

# Light:

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

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

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Transmission Abroad.]

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SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 1881.

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## SPIRITUALISM AND SECULARISM.

The Origin, Progress, and Decay of the God-Idea, a title repellent and even repulsive in its wording to most of our readers, as well as to ourselves, was the subject of a lecture recently delivered in London on a Sunday evening. The lecturer, a lady, addressed a crowded audience—we estimated it at over a thousand—consisting for the most part of intelligent-looking men and women. The main line of argument, stated with considerable force and quiet eloquence, was evidently understood and appreciated by the congregation.

The lines of the discourse were to a considerable extent parallel with those of some of the paragraphs of our leading article last week. The lecturer shewed how the idea of God had progressed from the earliest forms of fetichism, followed by the worship of the creative principle in the universe, which attained its highest development in the worship of the heavenly bodies. She then traced its course through the successive books of the Old Testament, pointing out how very different was the God in Amalek's time, who commanded both man and woman, infant and suckling, to be slain, and all that they had to be utterly destroyed, to the God of Jonah, who, when the prophet was displeased because the Lord would not execute his threat, said, "Should I not spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left, and also much cattle?"

Proceeding then to the New Testament, the loftier character of its teachings was illustrated, but beyond which, in the view of the lecturer, the Christian Church had continued to make progress until the highest form of the God-Idea was reached in the Theism of such men as the Rev. C. Voysey. Again in advance of this, the lecturer taught that we must come to the "scientific agnosticism" of the present day, between which, and the "atheism" which she and those who sympathised with her preached, she saw no difference. In her view, a belief in and the service of God, must be substituted by a belief in Man and in the service of Man—of Man as the "Monarch of the World," and that all the old ideas of a Divine Being who made him must fade away and decay before the growth of a belief in Man.

The lecture was listened to with attention and with frequently expressed applause. What we mainly regretted was, that the lecturer appeared to us intentionally to pander to the prejudices of part of her audience by needlessly vivid and extravagantly worded descriptions of the anthropomorphic views, and of what we may call the coarser side of orthodox theology.

In thinking over the gospel thus preached to the people, with manifest sincerity and also with some amount of self-sacrifice and devotion, many things struck us. Has it that in it which will regenerate the world? Will it meet the wants, the desires, the cravings of suffering, sorrowing humanity? We cannot see that it has any power of this kind. It excites no love; none of that unconquerable enthusiasm the heat of which kindles a like flame in its disciples. It is cold, calculating, belongs exclusively to the intellect and ignores the heart. The idea of "Man" as used by Positivists and Secularists is not a practical one. The idea of an individual, personal, Divine Being is in a certain sense comprehensible. An individual man is comprehensible; but Man, as an idea, including all men who have ever lived, who are living now, or who are going to live, and constituting one object of reverence, or love, or service, seems

to us in no way to aid in solving the problems of life. The injustices of the present world, taken by itself, are in no way satisfied by it. It is no consolation to the victims of the awful misery and suffering existing now among thousands from no fault of their own, and from causes over which they have not the least control, to be told that it is all part of the "grand progress of humanity." Mankind will not be comforted, nor reconciled to the hardships of its lot, by reasoning of this kind, nor will it be aroused to patient, persistent effort after higher life and better conditions.

We are, however, face to face with the fact that the principles we have been adverting to are increasingly preached and increasingly accepted. And, believing, as we do, that they present a mournfully incomplete and partial creed, it behoves us to ask how it is that they are spreading and with what means they can be met.

It is to us evident that the class of mind that is so constituted as to accept the principles of Secularism is inaccessible to any teachings based upon revelations relating to spiritual or Divine things which are asserted to have been made in the past. There is no common ground to start from. There is a chasm between the two which cannot be bridged over. The Secularist asks the historical religionist the reason of his belief, and he has nothing but faith in tradition to bring in reply. The historical religionist cannot, from the present, lead up the Secularist to the grand revelations of the past. He cannot do as the New Testament preachers did. He cannot even do as the first Quakers did. George Fox says:—"I directed people to the Spirit, that gave forth the Scriptures, by which they might be led into all truth, and so up to Christ and God, as they had been who gave them forth. I was commanded to turn people to that inward light, spirit, and grace, by which all might know their salvation and their way to God."

There is no preaching of this kind now, not even among the Quakers, many of whom would now disown George Fox for heresy. We think, therefore, that the priestcraft which is so much mixed up with the religious teaching of the day, and the exclusive building on the past, destroy the power which the Churches might otherwise exercise in meeting the modern phases of infidelity. We must look elsewhere.

The lecturer we have been referring to above, at the commencement of her discourse quoted the questions, Where does man come from? and, What is he? as urgently demanding solution. But she omitted the third, Where is he going to? Of course she did this, as according to her belief, he is not going anywhere, and there is nowhere to go to. It is, therefore, a frivolous and stupid question to ask.

Still the question is asked, and will be asked, and demands a reply. The Churches cannot answer it to any purpose as against the cold questioning of the scientist or the secularist.

The Ten Commandments and the Law were not given through the wise men of Egypt, but through Moses in the Wilderness. The Gospel of the New Testament did not come through the Pharisees or Sadducees (corresponding to the religious and scientific worlds). The main agent in the Reformation was an obscure monk. To the leaders of despised puritanical sects we are indebted for much civil and religious liberty. Now again, at the present time, there is urgent need for something to meet the advancing wave of materialism and atheism which has of late years spread so rapidly over Europe. Nothing that we can see appears to us to possess the qualifications essential to oppose it except a belief founded on the facts and teachings of Spiritualism.

We propose at an early date to resume this subject, and to shew to what extent—though we do not claim it can do so fully—Spiritualism enables us successfully to attack Atheism, and how far also, and in what way, it fails to assume the position which it ought legitimately to take, and what it must do if it means to exercise any real reforming power.

### PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF AN OLD SPIRITUALIST.

I first made the acquaintance of Mrs. Mary Marshall about the year 1860, as it was not till then that I began to pay attention to the report current since 1848 that those who had died were able to communicate with those still living. Upon being informed that there was a small room in King-street, over a furniture shop, where investigation could be made, I at once paid a visit to the Marshall family, who enabled me for the first time to hear the wondrous Spirit-rap. That sound alone, without the accompanying intelligence, is a phenomenon well worth witnessing, but when you are told that it is enough to think of a departed friend for that friend to rap his name out by means of the alphabet, it becomes interesting indeed, for it is not at first in the face of appropriate remarks, with names of places in India—as I have had—correctly spelled where death took place, that one arrives at the conclusion that one's friends have nothing whatever to do with the manifestation. Before I became disillusioned, having made a list of all my friends and acquaintances that I could think of who had departed this life, I used to go nearly every day to the séance room and mentally evoke some of those on my list, and when it was, for instance, a certain relative who had been a devout, orthodox Christian, she telegraphed, "*Tell Susan I am very happy for I am with the Lord.*" Now here was the name of a living sister given whom I had neither mentioned nor thought of. As she had had much love for the Spirit and sympathy with her religious proclivities, the message was sufficiently apropos to stagger me, more, I must confess, than it did my sister when reported to her. She did not deny that the information was exceedingly satisfactory, but would not allow that as much could be said for the authenticity of its source.

