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SATURDAY, JULY 9, 1881.

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SPIRITUALISM— IS IT FACT, FRAUD, OR FANCY?

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"Spiritualism as a Basis of Belief." J. S. Farmer.
"Researches in Spiritualism." W. Crookes.
"Startling Facts." R. B. Wolf.
"Arcana of Spiritualism." Hudson Tuttle.
"The Spirit World." Eugene Crowell.
"LIGHT."
The Medium.
The Spiritualist.

We have taken the books and periodicals which head this article as tolerably fair specimens of Spiritual literature. Every historical period has its own peculiar phenomena. Last century, with its chaos of thought and feeling and mad revolutions, was the necessary historical preliminary to the order and productiveness of our own era. The wild speculations as to the origin of the universe have, under scientific method, given way to the doctrines of universal order, or law, in the present century. Materialism has taken a new form—beautiful, but cold and impassive as the snowy height of an Alpine peak. It has established order at the expense of a controlling intelligence and universal law, with the robbery of an all-present heart. It is waging deadly war with an established system of religion that has indisputably done good work in the education of the race. The lofty ideal of manhood proclaimed by Jesus Christ has necessarily caused bloodshed and warfare in its establishment upon the human mind. He came, not to bring peace, but a sword. New ideas cannot root themselves without a struggle, often terrible, with the privileges gained by old systems and sustained by the conservative instinct. Materialism forgets the splendid educational service of the Christian Church. It is by no means an unsolvable point that the world would be far behind its present progression but for that ideal Christianity and emotional life rooted 1,800 years ago on the shores of the Galilean lake.

Science has found its bitterest opponents in those who profess to be the most zealous adherents of truth. Theologies, the human credal conceptions of eternal truth, have been met by the stern analysis of scientific method. Many theologic dogmas have been shattered to pieces, and, exulting at the ruins of these outer battlements, the votaries of science have imagined a complete victory had been scored.

One of the most dangerous tendencies of human nature, cultured as well as uncultured, is to overleap the boundaries of scientific fact and by imaginative enthusiasm assert as science what as yet only exists in sanguine expectancy. If Theology has sinned in this direction, Materialism is not behind its ancient foe. Because it has established that all is order in the universe, Materialism denies the possibility of miracles, or any benefit in prayer beyond subjective feeling. We have the startling fact that the scientific school is fast becoming, in its attitude to certain questions, unscientific in method, and lapsing into a dogmatism as pitiable as that of theologians. History records the establishment of Christianity by the demonstrative evidence of miracles. It asserts a fact, and sustains it by an overwhelming amount of historical testimony; but it does not give us a definition of the how. Theologians have unfortunately defined the method of a miracle to be interference with, or suspension of, natural laws; and scientists have straightway confused the definition of miraculous method with miraculous fact, and denied the possibility of the events. The whole squabble between the contending parties lies in bad definitions;

a quarrelling over the exact nature of the covering shell, while the kernel is left untouched. Historical veracity and scientific knowledge are thus in unseemly contest. The tendency of such disputes is, necessarily, to antagonistic dogmatism. Theologians assert more than they can scientifically prove; materialists deny more than their scientific knowledge warrants them in negating. Theologians have mixed up with the eternal truth confided to their care credal conceptions that are manifestly untrue to human nature and natural facts; and scientific men have dogmatized on partial inductions.

In the midst of these contending forces comes another—at present, in but ragged garments, its facts ill-arranged, and its theories contradictory—Spiritualism. Disowned by the Church on the one hand; jeered at as nonsensical by the indifferent; scowled at as diabolic by the bigoted, and denied by the scientific; and, yet, despite all this, its own chaotic state, and the so-called *exposés* that now and then startle Spiritualists as well as their opponents, its believers are counted by millions, gained within 33 years of the Rochester knockings, in every country of the globe; and its teachings are spreading every year of its history. It is idle to laugh at its lowly origin. The greatest religious triumph, taken altogether, started in an equally insignificant fashion, but its inherent force was sufficient to demolish the temples of polytheism, and consign to the pages of mere history the most powerful and splendid religions of the world.

The literature of Spiritualism is rapidly becoming a voluminous and important one. Its journals are weekly increasing in circulation. They are repositories of facts, abundantly testified, which will one day form the basis of a new science, when science becomes more truly scientific in method and Christianity more rational in its conceptions.

It is vain to assert that the facts are not existent. If these facts came to us through public mediums or packed circles alone, there would be room for suspicion of imposture. But Spiritualism has never been confined to the phenomena that come through professional exhibitors. Thousands upon thousands of men and women, many of them eminent in literature and even in science, are not only witnesses of the phenomena, but themselves the subjects of the mysterious force. But for the stigma and ruin brought upon all believers of Spiritualism, thousands of names unsullied in honour, unquestionable in intellectual power, and consecrated to the highest pursuit of truth, would be known and recorded before the world, not only as personal practitioners of intercourse with the denizens of another world, but as devotees of this transcendental science. The wail of the noble-hearted Christ is known by many a Spiritualist, "If I have told you of earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?" The portals of Spiritual science must be entered before the fair and sublime dimensions of the inner region of fact can be seen. Its elements must be mastered before its higher and incontrovertible truths can be gained. These elementary facts are such that they cannot be gainsaid. Let them be treated in a scientific method apart from any theory, and let the generalisations never be beyond the fair inductions of the facts; let there be scientific method in the researches, and Spiritualists do not fear but that, as in the case of Dr. Zöllner and other famed scientists of Germany, there will always be admission of the genuineness of the phenomena.

The elementary facts recorded in these books can be verified by most persons themselves. They need not be received on human testimony, nor on professional advocacy. Any family or household is all but certain to contain sufficient mediumistic power to call forth these physical phenomena. If these table-movings and rappings and other physical phenomena, be facts—and it is bootless to deny them—it is incumbent on the truly scientific mind to investigate them, and find out the law by which they are produced and governed; and yet men of such professed enthusiasm for scientific truth and comprehensiveness

as Professors Huxley and Tyndall treat it, if not with disdain, at least with complete indifference. Would these men treat some new astronomical phenomenon, or some botanical irregularity, or some geological monstrosity in this fashion? Wherever matter or force in its varied forms produces facts in realms they are familiar with, these investigators hasten to its study or hail its announcement. But whenever phenomena seem to point to higher powers, to, perhaps, the highest power of all, to another sphere of existence, they dogmatically close every sense of knowledge, and refuse to be taught by facts. In other words, they depart from scientific method.

When these purely physical phenomena are fully admitted, it is time to advance to the higher facts that will inevitably come. Somehow or other it will be seen that intelligence is guiding this force. You may endeavour to account for it on the psychic force theory of Mr. Crookes, or that of "Unconscious Cerebration" by Dr. Carpenter; but Spiritualists maintain that neither theory does nor can include all the facts. And supposing that psychic force and unconscious cerebration could account for it, it opens up an immense field of physiological study fraught with vital interest to a scientific student. In these books we have records of mental phenomena more startling than any merely physical. Here, however, the evidence begins to weaken unless we have, as numbers of Spiritualists have, evidence within their own homes of mental phenomena that cannot have come from their own organisation by any known or conceivable laws. For this class of manifestations to be of any worth it is necessary to be acquainted first of all with the original endowments and veracity of the medium.

