ; Perty, in Berne ; Butleroff, in St. Petersburg ; to search for the explanation of this phenomenal power, and to prove its reality. I declare, moreover, the published opinions of laymen as to the "How" of this subject to be premature, and, according to my view and experience, false and one-sided. This, my declaration, is signed and executed before a Notary and witnesses.—(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI, Berlin, Dec. 6, 1877.

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