To give another instance—a friend whose habit in life had been to dwell upon the dark side of things, a veritable pessimist, replied to inquiry as to his welfare "Mind and don't come here, for it is a bad place." I could cite many cases of such short but characteristic communications. I continued to believe I was talking to old friends until I perceived that it was my own mind that was read by the invisible intelligence, which gave me back what it found there. I came to this conclusion from observing that I was never told the name of a place, or given any information, that I did not already know. At first sight it seems a good test of identity for a Spirit to rap out the name of the place where he was known to have died, but it really is no test at all when we discover that we are in the presence of beings who can read one's thoughts. I made many experiments. Here are some: With two bank notes in my pockets, the number of one of which only I had observed, I asked for the numbers to be given. I could only obtain the number of the note I knew, shewing that what was in my brain could be seen, but not what was in my pocket. Upon asking a very intimate old friend with whom I was supposed to be in communication for the name of a favourite horse of his, "Jack" was rapped out, which was wrong. For the moment I had forgotten the name myself, but in a little while, upon it coming into my mind, asked for it again, when it was correctly and unhesitatingly rapped out. Upon another occasion I asked: "Can you tell me what horse will win the Derby?" Answer: "Blair Athol." As the saying is, *that was my fancy*, consequently that name was perceived in my mind. Curiously enough Captain Warburton, of the Army and Navy Club, was also told that Blair Athol would win the Derby. What is the explanation of that successful prophecy?—for that horse did happen to win. Perhaps, that finding no name was in his thoughts, the one taken from mine was given again.

The Spirits round Mrs. Marshall's table I invariably found most obliging. They were always ready to do whatever lay in their power to gratify their visitors, of whom they had many of all classes of society. Often were to be seen ladies descending from handsome carriages, drawn up at the door of the furniture shop; so much so that casual observers, unaware of the attraction in the upper chamber, would conclude that the master of that shop was doing a good trade. To oblige me the invisibles adopted the plan of rapping the last letter of each word on the floor instead of on the table, in order to facilitate the reading off the phrases. Here it was that I first made the acquaintance of John King, who, after he had been for a long time satisfied with communicating by raps, and perhaps personating the uncles and aunts, and generally fooling visitors to the top of their bent, announced his intention of speaking aloud. He required that

the room should be completely darkened. Mrs. Marshall will remember that we had to thank Mr. Guppy for his successful attempt in making the first dark room in her house, no longer the original one in King-street; he took much trouble and had dark screens made to fit into the window frames. Then people came and heard John King talk and were much astonished at hearing a Spirit speak. After a time John declared his intention to shew himself some day, but I don't remember that he did so with Mrs. Marshall, as not long after the voice manifestation I think she retired into private life, thus necessitating the services of other mediums for materialisation. She was a great loss to the public, for while she was exercising her mediumship it was possible on the shortest notice to take a novice to hear the Spirit-rap. I have introduced many to the subject that way, although not always with the same result. Some would say, "She does the rapping very well, although I am unable to explain how she does it," while others would be satisfied it was what it was, and from hearing that intelligent rapping, would seek more knowledge on the subject and thereby become wiser and better men, for, happily, communications are not always merely thought-reading.

And now I might commence as heading to what I am going to write, *Shocking Treatment of a Medium*. One unhappy night Mrs. Marshall was invited by a lady of title to her house, in order that a very clever sceptical gentleman might hear the Spirit voice. She came obligingly, unsuspectingly, and unprofessionally. I was also invited. We sat round a table in darkness, and soon John King saluted the company and began to talk. The sceptic took up the conversation, but only to tell John King that he was not a Spirit at all, and that the whole thing was humbug. The small party present under his influence seemed to be of his opinion. There was one exception. Mr. Monti was there, and he was naturally indignant at the unmerited treatment of an innocent person by people who ought to have known better. After vainly endeavouring to overcome the feeling of scepticism with which he was received, the author of the voice took his leave. Mrs. Marshall then rose, and said, "As I see the opinion you have of me I will wish you a good evening," and she was allowed to go. I of course had done all I could to persuade the company that the voice was the manly voice I had often heard before, and that the medium, a woman, could not possibly simulate it, even were she inclined to do so. My partisanship cost me dear, for to my surprise and horror, a few days after a lady who had been present upbraided me with aiding and abetting Mrs. Marshall. I asked her if she really thought that I did the voice, and she said "yes." Here was "the most unkindest cut of all," to be thus thought of by a lady for whom I had the greatest respect and admiration. It was nothing to me what the unbelieving man may have thought, but that an old friend who knew me well should allow herself to be thus influenced is sad to think of. I do not know to this day whether she has changed her opinion of me; if she has, she has not said so.

Bordeaux,  
June 4th, 1881.

J. H. G.

DALSTON ASSOCIATION.—On Thursday evening next, the 16th inst., Mr. J. J. Morse, the president, will deliver an inspirational address.

MR. J. C. BUNDY, the editor of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, has been compelled to take a protracted period of rest, rendered necessary by overwork.

A farewell soirée will be given to Mr. E. W. Wallis, by the Nottingham Spiritualists, on Monday, July 18th. Mr. Wallis will sail for the United States about July 27th. During his tour there he has promised to contribute exclusively to "LIGHT."

SPIRITUALISM IN QUEENSLAND.—Australia is a free country, and an *is.n* has a free course there. People are not afraid to think, nor to speak out what they think. In the north-eastern colony, so progressive in pastoral and mining affairs, so liberal in supporting schools without fees, while declining State aid to religion, Spiritualism has made its way. A new Queensland paper has been started under the name of the *Telephone*. An appeal for support is published in the *Brisbane Daily Courier*. "Hitherto," says the appeal, "the public advocates of Spiritualism in Brisbane, so far as we know, have not attempted to harmonise the subject with the teachings of the Bible. This was, of course, because they honestly considered they could not do so. The literal meaning of the Scriptures has for the last century been the stumbling-block to a large number of intelligent men." A considerable number of disciples appear, too, among the Queensland farmers on the delightful and fertile uplands. The inquiry there is not on the commercial basis too common with mediums here and in America.