And it is well to note from the experiences of investigators that the study of the higher facts is ruled by the law of affinity. As a man is so will be his environment by the Spirit-world. The theory of Spiritualists is that the life of earth is an obscuring of the real Spirit-nature of the man; that death is the loosing of the bond with a clumsy bodily medium for the inner Spiritual state. Death is an inevitable revealment to outer gaze of the real manhood. The man looks in the Unseen what he is, not as on earth obscured by his bodily covering. Hence the naming of individuals there is by Spirit symbols, like "Mines of love," God to Himself," or "Torrents of power." The arbitrary naming and placing of earth is there unknown. The accidents of birth and fortune on the earth plane of human life elevate men above their proper sphere, or subject them to the humiliation of an environment that is distasteful to every feeling. Death to a Spiritualist is right placement. By the inviolable law of human being, "each goeth to his own place." It is a sublime conception of the self-operating power of Divine law. Its brilliant harmony is a fair test of its truth. Nothing is more puzzling to the philosophic mind than the inequality of earth. It has always been a powerful argument for the continuity of life beyond the grave. The rigid justice that prevails in that other life is a sublime gospel to the storm-tossed soul and a thunder peal of warning to the transgressor. It is precisely this unvarying accuracy of personal affinity that, Spirits say, rules their intercourse with each other and with communicants on the earth side of life. As the preponderating influence of a circle or a solitary medium, so will be his Spirit-surroundings. The intercourse must be investigated by legal method. A *sine quâ non* to harmonious intercourse is a harmonious sitters.

So-called exposures are as startling to Spiritualists as to anti-Spiritualists. At one time this was unaccountable to them, knowing the absence of any intention to fraud. Only when it was discovered that in that other world were orders of Spirits as on earth—some full of high enterprise and lofty ideals, others of mischievous, and even of Satanic malice—did these phenomena receive their just explanation. The lamentable break-down and *exposé* drew attention to the laws upon which such communion must be based. Miscellaneous sittings and haphazard circles must be abandoned. Law reigned here as in every other department of the universe. As the conditions, so the manifestations. Did evil preponderate in the sitters it attracted a like element from the invisible spheres. The exposures thus turn out as the greater proofs of the truth of Spiritualism, and as a spur to purification and development.

The laws which guide this intercourse are not so much subtle as delicate. Physical conditions have a great deal to do with it. The state of the weather, or of the atmosphere, the health of medium and sitters, all make it more or less difficult for the Spirit to operate.

One thing is clearly and scientifically proved, that the Spirits on the other side the veil are more sensitive to Spiritual

affinities and antipathies than we are here with the comparatively coarse bodily medium through which we communicate with each other. Malice, envy, hatred, flippancy, and dogged refusal to believe rather than unbelief, make it extremely difficult, and all but impossible, for satisfactory phenomena to take place. And on no reasonable ground can it be expected. Even here, such elements and feelings make communion impossible. They soon act as repellant or separating forces. On the other hand, love, peace, the habit of patient investigation, and a willingness to believe if satisfactory evidence be given, act as stimulants to the investigations, and a circle composed of such harmonising emotions is one where the best and purest of communicating Spirits can operate to the undoubted satisfaction of all present.

One of the chief teachings of this literature is the enlargement of the sphere of the natural, and, indeed, the complete banishment of the supernatural. Nothing stands more in the way of Spiritualism advancing than the weird, ghostlike idea that gathers round the mere mention of an unseen world. It is a relic of the world's childhood. It is fostered by the Church, and detested by the scientific mind. Spiritualism opens the portals of the unseen spheres and proclaims that all is Nature. Like science, it ridicules the idea of anything above Nature, except Nature's Creator. The Spirits are men and women who have lived on earth. They are here still. They entered that world as they left this. There has been no more break in the continuity of their existence than happens to us in the common sleep of night. They have not even changed their form, though they find their bodily powers capable of new exertions and experiences. Probably none among the many benefits promised by Spiritualism can compare with this. Its ideas rout the remnants of pagan thinking. The world is no longer to cower before the unseen potencies as our forefathers trembled at the lightning flash, or fell on their knees in the worship of cowardice before the descending avalanche. The Spirits speak, and the burden of their gospel is that the Reign of Terror before the supernatural is at an end. It should be welcomed as a long-sought colleague by science.

There is no probability of such a movement being stayed. The phenomena, being unquestionable, must sooner or later be investigated and classified on scientific principles. If the truly scientific man be one who recognises all facts and endeavours to discover their law, then what folly for the devoted student of science to ignore them! They may, at least, shed important light upon the nature of man's Spirit, and the relation of that Spirit to his bodily structure, for even, if it can be proved that these manifestations are not proceeding from departed men and women, then they come from the mental and emotional part of embodied men and women; and the sooner the facts are elucidated and arranged the better for the interests of science.

(To be continued.)

"CLOUD-HOPPING."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In my letter to you on "Occultism," in your last week's impression, this word "cloud-hopping" was excusably misprinted clod-hopping. I have been asked what I mean by it. It is a playful neologism invented by myself, or somebody else, about 40 years ago, and it is intended to convey the idea of "mystical inutility," including all kindred spiritual and metaphysical vanities, frivolities, and antics, ending in nothing. In this sense I hope this compound expression will be generally adopted.

TRIDENT.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, the novelist, knew something of Spiritualism, as indeed who doesn't? In a letter which he wrote 20 years ago to his friend Pike, and which is quoted in the current number of *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, we find the following passage:—"I do long to see you, and to talk about a thousand things, relating to this world and the next. I am very glad of your testimony in favour of spiritual intercourse. I have heard and read much on the subject, and it appears to me to be the strangest and most bewildering affair I ever heard of. I should be very glad to believe that these rappers are, in any one instance, the spirits of the persons whom they profess themselves to be; but, though I have talked with those who have had the freest communication, there has always been something that made me doubt. So you must allow me to withhold my full and entire belief, until I have heard some of the details of your own spiritual intercourse." Whether Hawthorne had his doubts satisfied before his departure to the other life, we have no means of knowing.

SPIRITS; OR, UNCONSCIOUS CEREBRATION?

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I shall be obliged if you will allow me through your columns to thank "Epsilon" for his reply to my letter, and to answer some of his questions.

But first I must ask him what "grotesque results" should follow the method of conducting a series of experiments on the assumption that the current hypothesis is true, and only abandoning that hypothesis when it proves to be totally and invariably inconsistent with facts?

The theory of unconscious cerebration which I have substituted for that of Spiritual agency does, on the other hand, explain all the facts which have come under my observation. None of these facts in the slightest degree point to the objective existence of Spiritual beings. The "nearly" in my letter referred to some occurrences which have been reported to me through reliable witnesses, and which both theories will account for. "Epsilon," too, should have noticed that my letter was written throughout in Spiritualistic dialect.