## THE ORIGIN OF "IMPRESSIONS."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—When Mr. Newton Crosland speaks of Spirits being able to "convey thoughts and impressions from one person to another," he evidently assumes that thoughts and impressions cannot be conveyed (apart from ordinary known means) from one to another *without* the intervention of individual disembodied intelligence. But that is just the question; for if a mental image is itself a modification of the psychic aura, ether, or whatever we like to call this infinitely subtle and pervading medium (I purposely avoid using the language of occult science), it has thus become an independent embodiment, and may be projected, or communicated by vibration, to any distant organism sufficiently sensitive to receive it. That imagination can be thus transmitted along the nerves *within* the organism no one can doubt who recalls some accepted facts of physiology, or even the well-known phenomena of "mother's marks." Indeed, the physical effects of imagination are too familiar and admitted to require illustration. There are some, however, so remarkable as to be scarcely less incredible to the uninstructed than our Spiritualistic facts. For instance: a lady sees a heavy window sash fall on her child's fingers. Three of her own almost immediately show marks of similar violence. Another lady sees a heavy gate swing to as a boy is passing through, his foot only just escaping. She feels a violent pain in her own foot, and on reaching home discovers a livid bar across it, just where the gate would have struck the boy's. Mentioning these facts not long ago to a friend, but keeping in reserve my authority, says he, "I suppose that is about as true as your Spiritualistic nonsense." Whereupon I produced Dr. W. B. Carpenter's "Mental Physiology," and shewed him the narratives, detailed at length, and fully accredited by that learned author, who gives many similar cases. Among the most striking cases of the production of physical substances by the imagining desire are those in which infants have been suckled from the male breast. The authorities will be found in a medical work entitled "The Physical Life of Woman," by George Naphey, M.D., 1872. In all these instances, the mental image is visibly stamped upon the body. The subjective has become objective, a physical reality no longer dependent on the mind conceiving it. Within the organism, it is true, but given a medium similar to that which enables the nervous system to transmit impressions, and such impressions may travel *beyond* the organism, along lines established by *rapport*, psychic affinity, or magnetic attraction. Imagination is "image-making"; mind materialises. "Imagination makes reality (Wesenheit)," says Böhme. This is the clue to the understanding of magical powers. "Pour le sage, imaginer, c'est voir; pour le magicien, parler, c'est créer," says Eliphas Levi. Listen also to Paracelsus: "Through faith, men may perform the incredible *by means of the imagination*, even to draw down the strength of the influences of the stars; and if the command be combined with faith, the magically divine spirit within us has a superhuman sphere of action, which extends itself as wide as our thoughts, our imaginations and our faith." Again, "Determined imagination is the beginning of all magical operations. Fixed thought is also a means to an end. . . . If we rightly understood the mind of man, nothing would be impossible to us on earth. The imagination is invigorated and perfected through faith, for it really happens that every doubt breaks the operation. Faith must confirm the imagination, for faith establishes the will. Because men do not perfectly imagine and believe, the result is that the arts are uncertain while they might be perfectly certain." But it is not only from the trained will of the adept that the imagination can acquire propulsive energy. Intense longing, the involuntary concentration induced by a sudden shock (as, in the tiger case, the sudden terror of the people in the street would shoot forth an image of the escaped beast, that is to say, would set up vibrations in the ether analogous to those by which *sound* is produced); in short, any mental impulse strong enough to objectify thought will speed it along the lines of least resistance, or if it concerns another may suggest the thinker in that other's mind. In the *Spiritualist* of September 6th, 1878, copied from the *Louisville Medical News*, will be found the following very interesting case of a transmitted impression. A father, asleep near his daughter, who is reading a book to herself, sees a vision of a man (described) lifting up a coffin, &c. The daughter was at that moment reading a recital (in the "Life of Marie Antoinette") of the exact incident that had constituted his dream. Was this put into the sleeper's mind by his "guardian"? The cases

recognised as extraordinary bear a very small proportion to those of nearly daily occurrence, which, having no apparent significance or importance, are scarcely remarked, or are passed over as mere "coincidences." There really seems to be some danger of "Spiritualism" making us forget that we are Spirits ourselves, so much is attributed to disembodied intelligence that properly belongs to our own activity. The doctrine of the "guardian" may be a true one, I hope it is. But if so, it is strange, and a pity, that ninety-nine persons out of a hundred receive no saving warnings, though I gladly admit that there are recorded cases in which impressions must be called premonitions, and must be ascribed to friendly design. The cases to which I refer are those in which the danger to be averted has been pictured as a complete event, whereas the result shewn in the image does not happen, owing to the precautions taken. Such was the case of a gentleman on a pedestrian tour who dreamed of a certain place on a road, and of three tramps springing out on a solitary traveller (himself) and murdering him. Thus forewarned, he procured a companion, recognised the place pictured in the dream, and sure enough, at that very place three tramps came out from a gateway, and solicited alms. But not venturing to attack two able-bodied men, they went off with mere abuse. Mr. Crosland will not find me attempting to explain such a case as that without recourse to "guardianship" of some sort. But why? Because *the impression contained more than the event*. As to other impressions anticipating what we call the future, such as that I before referred to, and which Mr. Crosland actually believes to be referable to the "guardian," the explanation involves some metaphysics, and I must not further prolong this letter. At present, I will conclude with one general observation, which is, that the phenomena of imagination are not isolated, and do not belong merely to the curiosities of occult science. They relate to man's whole nature and faculties, and their explanation depends on principles which have the highest religious application. But confining ourselves to the lower ground, let us investigate the nature and effects of our own mental activity before adopting the slovenly expedient of putting a disembodied personal agent behind every phenomenon which our ignorance of natural law leaves for the moment unexplained. Mr. Crosland would smile at the simplicity which used to see a direct Divine volition in every thunder-storm. I hope he will not encourage us to rest in a similar stage of development in our conceptions of occult phenomena.—Your obedient Servant,

C. C. M.

## THE FALLACY OF THOUGHT-READING.

A day or two ago I was calling on a lady, one of the most clear-headed young women whom I know, when the conversation turned on the Bishop performances. She said that at a party of half a dozen friends, where she had lately been, one of the guests had been led by the discussion in the newspapers to try what she could do, and she found that if a person would place herself passively in her hands she could influence her to perform any little action that might be agreed on, without letting her have the smallest intelligent intimation of what she was intended to do. My friend said she thought she had sufficient command of her will to comply with the conditions required, and to place herself in a state of entire non-resistance. Accordingly she went out of the room, while it was determined that she should be made to kneel down in the middle of the room. The lady who performed the part of mesmerist then came out to her, and having blindfolded her, led her back into the room, merely placing her thumb and fingers on the back of her neck, but not exerting any pressure upon her that she was conscious of. When she came into the room she remained for some little time without being sensible of any guidance; but after a pause she felt impelled to move forwards, and coming into the middle of the room she felt a sort of weakness in her knees that led her to kneel down, the influence that led her to do so seeming to come from the knees themselves, without any connection with the light grasp of the mesmerist's hand on the nape of her neck. Here there was nothing like thought-reading on the part of the agent. She had not the least conception of what she was intended to do until she had accomplished it. It is a clear case of an action directly induced by the will of another, without the intervention of the intelligence of the agent.

31, Queen Anne-street,  
June 4th, 1881.

H. WEDGWOOD.

## TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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

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

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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\* \* Cheques and Post Office Orders may be made payable to EDWARD T. BENNETT, at the Chief Office, London. Halfpenny Postage Stamps received for amounts under 10s.

## NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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Subscribers whose subscriptions have expired will receive the last copy due to them in a coloured wrapper, after which the paper will be discontinued unless the subscription is renewed.

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

Her Majesty the Queen has graciously intimated to Mr. S. C. Hall, that "with great pleasure" she sanctions the dedication of his book "Rhymes in Council" to her grandchildren. As soon as this book is ready Mr. Hall will, if his health be spared, devote himself to the production of a large work, in two volumes, to be entitled "Recollections of a Long Life." We are much gratified to learn that Mr. Hall, notwithstanding his age, is in good bodily health, and that he has been regaining cheerfulness since he left the house at Moseley, where he had the painful experience of his wife's decease, and returned to his old neighbourhood and his long-cherished friendships at Kensington.

The "Spirit Teachings" given by automatic writing through the hand of "M.A." (Oxon.) are always profitable reading, and not seldom convey sound and practical lessons, which Spiritualists would do well to take to heart. In the instalment of these valuable papers which we this week give to our readers, are some important instructions for the conduct of sésances. Failures are, doubtless, very generally attributable to ignorance of the necessary conditions for success—or, what is worse, to the culpable neglect of the proper means by which alone such conditions can be secured.

At the Fortnightly Discussion Meeting at 38, Great Russell-street, on Monday evening next, Mr. Desmond G. FitzGerald, the Chairman of the Research Committee, will introduce the subject of "Spiritualism *versus* the Press and the Public." Mr. FitzGerald never speaks without saying something worth hearing, and he is sure on Monday night to give utterance to thoughts which will be deserving of serious consideration. If, in the discussion of the subject, the friends can suggest any practical means of inducing the public Press to be fair in its treatment of Spiritualism, the future will indeed be full of promise.

There is so much in the theology and philosophy of Swedenborg which runs on parallel lines with Spiritualism, that it would almost have seemed to be in the very nature of things that Spiritualists and the disciples of the Great Seer should be fast friends—appealing to the same facts and phenomena in support of the truth of some essential features of their faith. And yet, while our ranks include several of the best and most intelligent of the Swedenborgians, amongst the Swedenborgians also are to be found some of our strongest and most implacable opponents. They believe in Swedenborg, and they do not like to believe that anybody else has or can have the same or similar experiences in relation to communion with the unseen world. Spiritualists may indeed have a certain sort of intercourse with inhabitants of the other life, but the orthodox Swedenborgian does not doubt that, while Swedenborg held converse with angels, Spiritualists are in communication with devils.

In the early numbers of "LIGHT" we published a short series of articles entitled "Six Months with the Spirits—By a Swedenborgian." The writer had been inquiring; had found a medium in his own family circle; had received a number of communications which satisfied him of the identity of the Spirits by whom they purported to be given; but had arrived at the conclusion that while the Spirits so communicating were

certainly not angels, they were as certainly not devils. The editor of *Morning Light*, an ably conducted Swedenborgian weekly journal, reviews the articles of our correspondent, and evinces an evident regret that so intelligent a brother should so far have fallen from the true faith as to believe that the communicating Spirits are not devils! He is quite in accord with him that they are not angels, but that they are not devils, "we cannot," he says, "so thoroughly agree with him." Considering what is so very manifest throughout the "review"—that the editor knows little or nothing of the subject from personal experience, and that he is moved by prejudice more than by reason, we are not surprised that he would rather give us credit for converse with devils than with angels.

But we will let the reviewer speak for himself:—"Our position on the matter," he says, "is this. We do not deny the *possibility* of intercourse between the inhabitants of this world and the inhabitants of the Spirit world. Indeed, in a general sense such intercourse is being constantly carried on. Good and evil Spirits are ever around us, influencing our affections and thoughts; but they are not permitted to know with whom they are in contact, nor to reveal themselves by name to us, lest they should violate our freedom." They are "not permitted to know with whom they are in contact, nor to reveal themselves by name"! How does the reviewer know this? To make this assertion is to assume the very point at issue. Where is his proof? If he appeals to Swedenborg let him say so, and we will quote Swedenborg against himself. Meanwhile we deny the truth of the reviewer's assumption, and call in evidence the testimony of old and experienced Spiritualists. Let him read carefully and candidly M. A. Oxon's "Spirit Identity," and he will learn that either Swedenborg is wrong or that he has drawn false deductions from his master.

But the reviewer proceeds:—"We deny the *probability* of direct intercourse between any individual here and any individual inhabitant of the Spirit world. We *doubt* the genuineness of all the so-called 'communications' made through professional mediums, and *question* the reality of those received at private sésances, most of which are in our opinion the result of vivid imagination and self-deception." The writer admits the *possibility*, and denies the *probability* of Spirit communications, but modestly enough only *doubts* their genuineness and *questions* their reality. But surely when a man undertakes to combat the testimony of witnesses as honest and intelligent as himself—witnesses who have, moreover, devoted years to the investigation of the facts—he should be in a position to do something better than dismiss the subject with *doubts* and *questionings*, and with *denials* unsupported by the slightest pretence of evidence.

One word more as to our friend's manifest ignorance of the subject with which he has ventured to deal. "There is no analogy," he says, "between these 'communications' and the revelations of angelic power and teaching given in the Word of God. The 'seers' of old time were enabled to receive 'communications' by having their spiritual eyes and ears opened; the modern 'medium' professes to 'materialise' spirit." Does not our friend know that there are many modern mediums—clairvoyants and clairaudients—who answer exactly to his description of the "seers of old time," and who "receive communications by having their spiritual eyes and ears opened"? Does not he know also that the Bible has records of the appearance of Spirits so far "materialised" that they were able to partake of natural food? Does not he know that it is *not true* that "the modern medium professes to materialise spirit"? Does not he know that while the "Spirit" is alleged in *some cases* to come in a substantial form, apparently the same as that in which the angels appeared to Abraham and to Lot, the medium in no instance professes to have any power in the matter? If he does know these facts he has been guilty of misleading his readers. If he does not know them, then he is manifestly incompetent to discuss the questions at issue.

We hear that several new members are to be proposed for election at the Council Meeting of the British National Association of Spiritualists, on Tuesday evening next; and such of our readers as are not already subscribing members of that body, and desire to bring about a more united and harmonious action in the movement, are invited to consider the expediency of joining the Association, and thus increasing its power for useful work.



## SPIRIT TEACHINGS.

## SECOND SERIES.

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

M. A. (OXON.)

No. V.—CONTINUED.

*No one would hesitate: and I cannot help thinking you do not point out these things sufficiently often. It is hard for me to say perpetually, Don't do this or that. And I know the great assault on us will be on the side of truthfulness. I believe we stand alone there. For myself, I frankly confess that if I lost my confidence in communications I should cease to sit for them; and so the circle would be at an end. In the midst of much that is uncertain I have never lost my faith in what you say.*

We earnestly pray that you never may. Our circle stands in a peculiar position; entirely distinct from any other in your country. And that must be borne in mind in estimating our advice, nay, our commands; for if they be not obeyed we shall fail of success. We do not seek for aught but what subverts our purpose. And we have done for you hitherto what entitles us, on common grounds of trust, to be heard on this point. You have received that which others have longed for in vain. We regret that we have not been able to admit to the privileges which you share many who would value and respect them. You know our reasons, and they obtain still. It is not necessary the power we use should be supplemented by any other. Were it so we know best how to evoke what we desire. It is to us a source of mournful sorrow that the adversaries should beset us, and that the most vulnerable point of attack should have been selected with any hope of success, such as we foresee. We have long known and said such would be the line of attack. But we have a claim on all our friends to aid us in resisting it to the uttermost. Assuredly we may hope that none of you will be ranged against us. Nor do we fear that when the veil is lifted it will be found so. But ignorance may destroy what can never be rebuilt. We have warned you that the influences which surround that circle\* are untruthful and deceptive. Of what sort is the influence that would be so generated? One that you may mingle with ours? In the name of the Supreme, No. We reject and refuse it. When we require to evoke other influence it shall be of other sort than that. Nor have we deserved that our warnings should be despised. It will not now be long before we shall be for a time separated from our circle. It will be well for you to refrain from sitting with others. For this reason we have advised you to refuse to meet friends of the cause as you have been asked. At another time we should have urged you to go. Not now. No harm will ensue from our friends meeting the Spirit calling himself—. We can always protect them and you, if we know. But we cannot protect from insidious influence which is intended to gain possession and entry to our circle. We have never refused to permit any of you to do what seemed right out of the house in which we meet, and as spectators in other circles; though we have perpetually seen the danger of which you are unaware. But external development we refuse to permit. On this head we are decided. We have somewhat to say as to the sitting of the other night. It would be well for you to bear in mind and act on such rules as these:—

Do not sit in circle soon after a heavy meal; or when mind and body are tired and worn out; or when the Spiritual atmosphere is inharmonious. Do not before sitting, enter into any exciting, or exhausting, or argumentative conversation; nor into any that requires severe mental exertion. The mind should be passive and the body easy.