His questions relating to health, mental calibre, &c., I could answer satisfactorily. But what directly have they to do with the matter? Some of those with whom I have sat are persons of more than ordinary ability; but how does that affect the question of the presence of Spirits? The phenomena were not "vague"; they were definite and false. "Spirits" have again and again described pictures, reported occurrences, and given names and initials, all of which have proved wholly untrue. How could such fabrications be produced by a "want of harmony in the circle"?

The question is, Were Spirits present at all? If the answer be yes, then why have they never been able to prove their existence, although constantly attempting to do so, by shewing a knowledge of any, even trivial, fact which was unknown to the sitters?

But if there were no Spirits present at my séances, it proves an unexpected capacity in stolid persons for deluding both themselves and others. And since my séances are closely connected in several ways with a long, and in some degree successful, series conducted by others, it makes one doubt whether Spirits have been present at any of these, and in fact whether Spirits are ever present at all. I know that I have deluded myself; others may do the same.

I would gladly pursue the investigation farther; any Spirit, of whatever grade, would be welcome. But since I have learned the knack of watching my own mind, the table has refused to speak, and at last even to move, although "mediumistic" persons have been present besides myself. And yet the "guides" of well-known mediums have assured me that I am sufficiently "mediumistic" to turn a table when alone.

Since writing the above, I have seen the letters by "H. T. H." and "Trident." The facts related by the former are striking, and I should be satisfied with such proofs myself. But the Spirits who attend my table-turnings never can tell such things, and those that clairvoyants have seen attending me have in no case been recognised by me.

The suggestion of "H. T. H." about a "light and careless spirit," I anticipated in my letter so carefully that "Epsilon" imagines we sat in "an unnatural awe," an alternative equally untrue.

All three of your correspondents fall into the common mistake of confusing incorrectness of fact with intentional deceit. Empedocles told us that his bust was in Room No. 3 of the British Museum, and that Macmillan has published a translation of his works at 5s. The rooms in the British Museum are not numbered, nor does Macmillan publish any such book, nor, indeed, are any works of Empedocles extant.

But I do not feel that a stigma attaches to my character, although I maintain that these falsehoods were caused by "unconscious cerebration." I grant that I may have used this phrase in a sense, perhaps, unusually wide. I mean by it that an idea in the mind of a sitter may readily be spelt out through the table by the action of his muscles, although at the time he is wholly unconscious that he is influencing the table in any way.

Thanking you, Sir, and your correspondents for courtesy towards me, and still hoping for some explanation that will meet my case,—I am, yours truly,

PSEUDO-MEDIUM.

28th June, 1881.

He who attempts to teach religion without exemplifying it, loses the advantage of its best argument.

HOW BISHOP LEARNED THOUGHT-READING.

So after all Mr. Washington Irving Bishop is not original. Everybody, of course, has heard and seen the "hide-and-seek" games of children; but we did give Bishop credit for having invented the particular form of the game in which he and certain "grave and reverend signiors" have recently engaged, to the amusement of the public. He is, however, only a plagiarist from one Brown, who performed the same tricks years ago in precisely the same fashion in America!

In the July number of the *Journal of Science* is a copy of an essay on the subject which had been published already by Dr. G. M. Beard in the *Popular Science Monthly* of February, 1877, just four and a-half years ago. In this essay Dr. Beard describes very minutely Brown's performances, and the descriptions read for all the world like carefully written reports of what Bishop has been doing in London. Here is one of them:—

"The method of mind-reading introduced by Brown, which is but one of many methods that have been used, is as follows:—

"The operator, usually blindfolded, firmly applies the back of the hand of the subject to be operated on against his own forehead, and with his other hand presses lightly upon the palm and fingers of the subject's hand. In this position he can detect, if sufficiently expert, the slightest movement, impulse, tremor, tension, or relaxation, in the arm of the subject. He then requests the subject to *concentrate his mind* on some locality in the room, or on some hidden object, or on some one of the letters of the alphabet suspended along the wall. The operator, blindfolded, marches sometimes very rapidly with the subject up and down the room or rooms, up and down stairways, or out-of-doors through the streets, and, when he comes near the locality on which the subject is concentrating his mind, a slight impulse or movement is communicated to his hand by the hand of the subject. This impulse is both involuntary and unconscious on the part of the subject. He is not aware that he gives any such impulse; and yet it is sufficient to indicate to the expert and practised operator that he has arrived near the hidden object, and then, by a close study and careful trials in different directions, upward, downward, and at various points of the compass, he ascertains precisely the locality, and is, in many cases, as confident as though he had received verbal communication from the subject. Even though the article on which the subject concentrates his mind be very small, it can frequently be picked out from a large number, provided the subject be a good one, and the operator sufficiently skilful. The article is sometimes found at once, the operator going to it directly, without hesitation, and with a celerity and precision that, at first sight, and until the physiological explanation is understood, justly astonish even the most thoughtful and sceptical. These experiments, it should be added, are performed in public or private, and on subjects of unquestioned integrity, in the presence of experts, and under a combination of circumstances and conditions for the elimination of error that make it necessary to rule out at once the possibility of collusion."

Dr. Beard's essay is well worth reading. It shews that others beside Brown and Bishop have succeeded in the so-called thought-reading and have succeeded even more completely than they—and it records numerous interesting experiments by which the Doctor established his conclusions that it was not thought or mind reading after all, but "muscle-reading," a term which he himself used when he published his essay nearly five years since, but which we had supposed was first employed in the controversy which sprang up over Bishop's exhibitions in London not many months ago.

But is Bishop really a copyist after all? May he not have discovered in himself some peculiar powers—or have thought that he had done so—without knowing that the same powers had been possessed and publicly exhibited by others? Well, Dr. Beard has answered the question in a letter which accompanies his contribution to the *Journal of Science* of the copy of his previous published essay. He says distinctly:—

"Irving Bishop was in America at the time I was making my researches, and had conversations with me about them, and gained what he knew from my studies and from the performances of 'Brown, the mind-reader.'"

But Dr. Beard has also a bone to pick with Dr. Carpenter:—

"Dr. Carpenter's course in this matter is, as it seems to me, hardly worthy of a scientific man, for he has long been familiar with my investigations in this department; indeed he sent to me for my original papers about two years ago, and he complimented me, in as high terms as one scientific man can bestow upon another, for the original work that I had done in this and allied departments of science. Now when the subject is brought up he nowheres recognises my discoveries which previously he had quoted with high approval, but allows the credit to fall upon himself by implication, or lets the matter remain undecided."

So Dr. Beard thinks that Dr. Carpenter's course has been hardly worthy of a scientific man! We fancy we have heard similar expressions of opinion about Dr. Carpenter before.

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.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

In his lively series of transatlantic sketches "To-day in America," Mr. Joseph Hatton has a chapter devoted to Spiritualism. He is not a Spiritualist, and does not seem to know more about the subject than can be gathered from casual conversation, and a chance visit that he paid to Foster, the well-known medium. He has some effective remarks on the credulity of certain Spiritualists whose faith is sufficient to enable them to swallow any amount of ungrammatical and incoherent twaddle, if only it profess to come from some great name among the "mighty dead." He mentions a judge in the West who, "at various local séances, and through various local mediums, has conversed with the daughter of Pharaoh, the wife of Abraham, the Witch of Endor, Mary Queen of Scots, likewise Moses, Saul, and Lazarus 'who licked the dog'!" When the smile that this folly raises has passed off, one is inclined to say that no reprobation can be too strong for the criminal stupidity that so loads a true and ennobling belief with ridicule and contempt.