Do not meet in a room that retains in it a loaded atmosphere. If possible exclude light three or four hours before you meet together. Burn in the room a little aromatic gum when you close it, but only a very little.

If the atmosphere be loaded or unpleasant let a current of air into the room. Sometimes the atmosphere has been charged by the communicating Spirit and is too much loaded.

If any of these conditions be frustrated do not sit at all, or only under strong impression, and cease to sit as soon as inharmonious influence is felt.

In sitting seek not curiously for anything. It mars our plans frequently to have a strong positive will present which is fixed on any point. Cultivate perfect passivity.

Be ready always with questions on any points which are not

clear to you. Try and aid the manifesting Spirits by making easy for them that which is frequently harder than you know. Do not needlessly or heedlessly throw obstacles in their way. A set speech is frequently impossible when questions could readily be answered.

Maintain as far as you can a serious and attentive frame of mind. Inattention at once removes one element of power. The mind should be passive yet interested and attentive. Above all, be earnest and prayerful, ready to hear, and anxious for higher knowledge, soaring up, not bound to earth.

These rules if ye will follow, much trouble may be saved both to us and you.

*I can't help wishing that you had given us such advice long ago. Now is music desirable, or silence?*

Music, if good, is well, but not necessary. We prefer quietness and attention. Music helps the lower manifestations and inferior Spirits. But such musical sounds as we usually hear do not help us, rather the reverse.

*Do you know anything of —?*

We have known his work. He is returning and working out a special work which is subsidiary, but on a low plane. He does good work, but he has not morally progressed, and his work is for other than ours.

*Oh, yes. Is his account of himself true?*

We do not know; but you cannot rely on receiving truthful communications from him. His work is physical. The moral element is almost undeveloped yet.

*He is much better since I first saw him.*

He is progressing as all do in doing their work. Farewell. The Supreme bless us and you.

+ IMPERATOR.

## THOUGHT-READING.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—If the recently strangely re-awakened interest in this subject has not already shared the fate of other days, and in view of the distressing differences of the distinguished scientific men on the matter, I would beg permission to bring into court the evidence of a professor of the art who has, in my opinion, a better claim to be heard than any of those gentlemen who have favoured us with their disquisitions in the daily Press.

Some two years ago "Little Luie" and her "Pa" were exhibiting at the Brighton Aquarium, and I was invited by the then "genial manager" to interview them and make out, if possible, their *modus operandi*.

For the exact appreciation of what follows, I will mention that my experience of Spiritualism has been that we are first of all looked upon as idiots, and when doubts occur as to that theory being correct, a revulsion of feeling takes place and we are then regarded as authorities, and placed in the uncomfortable position of being expected to know everything.

Under such circumstances, I was introduced to "Professor" Heriot, the "Pa" of "Little Luie." The before-mentioned "genial manager" made all things pleasant and ensured the most favourable "conditions" by an antique process, known in those days and in that place as "Shedding a tear." The "Professor" "came up" kindly for examination, and the following interesting conversation and lucid explanation occurred:—

Myself.—Well! how do you do this thing, if it is a fair question?

Professor.—Oh! yes, certainly; it's thought-reading.

M.—Yes, precisely so, but what do you mean by thought-reading?

P.—Oh! second-sight; you know what that is.

M.—Well, yes; but, eh—

P.—Well, it's clairvoyance; you understand that.

M.—Certainly, to some extent, but how do you apply—

P.—(impatiently) I don't know what the d—it is, but I can do it, and will shew you what I can do.

On the instant he gave me a proof of his power, which might certainly have been trick, but, in my opinion, was not. One interesting point occurs here, that while the above conversation was taking place between the "Professor" and myself, his daughter "Little Luie" was explaining to my daughter that she had been taught the business when she was seven years of age. Shortly before this episode, "Little Luie" had been creating some sensation at the Westminster Aquarium, and a discussion arose as to the explanation of her success. A well-known Spiritualist contended that it was all trick, and published elsewhere a key or system by which he presumed the affair to be explained, but the late Mr. Serjeant Cox, to my mind, shewed that that key would not cover all the ground. From attentive

\* One of our members had been urged to join another circle and this elicited the present communication.

watching and careful consideration, I arrive at the conclusion that "Little Luie's" performances are three-fourths a really clever trick, and the remaining quantity is what her "Pa," the "Professor," describes as "I don't know what the d— it is, but I can do it."

It appears to me that in this, and in connection with one or two other matters, there is much room for consideration. Any one taking the trouble to watch for it will frequently meet with certain people who occasionally exhibit the faculty of knowing things by other than the ordinary means. I know of the case of a little girl, the daughter of a medical man, who at the tender age of three or four startled her parents with the extent of her knowledge of the doings of people at a distance which there was no possibility of her getting in the ordinary way.

Pending a solution of the mystery of Mr. Washington Irving Bishop's performances at the hands of science, I fancy we shall be tolerably safe in considering them mostly tricks, and not equal to "Little Luie's."

The thanks, however, of all who desire to see the spread of Spiritualism are due to Mr. Bishop and the prominent men whose vagaries are constantly directing attention to it.—Yours obediently,

R. M.

### SPIRITS—OR UNCONSCIOUS CEREBRATION?

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I believe table-turning is a form of spiritual manifestation recognised by thorough-going Spiritualists, though considered by them to be of a low order. It is, however, easily tried under test conditions, and on the spiritual hypothesis a satisfactory result ought readily to be obtained. If, therefore, any of your readers can suggest an explanation for the following phenomena I shall feel greatly obliged. I may say that the sitters were in every case intimately known to me, and that I am certain there was never any trickery or conscious deceit.

I first attempted table turning with one or two persons whom I knew to be mediumistic, and terribly in earnest. Spirits already known by them came and tapped out messages which, although generally obscure or trivial, appeared to me exciting and important, as being direct communications from another world. One Spirit, calling himself Empedocles, told us a lot of things about his bust in the British Museum, and the translation of his works published by Macmillan. At other times Spirits have given us a number of details of what friends had recently been doing hundreds of miles away. All these were absolutely untrue.

I had often been told both by Spirits and by mediums that I was a medium myself; so at length I tried with some brothers and sisters, and to our surprise we readily obtained a good deal of information about people both living and dead, all of which has, however, proved to be false.

This incapacity of the Spirits to speak the truth in the simplest matters has naturally led me to examine my own mind, and this examination has shewn me—

1st. That whenever the Spirits have spoken through me truly and sensibly, that knowledge and those ideas were already in my own mind.

2nd. That whatever the Spirits have spoken which was not in my mind at the time, has been wholly untrue.

3rd. That whenever I made a mistake in reckoning the alphabet, the Spirits did so too; if my thoughts wandered, theirs did also; and, finally, if I scrupulously kept my mind impartial, refusing to expect one letter more than another, the table constantly rapped away to "Z."