There are two stories of Foster's powers which are in their several ways striking and instructive. The first was told to Mr. Hatton, the second is a record of a séance at which he assisted. The first excels in marvel, the last in suggestiveness. A friend of Mr. Hatton's went with Captain F. after the war, to sit with Foster. The medium was smoking unconcernedly, and the séance proceeded tamely enough for some time. Suddenly Foster grew excited, and said to Captain F., "There is present the Spirit of one who loved you dearly, and who died of a broken heart." "Take care," said F., nervously clutching the back of his chair. "She was a deeply injured woman," Foster went on absently, "and when she died—" "Stop! Be cautious, or I may kill you," said F., leaning over the table, with his white face close to Foster's, whose calmness was not in any way disturbed. "Shall I repeat her last words?" "No living soul but myself heard them: they were whispered in my ear. If you are tricking me, if you make any mistake, I will shoot you where you stand." He grasped a revolver, and looked straight at Foster. "Shall I repeat or write them?" said the medium quite calmly. Told to write them, he put a slip of paper under the table, and shortly after handed it to the Captain, who fell back into his chair with a cry of surprise and remorse.

A very striking story which, as we have summarised it, loses somewhat of its dramatic intensity; a little dressed, perhaps, but, very probably, a fairly accurate account of what occurred, or may have occurred. The woman had been wronged; there had been a bond of affection between her and Captain F.; he was uneasy in his mind, dwelling on his sin and its fruits. These are the materials, simple enough in themselves, for the production of such a scene. It is such motives, where the affections are concerned, and where a wrong has been done, that apparently avail most to bring back departed souls to earth. A large proportion of the best authenticated stories of apparitions and appearances of the departed, outside of the records of Spiritualist séances, is concerned with either the gratification of an affection which has survived death, or the attempt to undo a wrong or atone for a sin the memory of which refuses to be laid.

The second narrative is less dramatic. It records Mr. Hatton's experience with Foster on "a fine morning in October with the Indian summer sunshine stealing through the window." The knocks impressed Mr. Hatton, as they do most careful observers, as of "a strange immaterial character—sounds that appeared to be made by aerial concussions." The usual writing of names and making the paper on which they were inscribed into a pellet—a foolish proceeding, we have always thought—followed, and Mr. Hatton treated some 30 names in this way. He was told to fix his mind on someone, and he thought of his father. The name was properly spelled out, and a simple message duly signed, "F. A. Hatton," was given. "The very simplicity of the incident was impressive," is Mr. Hatton's comment. The same result was obtained when he thought of his sister, even to the giving her pet name.

So far all was well. But now Foster called out "Mary G——. Who is Mary G——?" No response. The pause was broken by Mrs. M——, a lady who had accompanied Mr. Hatton, and who claimed Mary G—— as her aunt. Much was made of this particular aunt, and she was the most pertinacious of the ghosts. When the séance was over Mr. Hatton asked Mrs. M—— why she had claimed Mary G—— as her aunt? "Because no one else did, and I did not want a decent respectable woman going about begging for a relation. Who was she then?" "My grandmother." "That's unlucky. But why did you not stop Foster as he kept speaking of her as my aunt?" "Why did not my grandmother stop him?" said Mr. Hatton. Why, indeed? It is a very suggestive query; and one the answer to which would involve the discussion of the reason why a large proportion of the Spirits that frequent public and physical circles so readily assume any name and character assigned them, from Pharaoh's daughter or Pythagoras to the sitter's sister, or cousin, or aunt.

Such instances are instructive, especially to persons who do not pursue their investigations beyond the public circle. There are others in Mr. Hatton's book, but we need not quote them. No instructed Spiritualists rely on any such records as evidence of any thing more than an abnormal power in a person called a medium. If they seek evidence of the identity of Spirit, or of the perpetuated life of those whom they love, they seek it by quite different methods. When the materialist has broken his shins sufficiently over the rough facts which the ordinary Spirit-circle furnishes, there are abundance of others ready which will engage his deeper thought. But the subtleties of metaphysical speculation, and the possible interpretation of the inner mysteries of Spirit and Spiritualism, must be reserved for the mind that has ripened under the more objective methods of observation, and has satisfied itself that there is something or somebody at work, producing effects not to be accounted for by any known laws. Then is the time to ask: Who or what is this?

There is one little suggestive incident that may be noted in Mr. Hatton's record of this same séance. "You are thinking of two dead persons now," said Foster, "Pope and Dr. Williams. They are here." "I was not thinking of Pope, and he is not dead," said Mr. Hatton. This confused the medium, and he insisted that the two persons had been present in Mr. Hatton's mind. That was not the case, but he afterwards remembered that he had written the two names together on one slip of paper. Does Mr. Foster then unconsciously acquire his information from the pellets that he handles, reading them clairvoyantly? It looks like it in this case: but the explanation by no means covers such a narrative as the first we have quoted, though it is within the bounds of the possible that the same clairvoyant gift that read the pellet, might have read Captain F.'s mind. Mr. Foster stoutly claims that he sees the Spirits present, and learns from them what he conveys to the sitters.

MR. BERKS T. HUTCHINSON leaves England next week on a visit to Scotland. He hopes to see Mr. Bowman at Glasgow, and would like, if opportunity permits, to have a sitting with Mr. David Duguid. Having come all the way from South Africa he naturally enough desires to see all that can be seen of Spiritualism in the "old country."

In a review of "Illusions—a Psychological Study, by James Sully," the *Journal of Science* remarks:—"Spiritualist Séances are several times referred to in the work as hot-beds of illusion. This may be so; but we fear that the 'exposers' and opponents of Spiritualism might in like manner serve as an instance of equal and opposite 'illusions.'" We suspect that the editor of the *Journal of Science* knows more about Spiritualism than he thinks it prudent to avow.

CLANDESTINE SPIRITUALISM.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Reading your "Notes by the Way" in a recent issue of "LIGHT," I came upon the words: "Why should we not have a sort of Freemasonry in Spiritualism, with the requisite means of revealing ourselves to any initiated brother?" It appears to me that for more than one reason the suggestion contained in this query is not a very happy one. I can imagine how such a suggestion carried out might be of some service to those whose principal object is privacy. It might be allowed that the weak-kneed among the Spiritualistic brethren would find in the arrangement a groundwork of strength; but when one looks to the interests of Spiritualism as a movement the uses of such secret methods as you suggest are hardly obvious. Perhaps I am prejudiced somewhat in this matter, perhaps lacking in experience, but I have never yet read or been informed that the interests of Truth have been furthered through the instrumentality of *secrecy* in any form.

The Truth is ever open and loves the day. It is, in fact, sunshine of another and a higher sort; and those who are worthy of its irradiation—the wise, the earnest, and the courageous of mind—seldom feel prompted, I humbly think, to ally themselves in bonds of secret fellowship for the purpose of making things more comfortable for themselves.

"For men in earnest have no time to waste
In patching fig-leaves for the naked truth."

I trust my words may not offend you or any of your readers. I endeavour to think, as I write, that the interests of truth are superior to those of persons. I believe I am right in this.

To me, no subject appears more important as affecting the present and future happiness of myself and my fellows, than this of Spiritualism. History records instances numerous enough, of men, aye, and women too, who have patiently borne the heaviest pressure of persecution, the bitterest sting of personal loss, for the sake of truths of far less moment than those which Spiritualism reveals to the "pure in heart and sound in head" of to-day.

Perhaps, however, this is sounding too high a note for present purposes. Well, it may be so. But we cannot afford to dispense with earnestness in our cause, nor do the truths which Spiritualism embodies appear likely to unfold and get themselves heard and felt in the lives and affairs of men by methods altogether different from those which the world has been used to in the past. The facts of Spiritualism demand an almost universal alteration and readjustment of things; and like its "brethren of ancient time," Spiritualism has a rough species of work before it—is now, in fact, hard at it. It has to shoulder its way somewhat rudely, to shock the proprieties, to introduce a reign of anarchy among conventionalities, and to throttle all manner of Spiritual scarecrows, and generally to behave itself like an irrepressible iconoclast, until such time as a new centre of gravity is discovered amid the chaos, and a new order of things established. The instruments best fitted for this class of labour are such as "love God and fear no man." These are never recruited from among those who believe in "Limited Liability," and think only of *that* and their comfort.

Coming more to the point, I do not think it a hardship that one has to make some effort to find out those of like mind and experience to oneself. Herein is pleasure rather. I should much prefer to find a friend and sympathiser through the interchange and friction of our expressed sentiments and opinions, than to descry him through a peculiar and mystical shake of the hand, or wink of the eye, or through any code of secret signals established for behoof of "the initiated."

It is, moreover, not always desirable to meet people calling themselves Spiritualists. This is a generic term covering a whole realm of human antipathies. It might at times, therefore, place one in an awkward and perhaps, unhappy position, should any other method of introduction than that usual between man and man in open speech, be employed towards strangers. Besides, would a Spiritualist be right in deeming caution generally the best guide in mixing with his fellows? I hardly believe it. In nine cases out of ten caution makes a blockhead of a man, and he knows and feels this best, when he can only bite his nails in vexation at the golden opportunity just lost, of impressing some one else with the facts he possesses a knowledge of.

What better companion can be found in one's walks than an honest sceptic, whose laugh, it may be, you endeavour to turn into gravity and respect? I should much sooner have for

temporary company even a hard-headed scoffer, on whom my arguments and the record of my experience would fall as ineffectually as hail on a rhinoceros's hide, than one of the "gushing" brethren "bang fu" of the subject, and "fu" of nothing else.

A close friend of mine has occasion to travel in the country a good deal. He is an ardent and earnest Spiritualist—few in the movement more so than he. His business brings him in contact with people of various dispositions, and wherever circumstances permit he ventilates his views. He loves the conversation of his fellows, and delights in the interchange of opinion upon all subjects affecting the common weal. He never loses an opportunity of avowing his principles, and in this fashion he has carried Spiritualism into strange places. He can withstand the laugh of the "uninitiated," the scoff of the incredulous; and strives to plant information where it will arrest attention and quicken thought. Often has he succeeded in making people say: "Well, sir, you really astonish me, I had no idea it was anything like that," and to accept for perusal a standard book on the subject—people who previously had nothing but a shrug of contempt for Spiritualism. Pardon me for trespassing on your space with so long a story; but the instance of my friend came to my mind as I pondered over your suggestion contained in the sentence quoted above. I thought of such a Spiritualist as my friend going his rounds, jealous of his reputation, and guided in his movements only by caution aroused through fear of rebuff; adopting clandestine means of gauging his fellows, instead of manfully, but not obtrusively, avowing what he is, and maintaining what he knows to be true. And because the alternative picture appeared to me by no means a happy one, have I ventured thus to comment upon and criticise your "Note by the Way."

No doubt you will have some difficulty in perceiving how this species of propagandism should be unfavourably affected by the adoption among Spiritualists of private means of knowing one another.

From another standpoint, however, your suggestion ought, I think, to be withstood. The immediate object in view is doubtless humane; nevertheless, I cannot help deeming it a concession to a certain mood or tendency in the movement which, were it pandered to and allowed scope, would lead to baser issues than are now thought of. Still this is perhaps only opinion. Anyhow, there are some who would have this dispensation tamed in its antics, and rendered "respectable." They sigh for the days when Spiritualism "shall walk in silver slippers," with the sun shining and the people applauding. That such a day is yet afar off many are disposed to lament, while others again are inclined to ejaculate, Thank Heaven!—Yours, &c.

J. McG. M.

Glasgow, 28th June, 1881.

WRITING ON CLOSED SLATES.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Remembering my promise to give you some of my experience with Mr. Phillips, of New York, I am led to observe that probably "slate writing," of all phases of phenomena, is the most convincing to the novice. Given in the light, as it often is, there can be no question that some force and intelligence beyond the sitters and the medium produces it, and thus the novice is at once advanced to an essential *fact* from which to steer his new departure.

Spending some time in New York City during last winter I was able to pay several visits to Mr. A. J. Phillips, of 133, West 36th Street. I found him a quiet unobtrusive man of about 25, quite the reverse of talkative; nor did he seem to pay the slightest attention to his visitor, scarcely appearing to notice me as I entered the room.

His bed-room was used as his sitting-room; furniture the usual allowance, with the addition of a round table of about three feet diameter. I seated myself opposite the medium at this table, the only articles on it being two small slates, some paper, and a lead pencil. The curtains at the two large windows were rolled up so that the sunlight filled the room.

Almost immediately upon our seating ourselves, the medium commenced writing on the paper very rapidly *backward*, and *wrong side up*. Among many things I was asked in this writing to clean the slates. I took them to the washstand and thoroughly cleansed them, the medium the while remaining seated, at least 12 feet away. Before going nearer to him I closed the slates *without* any portion of pencil between them,

and returning to the table and my seat, retained my hold upon them. The medium then took hold of the opposite edge of the slate-frames, and within a minute I could distinctly hear writing, and when the slates were opened I found several lines well written, and that too, in the *peculiar hand-writing*, and over the *signature*, of a dear one departed. This occurred several times, always without a pencil, and always while I held the slates.

I repeated the visit a number of times, never giving my name or address, and on the last occasion the following result was obtained. I cleaned the slates thoroughly, and placed them together without pencil or other substance between them. I then took the frame in my teeth, and thus held them tightly together about two minutes. The medium during this time was no nearer than three feet from the slates or me, and not in any way touching either. I could distinctly hear the writing, and on its completion three gentle raps were given. On opening the slates I found two lines written well, addressed to me, and signed with the full name of a friend.

We can have the same results here in London if our friends will develop for them. Nothing could be better, or more useful, or more calculated to *elevate* all concerned, including—
Your obedient Servant,

FERGUSON.

June 30th, 1881.

"THE PSYCHOLOGICAL REVIEW."

It gives us great pleasure to notice the re-appearance of this *Review*, after a suspension of rather more than a year. The first number of Volume iii. is published this month, and will, we hope and believe, be the commencement of a new career of interest and usefulness.