I may add that these conclusions are mainly the result of sésances where I myself was acting as medium, since, when other mediums were sitting with me, it was impossible to trace the workings of one mind. But in one point nearly all my observations agree: No one in Spirit-life either speaks the truth or fulfils solemn engagements.

I must repeat that the sitters have always been most seriously in earnest.

Hence it follows that I am driven to accept the theory of unconscious cerebation, a result somewhat discouraging to one who hoped that Spiritualism might prove an objective basis for religious faith.—I am, Sir, yours truly,

June 2nd, 1881.

PSEUDO-MEDIUM.

MR. F. O. MATTHEWS, the clairvoyant, having reconsidered his intention of visiting America, will not do so until next year.

### THE CASE OF MRS. FLETCHER.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Last mail brought us the result of the Fletcher case and I learn with great regret that Mrs. Fletcher has been sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour for a period of twelve months (the imposition of hard labour being, according to my way of thinking, in any case an unnecessary piece of cruelty).

As you very properly remark in your editorial, there is likely to be a difference of opinion even amongst Spiritualists as to the guilt or innocence of Mrs. Fletcher, and there can be no doubt that whether she be guilty or innocent the law, as it at present affects mediums, requires revision.

I believe in Mrs. Fletcher's innocence, and although I have no wish to alter the honest opinions of others, I think it only fair to give you the following extract from a letter she wrote me just at the commencement of her trial:—

"Before you receive this letter my fate will have been decided. It is evident that conviction and not justice is what the Crown seeks. Before God and His holy angels, I am innocent of all wrong doing, but I have no thought of being set free. Even should I be acquitted of the charge of fraud, I shall be found guilty of being a medium and of giving messages from Spirits, and I shall be imprisoned. I can only say 'God's will be done;' nor could I seek for a better fate than that of being a martyr to the truth. If I am convicted, do you use your pen and your influence to turn my martyrdom to good account, and work for a change of the law, as it at present affects mediums, so that I may be the last of the sufferers, and that mediums in the future may at least benefit by my sufferings in being left free to follow their vocation without fear of punishment."

To my thinking these words have the true ring about them, nor can I bring myself to look upon Mrs. Fletcher as the miserable and guilty wretch that so many consider her. If she were guilty it is simply incomprehensible that she should have left America, where she had triumphed over her accusers, to stand her trial in England, for she knew before starting that she would be arrested on arrival.

My wife left for England last February, and at the last sésance we held prior to her departure we asked the Spirit of my mother (who has always held control at our sésances) her opinion of Mrs. Fletcher, and her answer was, "A noble and true-hearted woman; cruelly and bitterly wronged and persecuted, but whose innocence shall yet be made manifest;" and to this I say "Amen!" I have known Mrs. Fletcher for a long time, and I have never heard her utter, or known her write, so much as an unkind or ill-natured word about any human being. Nor in her letters to me, although she was smarting under a sense of injustice, has she breathed a syllable against those who were prosecuting her. Let us remember that:—

"Life is full of holy uses,  
If but rightly understood;  
All its errors and abuses  
May be stepping stones to good."

And let us who call ourselves Spiritualists, and who should be distinguished above all by the spirit of love, charity, and toleration, do our best to turn the evils and abuses that this unhappy business has brought about us to good account.

I am sorry I cannot report that Spiritualism is making much progress out here, but I think if we could secure a good physical medium we might do something for the cause. There seems some probability of Mr. Eglinton paying us a visit next cold weather. He will be heartily welcomed by many beside myself.

With best wishes for the success of your paper, and trusting that you will not cease to agitate until the law as it affects mediums is altered,—I am, yours for the truth,

J. G. MEUGENS.

Calcutta,  
9th May, 1881.

MRS. AND MISS COOK have returned from The Hague, where, we understand, they met with a very cordial reception from various Spiritualists.

We are glad to hear that the *Psychological Review* is to be revived. The first issue of the new series is to appear on the 1st of next month.

It is probable that Mr. W. H. Lambelle, the late editor of our Newcastle-on-Tyne contemporary, *The Herald of Progress*, will accept the occupancy of the Unitarian pulpit at South Shields, which has been offered to him.



## OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

## "The Spiritualist."

A lengthy article by "Noemen" treats of "the fundamental conditions of transcendentalism," but, dealing very largely and freely with quotations, the writer does not offer much of his own that tends to our enlightenment. The drift of the argument can be gathered from the following extract:—

"Anyhow, it has been repeatedly shewn, and is now generally acknowledged, that there is no such wisdom to be found anywhere as that which Plato and Aristotle affected; no such divine knowledge or intuition possible as that which they, with their throng of followers and more remote Oriental teachers, pretend to have evolved. The life of Nature is everywhere in ignorance with respect to its first source. We do not feel our fulcrum, much less are conversant with its universality. The revelation of that on which we depend, supposing a *nexus*, would be unquestionably adverse to this life and fatal. Ontology, as a science, is impossible therefore, and our conclusions about causality are inferential and vague."

The closing paragraph infers the impracticability of transcendentalism, past or present, in these terms:—

"The obstacles that are now seen to beset the natural intellect with respect to transcendental knowledges, would seem to have been more than equally apparent to those men who exceptionally laid claim to them, but who never therefore laid claim to them apart from the evolution *de novo* which underpins their pretension, and from the advantage or disadvantage ground of which they taught, whether truly or falsely—but always with reference to this—and introduced belief in the existence of a scientific area that is despaired of under conditions which practically interdict the whole conclusion."

Mr. H. G. Atkinson, F.G.S., is of opinion that Mr. Bishop's "mind reading," "may be explained by brain sympathy—the influence of one brain upon another of a corresponding relationship, by passage through an intervening ethereal medium—as in the case of light, heat, and magnetism—without the intervention of the nerves of sense."

## "The Medium."

"The Discipline of Suffering"—a funeral sermon preached by the Ven. Archdeacon Colley at Natal—is replete with Spiritual thought.

A clergyman recently asked the editor "Shall I allow myself to become a medium?" being fearful that if he did it might lead to some untoward result during his pulpit duties. The reply to his question contains the following:—

"We are really all in the hands of the spirit-world, whether Spiritualists or not. The potter hath power over the clay, but some never have the 'honour' of spiritual consecration. If, however, the Lord of the vineyard has work for us to do, we are indeed powerless to resist. We may be taken, like Paul on his way to Damascus, and have the whole current of our lives involuntarily changed. My advice, then, is—seeing that at any time the spirit-world might lay hold of you, whether you attend to Spiritualism or not—be true to the voice within your own breast. If, then, you are made the instrument of spiritual work it will be in such a way as to bring spiritual good and satisfaction to yourself, and with a minimum of worldly inconvenience. But if, like Jonah, you attempt to flee from the face of the Lord, the result will be much more unpleasant."

"A Jersey Spiritualist" thus criticises certain astro-theological articles, the writer of which formerly contributed to the *Medium*, but whose papers have been recently appearing in another journal:—

"In fact they would not dare publish what they have written of the Blessed Jesus Christ, of any private individual, for fear of being called to account for libel. It is to be regretted that men of such talent and profound learning should think proper to publish their outrageous views in a paper which professes to plead the cause of Spiritualism; and what is the result? Their adopted channel has only existed one year, during which time all the donations have been swallowed up, and the funds so exhausted that the poor Editor is made the scape-goat and dismissed. But alas, a cause which ought to be held most sacred is brought (through such articles) into contempt by those who might by proper management be brought to be bright ornaments of true Spiritualism."