The main objects of the *Review* are thus stated:—

"1. To set forth the phenomena in such an accurately recorded form as may commend the subject to the attention of the general public.

"2. To add its quota to the sifting and tabulation of the vast accumulation of facts already to hand.

"3. To determine and name the subtle forces at work in the production of the phenomena in question.

"4. To discuss the laws which govern, and the philosophy to which the facts lead up, with such clearness and efficiency as may at once satisfy thoughtful readers and stimulate investigation."

"Another important feature will be a *résumé* of contemporary Spiritual opinion."

The present number contains, first, a few pages of interesting facts. Eleven pages are then devoted to the "Monthly Summary." This appears to us to be a very carefully written *résumé* of both the English and foreign Spiritualistic periodical literature of the past month; and will, we think, if continued in the same style, be exceedingly valuable as a reference.

Mr. Newton Crosland contributes an original article on "Clairvoyance," and Hudson Tuttle on "Spiritual Organisation." "The Occult World," by A. P. Sinnett, is reviewed at considerable length by "M. A. (Oxon)," and Professor Denton's last work, "Is Darwin Right? or the Origin of Man," by Mr. E. T. Bennett. Some shorter articles fill up the number, which it will be seen contains an interesting variety of matter.

In reference to "Spiritual Organisation," a subject of great difficulty, and which must still demand much attention, both in this country and in America, Hudson Tuttle regards "the instability of all associations of Spiritualists, even of local societies, as the surest sign of advancement and ultimate success." He points out that not the Church, but the Scientific Association, must be the model for the Spiritualist. He says this without any disparagement to the former, on the ground that "the Church extends itself by means of proselytising," but "a Spiritualist must become such by intellectual growth."

We hope to refer again to the communication by "M. A. (Oxon.);" on "Occultism and Spiritualism," a subject which is now engrossing a large share of attention. His article demands a more careful reading than we have yet been able to give it.

The *Psychological Review* will take a position unoccupied by any existing literature, and will fill the gap left vacant since the cessation of the *Spiritual Magazine* and *Human Nature*. It ought to attain a wider circulation than simply amongst professed Spiritualists.

Mr. J. J. Morse, we regret to say, is ill, and has been confined to his room during the past week. He will—we are sure—have the sympathies and best wishes of our readers.

VETERAN SPIRITUALISTS.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Professional matters required me to go to Dublin (my native city), which was the chief cause (as far as I can see) of my visiting England. You will be pleased to know that my object has been gained, having last week passed the written and oral examinations which confer upon me the degree of L.D.S., Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland.

On my way to Dublin I made a *detour*, so that I could visit a few of the workers in the great vineyard of modern Spiritualism.

My inclination led me to Manchester and Liverpool, where I met various classes of workers, ranging from the labourer, (hewer of wood and carrier of stone) to the grand architect, who directs the workman how to raise the superstructure, perfect in all its parts, and a glory to the Most High. The architect without workers can do nothing, and would be like a useless ornament, the two being mutually dependent on each other, and therefore one gift is as honourable as the other, all working for the glory of God and the welfare of our fellow-creatures.

My time being limited, and for fear of diverting my mind from professional studies, the examination being very crucial, I was prevented from calling upon many of our veteran friends, which I much regret, but I will refer to two or three whom I had the pleasure of meeting.

William Oxley (of Manchester) has been doing a great work for many years, and his writings and experimental investigations have greatly edified and interested me. Not one in a hundred, perhaps, can understand the kind of work in which he is engaged, and from sheer want of knowledge he is considered a theological iconoclast and anti-Christian Spiritualist. Now, I hope I am a true and faithful soldier of our Lord and Master, Jesus of Nazareth. To me, Jesus is the *Way*, the *Truth*, and the *Life*; and whatever other believers in Spiritualism (so-called) may think, each being at perfect liberty to form his own opinions, I stick to mine, choosing the term, *Christian Spiritualist*, in preference to being merely called a Spiritualist, which might mean anything or nothing.

Mr. Oxley and myself are in thorough sympathy, and, therefore, I do hope that your readers will not consider his writings anti-Christian should he favour you with some of his letters on Astro-Masonic subjects. Mr. Oxley is not a Freemason;* nevertheless, his researches into the philosophical and mathematical degrees shews that he has received "light" from the great Arcana of Nature, whose secrets are free to all the children of God, who seek for wisdom. As a subscriber to your paper I hope and trust that Mr. Oxley will see his way clear to edify a few of your readers.

Mr. Blackburn, of Didbury, Manchester, I look upon as a most valuable worker in the field, doing hard work at the foundations of the edifice,—I mean the phenomenal aspect of the movement. Without proof men will not believe, and unless we can demonstrate that the dead (scientifically speaking) can and do return, most of our labours are lost. Had Mr. Blackburn's gifts and liberality been more appreciated the phenomenal side of the subject would have had an ardent votary in this gentleman. I hope that before many years are passed we shall have a "Psychological Laboratory," supported by voluntary contributions, or carried on at the expense of fifteen or twenty gentlemen who will take charge of the phenomenal aspect of the subject.

William Hitchman, M.D., &c., &c., Liverpool, is a veteran Spiritualist. He is master of seven or eight languages, and an honorary and corresponding member of medical and scientific societies in different countries. He has passed through the various phases of Spiritualism, and, like a noble-minded man, has entered into many arenas and boldly fought for the greatest truth of the nineteenth century, sacrificing his time, money, professional and social welfare, preferring ostracism and loss of worldly goods rather than moral cowardice.

Next week I hope to be in Glasgow, on my way with Mrs. Hutchinson through the Trossachs, and if possible I will seek an interview with our old friend, Mr. Bowman, so that I may gain admission to the *Sanctum Sanctorum* (David Duguid's) of the Scotch workers.

I spoke to Hafed in 1877, and took away some souvenirs in the shape of Spirit paintings. I shall consider it a great favour

* I have been a Mason for over 14 years, not of the knife and fork phenomenalist, but the true seeker after light. The two past years I have ruled and governed a lodge as W.M., and in 1880 was Senior Deacon of the Provincial Grand Lodge of South Africa, Western Division. Masonry is entirely in sympathy with Christianity, for in the highest degree the Sacrament is administered to all true followers of the Cross (a mystery to many).

if my wife can have an interview, should we remain over a night, so that she can add knowledge to her faith.

Let me wish "LIGHT" every success and prosperity. There is plenty of room for all, each paper supplying the wants of its readers.

What we need is "organisation" in our movement, with a good organ that will represent all sides impartially. At present I am sorry to see all sixes and sevens, but no doubt it is all for the best.—Yours, &c.,

BERKS T. HUTCHINSON, L.D.S., R.C.S.I.,
2, Scarsdale-villas, Kensington, W., (of Cape Town),
July 3rd, 1881.

TRACES OF SPIRITUALISM AMONG THE AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINES.

A work written in great part by Alfred W. Howitt (a son of the late William Howitt), on the manners and customs of certain of the native tribes of Australia,* and which contains a great amount of curious and original information, gives the following in reference to a belief in communications with the departed.

Mr. Howitt says:—"One of the Tatungolung told me that he had been present at an invocation of the ghosts, which bears a strange resemblance to a modern Spirit *séance*:—On a certain evening at dusk, the Birraark commenced his invocation. The audience were collected, and silence was kept. The fires were let go down. The Birraark uttered the cry, 'Loo-ee' at intervals. At length a distant reply was heard, and shortly afterwards the sound as of persons jumping on the ground in succession. This was supposed to be the spirit 'Baukan,' followed by the ghosts. A voice was then heard in the gloom, asking in a strange intonation, 'What is wanted?' Questions were put by the Birraark, and replies given. At the termination of the *séance* the Spirit voice said, 'We are going.' Finally the Birraark was found in the top of an almost inaccessible tree, apparently asleep. It was alleged that the ghosts had transported him thither at their departure. At this *séance* the questions put related to individuals of the group who were absent, and to the suspected movements of the hostile Brajerak."

"Birraark" appears to have been the name of a class of what we should call "mediums." But so far as Mr. Howitt had been able to ascertain, they had entirely died out before the time of his intimate acquaintanceship with the natives, so that he had unfortunately no opportunity of personal investigation.

Mr. Howitt says further:—"It should not surprise us that the Kurnai is superstitious. His belief that the dead survive as a ghost, in a form usually invisible, when taken in connection with the knowledge that during life his enemy was probably trying to destroy him by magic, is seen to produce a belief that that enemy, when a ghost, may have power to work destruction, against which he is powerless. Nor is it strange that he should accept the statements of the Birraark, or that he should believe him able to communicate with ghosts, when we recall that he believes his own ancestral ghosts visit himself in dreams. We should be loth to reproach him with superstition when we reflect upon the extraordinary resemblance between the proceedings of the Birraark and the proceedings even now taking place in the midst of our highest civilisation at Spirit *séances*."

E. T. B.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J.B.—Your communication shall be inserted in our next issue.

Kether.—Our columns were full when your letter reached us.

Z.—Your fears are groundless; all will come right.

W.S.—We cannot recommend any special medium. Try sittings at home with a circle composed of members of your own family.

MR. BERKS T. HUTCHINSON, of Cape Town, has been on a temporary visit to Dublin, and has there obtained the degree of Licentiate of Dental Surgery, Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland. The examination, we hear, was very stiff, but Mr. Hutchinson passed it successfully—one more evidence that a man may be an earnest Spiritualist and yet be possessed of first-class abilities in the pursuit of science.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

"The Spiritualist."

The editor, discussing Mr. A. P. Sinnett's book on "Occultism," contends that:—

"On carefully examining the details of the facts published by Mr. Sinnett, it seems to us that they strongly point in the direction of Madame Blavatsky being but a strong physical medium, mistaken or hallucinated in her theory. Nobody but herself has publicly testified to having seen one of the Himalayan Brothers; a statement has, however, been made that Colonel Olcott has occasionally seen some of them, but as yet no direct utterance from him on the point is before the world at large."

The following curious argument is also adduced:—

"The existence of the alleged purified Brothers may be questioned on moral grounds. As a general rule, the lower the spiritual nature of the individual, the more secretive is he. Truth loves the open air and sunshine; the most attractive people met in society, are as bright and open as the day. But those who lead lives in which they try to get all they can to the disadvantage of others, those who are deeply immersed in the tricks of trade, and those who, like a shady section of the legal fraternity, live by swallowing the property of the widow and the fatherless, are necessarily secretive. Their lives will not bear publicity. From dislike to secrecy, we have always hitherto refused to join even any society which enjoins secrecy in any particular. But in addition to the abnormal secrecy about themselves fostered by the Himalayan Brothers, it is manifestly a selfish and reprehensible life to leave the world with its sorrows and its sins needing alleviation, for the sake of personal spiritual advantages. Such a life does not appear to be a good life, but one of intense greediness on the spiritual plane."

The current number has also several communications on Theosophy and Occultism—notably one by "C. C. M.," well deserving of attention, as, indeed, is everything from the pen of the same writer. "C. C. M." concludes:—"For my own part I find theosophy quite reconcilable with Spiritualism, nay, inclusive of it, if the latter is not unwisely narrowed by definition to assumptions which occult studies tend to correct."

"The Medium."

"Ouranoi" continues his contributions on "Bible Spiritualism," his special subject for the current week being "Prayer." He says:—"The essential substratum of prayer must be a sincere and blessed life. Prayer is only the expression of a soul with burning impulses and loving yearnings, crippled from want of scope or power to execute its vast designs. Holiness, or wholeness of life, must be the prior condition of a praying soul. An insincere heart, a fickle character, means a paralysed praying. 'Let him that prayeth ask in faith, nothing wavering.' If inner conviction be profound let it pass into visible, actual form. Let no outward obstacle appal. Let there be the unswerving conviction of a boundless helpfulness lying near at hand. Let him say to the mountains of obstacle 'Be ye removed,' feeling sure that being obstacles to the progress of goodness they 'shall be cast into the sea.' Such prayer will actually be a prophecy of what is to be. . . . It is implied that such praying covers the whole of man's life. He feels his ignorance, and he prays for light; he feels his waywardness, and he prays for steadying power; he feels the instability of human circumstances, and he prays for the divine eternity of sufficiency; he feels all need, and he prays for all grace. There are no divisions in his prayings. Its scope is all-comprehensive. It embraces his bodily and his spiritual being. Whatever he wants he asks for. Now such impartial prayer means complete envelopment by helpfulness. As he prays impartially and comprehensively so will he be met. All power lies in the Unseen, corresponding to all need."

We are glad to see that Mr. Burns' appeal for help is meeting with a hearty and generous response. So earnest a worker deserves the most practical sympathy.

"The Herald of Progress."

We quote from our contemporary the following interesting account of a *séance* at which the "materialised" form was weighed:—

"On Sunday, June 12th, I attended Miss Wood's *séance*, held on the premises of the Newcastle Spiritual Evidence Society, in this town. There were twelve persons present, three of whom were strangers to the town. I weighed Miss Wood on the machine presented to the society by Mr. Charles Blackburn, of Manchester. She weighed 7st. 3lbs., after which she went into the closet, and the *séance* managers requested two of the strangers to lock the door of the closet in which Miss Wood was to be secured, which they did, and I verified for my own satisfaction. The light was amply sufficient to allow us to see each sitter in the circle, all of whom were at least from four to six feet from the closet door. Miss Wood was thereby completely isolated in a closet over which she has no control whatever. After sitting a short while, a form in white garments, very similar in height to the medium, appeared in view, and presently walked round the circle, shaking hands with most present. I requested it to get on the machine, to allow me to weigh it; but by an inclination of the head it declined. It

* Kamilaroi and Kurnai. Group—Marriage and Relationship, and Marriage by Elopement. Drawn chiefly from the usage of the Australian Aborigines. By L. Fison, M.A., and A. W. Howitt, F.G.S. Published by G. Robertson, Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, and Brisbane, 1880.