## "The Herald of Progress."

"The most revered modern thinkers" (writes the editor) "have erroneously discarded all religious impulses. They speak wisely, when they tell us, that nothing happens outside the domain of law, but they dare not set bounds to the laws of the universe, nor seek to fathom their potencies. If they would humble themselves to embrace spiritual intuitions, they would discover, that love, faith, and will tower supreme over and above the laws of the physical universe." In the same article, the writer adds:—

"One of the greatest glories of our philosophy is that of its manifold character, and the communications through trance speakers and other mediums are sure to be appreciated, because they herald a loving faith for a blind and almost dying hope."

The utterances are adapted to the wants of every mental state, and the yearning of the soul of man for knowledge of the future conditions of existence is so universal, that our victory is assured. The churches are gradually modifying their teachings, and will awake to a recognition of their ancient belief in the Communion of saints."

A "trance" address through Mr. W. Howell; an article compiled in 1859, entitled "Jaspar," by S. C. Hall; a long quotation from an obscure paper, published in London, purporting to give an account of the exposure of mediums; and an article compiled from "The Autobiography of an Agnostic" in the current *Fraser*, constitute the bulk of the remaining contents. The readers of the *Herald* will be glad to note that the publication of the "Historical Controls" is to be resumed.

## "The Banner of Light."

The departure to the higher life, on May 21st, of William Fishbough is announced, at the age of 67 years. Mr. Fishbough "has been connected with the modern Spiritual movement from its first inception;" he was the scribe who recorded the utterances of A. J. Davis when dictating "Nature's Divine Revelations;" was "assistant editor of the *Spiritual Telegraph*," and was well-known as a writer, and "a man of much research, whose services on the material plane the cause at this juncture can ill afford to spare."

Concerning certain statements against our contemporary which have appeared in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, the *Banner* says:—"We pronounce the *Journal* an unreliable sheet. It has traduced us for months; it has slandered some of our ablest correspondents . . . it has brought to its aid anonymous writers, especially 'one of the most eloquent and popular of Eastern lecturers;' . . . has accused us of being in collusion with a Philadelphia publisher in order to induce its readers to believe we were mercenary. We brand the calumny as an infamous falsehood. We have always counselled peace in our ranks, and none have striven with more assiduity than ourselves to promote it. Still the *Journal* deliberately misrepresents us; and again we asseverate that we have not, either by voice or pen, counselled with Mr. Roberts in his attacks upon that paper and its management. We make this statement only because our veracity has been called in question. If the publisher of the Western sheet had fulfilled his duty, he would have set his readers right upon this point long ago. But policy is his governing feature, and sensationalism for gain his impelling motive. This is self-evident. Did we allow these attacks to pass any longer uncontradicted, some might infer that we were culpable. Hence we enter upon the disagreeable duty of holding up these Chicago conspirators, these spiritualistic leeches, that honest men and honest women all over the world may no longer be deceived by them."

"Charles H. Foster was at St. Louis at last accounts, having reached that city on his way East. The *Globe-Democrat* gave quite a lengthy report of an interview with him during which satisfactory manifestations of spirit-presence were received."

Concerning the comments of the *Journal* upon the Fletcher case quoted in the last issue of "LIGHT," the *Banner* says in describing the action taken, and the persons taking it:—"We mean those professed Spiritualists who—as has the paper in Chicago to which we have referred—seek to conduct the matter into the channel of a personal quarrel, and unsparingly denounce Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher individually and collectively, without stopping to reflect that it is much easier to make a charge against anyone than it is to prove it. The journal of which we speak has by anonymous correspondents (a most cowardly system of attack) and by editorials besmirched Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher in the most unmeasured terms; but in the main the assertions are *all*—the readers of them are left singularly in the dark as to any proof, other than hearsay, of the truth of what is asserted."

## "The Religio-Philosophical Journal."

Hudson Tuttle, in a critical review of a lecture entitled "Perihelion Prophecies," delivered by Mrs. Richmond, the celebrated trance speaker, remarks in the course of his article:—

"It has never been proven or even made probable that the stars or planets have the least influence on the world or its inhabitants. If they had, why should not this perihelion be for good instead of harm? Why is evil and evil only prophesied? Just this is the reason: there is no way of gaining notoriety more cheaply than by sitting up as a prophet of evil. Although there is vastly more good than evil in the world, an hour of misfortune blots out a half century of happiness, and everyone is looking forward to an evil hour, or imagines it has come."

Mr. Tuttle further writes:—"It is wicked and most reprehensible to put forward such wild prophecies, even for a mountebank astrologer, whose stock-in-trade is cunning and duplicity; but for a Spirit to do so, claiming to be supported by science, when every uttered word shews an ignorance of science, which it would be an insult to refer to the most ignorant boor, is still more reprehensible."

## "Revue Spirite."

The *Revue Spirite* for June, with various interesting articles, contains a report of the League of Instruction (*Ligue de l'Enseignement*). This League took origin in Alsace shortly before

the Franco-German war; but on the transfer of Alsace to Germany, its originator Jean Macé, a disciple of Kardec, transferred himself and his idea of the League to Paris, where, by the co-operation chiefly of fellow-disciples, it has assumed such dimensions that 475 delegates met in Paris last April, and a banquet was held, over which M. Gambetta, the President of the Chamber of Deputies, presided, and made an oration extolling the objects of the League, namely, the popularising of unclerical instruction and education throughout France by collective, local, and individual effort. The leading men in the movement are still Kardec's disciples, Jean Macé, Emmanuel Vauchet, Camille Flammarion, and P. G. Leymarie, at whose house the affairs of the League were conducted until larger premises were required. Its offices now are in the Rue St. Honoré.

The *Revue* tells us that the Spiritualists of Leghorn (Italy) have constituted a Pneumatological Society, open to all who profess belief in God, immortality, and communication with superior intelligences. Experiments are being made by this society in corresponding with other pneumatological societies by Spiritual telegraphy through trance mediumship. A physical phenomenon, visible to all present, is spoken of as occurring at sésances, namely a luminous atmosphere enveloping the whole person of the medium, and a luminous globe circulating around the person of another medium. But such phenomena, it is added, only present themselves through "mediums of the Third Incarnation." We are not informed what this is.

A correspondent writes that the authorities at Havannah (Cuba) are hostile to Spiritualism. There is an Anthropological Society there, meeting on the first Sunday of every month, which takes a materialist view of things and hotly opposes the disciples of Kardec; and just as hot is the opposition of the clericals, who are just now re-inforced by an influx of some of the Jesuits dislodged from France. But the Spiritualist journals of Madrid, Barcelona, Lerida, Mexico, &c., reach there, and mediums for writing, speaking, and seeing are rapidly increasing in number.

#### DALSTON.

On Thursday evening, the 2nd inst., the members of the Dalston Association of Enquirers into Spiritualism held a reception at their rooms, 53, Sigdon-road, Dalston, to mark the close of the winter season's work. Upwards of 40 ladies and gentlemen accepted invitations to attend. The rooms were prettily decorated with flowers and ferns, under the superintendence of the hostess of the evening, Mrs. Morse, who also attended to the refreshments served to the visitors, and by her cordial welcomes and assiduous attentions to the requirements of the guests, contributed materially to the comfort of all concerned. Mr. J. J. Morse, the president, ably seconded the lady of the house, and in conjunction with Mr. J. Taft, the hon. sec., arranged the programme of the evening, which afforded much pleasure to all present. Shortly after eight o'clock the proceedings commenced with a duet for piano, "Les Dames de Seville," by the Misses Sparey, and among the other ladies and gentlemen who favoured the company by vocal and other selections, were Mr. J. H. Guy, who sang "The Midshipmite" and "The Old Brigade;" Mr. S. Matthews, "My sweetheart when a boy" and "Once Again;" Miss Allen, who recited "Queen Margaret's Address to Suffolk" and "The Bridge of Sighs;" Miss Sparey, "In the Gloaming;" Miss Morse, "Oh had I but Aladdin's Lamp;" Mr. M. Patterson, who recited "Marc Antony's Oration;" Mr. Whitby, "Jack's Yarn;" and Mr. Haxby. Madame Ourry with her characteristic kindness played selections of dance music, which were fully utilised by the younger members present, in spite of the great heat that prevailed. Refreshments were served at 9.30, while for another hour and a-half conversation, music, and dance occupied the time, the company finally separating with many expressions of pleasure at the evening's proceedings.

#### GOSWELL HALL.

##### Debate between Mr. Holmes and Mr. Carpenter.

On Sunday last, according to previous arrangement, a debate took place at this hall between Mr. J. Holmes and Mr. Carpenter. The subject in the morning was, "Does the Spiritualistic hypothesis satisfactorily explain the phenomena and the circumstances connected therewith?" Mr. Holmes opened in the affirmative, and laid down the proposition that the Spiritual hypothesis is that mind is an enduring entity, and that what is called death is but a change from one state of existence to another. He then proceeded to enumerate phenomena of the most striking character which he had personally witnessed, and which could not by any possibility be explained by either trickery or delusion, quoting the testimony of Mr. Alfred R. Wallace and others as to the production of direct writing in sealed slates. Having brought the different phenomena to the front, Mr. Holmes proceeded in a logical and forcible manner to prove that what his opponent called a hypothesis was to him knowledge. Mr. Carpenter's task in having simply the negative side of the question to deal with was no easy one, and the only point in Mr. Holmes's speech which he endeavoured to meet was the slate writing, and even this he did not deny, but accepted the phenomena as facts beyond his comprehension. He could not form any idea how it was done, but the explanation given by

Spiritualism was inconclusive. He concluded by stating that his opinion of mind was that it was the outcome of his physical body, at the death of which his mind ceased to be. In the evening the subject was "Do the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism prove the existence of God, or 'Supreme Mind'?" Mr. Holmes again had to take the initiative, and he commenced by stating that he was not going to attempt to prove the existence of God mathematically, as it cannot have, and does not demand, such proof. It was from a moral standpoint that this question had to be looked at. Mind is the basis of conception, perception, will, reason, and intelligence. On these points the opener waxed eloquent and concluded by stating that he could not conceive of there ever having been a time when there was nothing. If such a state of things had been, there would be nothing now, for out of nothing nothing can come. In support of the independent existence of mind and its superiority over matter, he cited a most remarkable case of materialisation, the genuineness of which was proved by 26 gentlemen. This was through the mediumship of Miss Wood, at Leicester. In fact, the amount of evidence adduced was overwhelming, and it is utterly impossible to reproduce either the letter or spirit in the space at our disposal. Mr. Carpenter denied that his opponent had made out any case at all, and contended that mind was not an entity, and that neither Mr. Holmes nor anyone else was able to prove that it was more than the conjunction of the various forces inherent in the physical body. He then drew a picture of this world, in which he endeavoured to shew that there is more evil than good, more sorrow than joy, more sickness than health; in short, that evil is predominant, and Nature is an inharmonious whole, against which the human family has to struggle. The debate was conducted throughout in a kind and friendly manner; personalities were conspicuous by their absence. But, without a doubt, Mr. Holmes possessed and most ably retained the best position. A cordial vote of thanks was awarded to both gentlemen and suitably responded to. The next item was a vote of thanks to our friend, Mr. J. J. Morse, for the kind, genial, and impartial manner in which he discharged the duties of chairman, both morning and evening. This was heartily accorded on the motion of Messrs. Carpenter and Holmes, the former paying a most fitting tribute to Mr. Morse's strict impartiality, seeing he was so deeply interested in the subject.—J. N. GREENWELL.

#### LADBROKE HALL.

The meetings at this hall were rather thinly attended, owing to the holidays, on Sunday last, but Mr. F. O. Matthews was as successful as usual in his clairvoyant delineations. Miss Susan Gay is expected to occupy the platform next Sunday, and arrangements are being vigorously pushed forward for the Special Sunday Service on July 3rd, which is likely to prove an attractive and interesting occasion.

#### QUEBEC HALL.

On Tuesday evening, the 31st ult., Miss S. E. Gay delivered an address upon "Men and Women as Spiritual Beings," which was listened to with evident interest and appreciation by a fair audience. On Sunday evening last Mr. I. Macdonnell lectured upon "The Signs of the Times," and an interesting exchange of opinion between the speaker and members of the audience followed the lecture.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE.**—There is, apparently, a danger that, after the 24th inst., the doors of Quebec Hall will be finally closed, and Spiritualist meetings there be discontinued. Mr. J. M. Dale finds himself quite unable, single-handed, to sustain the work and responsibility. With the view of seeing what can be done to retain the hall, and continue the meetings which have done such good service, we are desired to state that a meeting of the members and friends interested will take place at five o'clock on Tuesday afternoon next, at the above hall. Mr. J. J. Morse has promised to attend, and from the presence and advice of others also who may come forward, Mr. Dale trusts that some arrangement may be arrived at which will prevent the suspension of the meetings, or the closing of a hall so long and so usefully identified with Spiritualism.

#### CARDIFF.

The platform of the Cardiff Spiritualist Society was occupied on Sunday evening last by Mr. E. Adams, who read selections from current Spiritual literature. At the close of the meeting the usual séance was held. On Whit-Monday a number of the society, with their families, accompanied the Unitarian Sunday-school and friends to a large field at Preswylfa, near Cardiff (kindly lent by Charles Thompson, Esq., J.P.), where, by the combined efforts of some energetic members of both societies, a most agreeable afternoon was spent, both by the children and the adults. Football, rounders, foot races, and other such exhilarating exercises were the order of the day, refreshments being partaken of under a large marquee tent. Special cars were provided by the Tramway Company for the conveyance of the party to and from the scene of enjoyment and the whole affair passed off without a single hitch.

**MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.**—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 Mapee, 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 Medalist, 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. Elliotson, 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.

The late Emperor of Russia; the late Emperor Napoleon; President Thiers; the Hon. Alexandre Aksakof, Russian Imperial Councillor; the late Prince Emile de Sayn Wittgenstein; His Imperial Highness Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; the late Baron L. de Guldenstobbe; Count A. de Gasparin; the Baron and Baroness von Vay; the Baron du Potet; Mons. Léon Favre, Consul-General of France; Victor Hugo.

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## 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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 TUESDAY, 14TH.—Finance Committee Meeting, at 6 p.m.  
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