then retired behind the screen, to be followed by a very diminutive form, *considerably lower in stature than the medium, though certainly not lower assuming it were the medium's form on its knees.* After essaying to talk with us for about five minutes, it also instantly withdrew behind the screen, and almost simultaneously a form, *similar in height to the medium,* appeared at a distance of about three feet to the left of the spot where the small form withdrew. I requested this form also if it would permit me to weigh it, and it signalled it would do so after it had gathered sufficient power. The machine was placed in front, but at a distance of about four feet from the closet door. It glided to the machine, and after ascending the scale, I asked it to tuck in its garments at the feet, that we might all see that it was fairly and squarely on the scale, and that it would fold its arms across its breast, so that others around might see for themselves that it did not tamper with the register. The form complied with these conditions. I weighed it, and found it to register 37½ lbs, or about 4½ st. short of Miss Wood's weight. Like the preceding appearances, it also withdrew behind the screen, and in about three minutes more Miss Wood (in the mesmeric condition) intimated the séance was finished, whereupon the two strangers and myself went to the closet door, *which we found still locked,* and the medium inside. I have not the slightest doubt in my own mind of the genuineness of the facts just recorded, that is, that there were no accomplices aiding and abetting Miss Wood, that Miss Wood had no apparatus by which she could have got out of the closet and fastened herself in again without its disclosing itself, that there are no secret springs or passages connected with the closet, and that Miss Wood has no access or control over it, as it is kept locked by the society, and opened by the managers of the séance for experimental purposes only."

Unfortunately this report is not signed, nor are the names of the sitters given. We have not the slightest reason to doubt that the communication is perfectly trustworthy—but such important reports should always be well attested.

GOSWELL HALL.

On Sunday evening last the platform of this hall was occupied by Mr. Ramsay, who first read a poem by Mrs. Sigourney on the marriage of a deaf and dumb pair, which was rendered in the most effective manner. We were next favoured with selections from Tennyson's "Enoch Arden," which were listened to with almost breathless attention and loudly applauded at the close. Mr. Ramsay concluded with Pope's Ode "Vital Spark," which received quite an ovation. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Ramsay for his kindness, to which he suitably responded. The audience were then invited to give expression to any idea they individually possessed relative to the better conducting of these meetings, whereby they may be made more attractive than they evidently are at the present time. This was at once taken up and useful suggestions were offered by Messrs. Wortly, Bowman, Greenwell, Swinden, and Ramsay, who all expressed their willingness to aid in the carrying of them into effect. Let us, therefore, hope that with this new force infused into the management the Goswell Hall services will be important factors in promulgating the glorious philosophy of Spiritualism.—J. N. G.

LADBROKE HALL.

Anniversary of a Martyrdom.

Mr. F. O. Matthews celebrated on Sunday last, at Ladbrooke Hall, the first anniversary of his release from Wakefield Gaol, where he was imprisoned as a Spiritualist. The new platform was tastefully ornamented with plants and flowers. There was a service of song by Mr. McKnight Smith, his daughter and choir; and though a regretted illness deprived us of the services of Mr. J. J. Morse as chairman and speaker, a large audience warmly testified their sympathy with and appreciation of Mr. Matthews, while addresses suitable to the occasion were given by him, Miss Gay, Mr. Hutchinson, of Cape Town, and Dr. and Mrs. Nichols. Mr. Matthews gave a very modest account of the persecution he had encountered, and stated the curious fact that his most active enemy was now a beggar in the streets, while he read a letter from the principal witness, testifying to his belief in his (Mr. Matthews') entire innocence, and expressing the warmest sympathy. It was impossible, in such a celebration, that the sufferings of other martyrs to the cause should be forgotten. Miss Gay, in her able and spirited address, gave her testimony from intimate knowledge to the entire innocence of Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher, and strongly censured the injustice and cruelty of the prosecution in managing to exclude the important testimony of Colonel Morton, by including him in the indictment. Dr. Nichols took other ground and asserted that there was not, during the whole trial, one particle of evidence to convict. The charge against Mrs. Fletcher was obtaining property by false pretences. The alleged false pretences were that the Spirit of Mrs. Hurtley, the mother of Mrs. Hart-Davies, was in existence, and had communicated with her daughter through Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher, advising her to join with them in the propagation of Spiritualism, and urging her to place her property in their keeping. Now, on the trial of the case, not one atom of evidence was given of the falsity of these pretences. It was not proven that there was no such Spirit, nor that she had no power to communicate with her daughter through the Fletchers,

nor that such communications were not actually made. No adept in materialism was called to either swear or affirm that Spiritualism was impossible, and contrary "to the known laws of nature;" but it was assumed by the Court, and pressed upon the jury, that such pretences were in their nature false, and that upon that assumption the prisoner must be found guilty. There was no legal proof or even pretence of proof. And every Spiritualist medium, and every person aiding and abetting such medium, is liable to such prosecution and conviction. In any other case there must be clear proof of the falsity of the pretences by which property is obtained. Here no such is needed. Judges and juries are quite ready to convict without it. There are, unhappily, a few Spiritualists both in England and America, who seem ready to sustain and applaud such convictions. Mr. Hutchinson, just returned triumphant from Dublin with his diploma in surgery, advocated an orderly and ornate ritualism in the public services of Spiritualists, with music and flowers, and all the aids that art can give. Mrs. Nichols expressed her warm sympathy with the cause, and all its martyrs. She knew and loved Mrs. Fletcher as if she were her own child, and believed that she was being prepared for a glorious work in the future. A brief and graphic account by Mr. Matthews of his work in London since his release from imprisonment, closed a very interesting meeting. It was announced that Dr. Nichols will occupy the platform next Sunday evening, beginning at seven o'clock.—SIGMA.

LEICESTER.

On Sunday last Miss Blinkhorn, of Walsall, gave two inspirational addresses in the Silver-street Lecture Hall. The morning subject was, "Who is my neighbour?" The evening one was from Isaiah xxx., verses 20 and 21. Both services were well attended, and the addresses were well received and full of instruction. On Monday last Mr. Bent opened his house for a reception of friends to bid farewell to Miss Blinkhorn, and to present her with a testimonial of a purse, which had been subscribed privately by the secretary and the members and friends, to shew a recognition of her past services in connection with our society. Mr. Bent made the presentation in a few kind words on behalf of the friends, and wished her prosperity in leaving this country for America. Miss Blinkhorn, in accepting the present, said she had been taken by surprise. She thanked all for the kindness that the friends had shewn to her on her visit to Leicester, and said she should always think of them when far away. Thus passed a very social and happy evening.—R. WIGHTMAN, Sec., 56, Cranbourne-street, Leicester, July 5th.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

On Sunday, June 24th, Mr. W. H. Lambelle delivered an able and effective address at the Sunderland Free Associate Church; subject—"Four Phases of Thought and their Unfoldments." He was supported on the platform by Mr. N. Morgan, the well-known mesmerist and phrenologist, Mr. W. Brocker, and Mr. Rutherford. The congregation was a large one, and the enthusiasm which greeted the able lecture of the late editor of the *Herald of Progress* evidenced at least that with a free and unbiased people his merits were readily and generously appreciated. This church has now become an established institution in the town, and the most intelligent of all shades of belief find a place for mutual encouragement and instruction.

On Sunday morning last Mr. Gibson delivered an address at Weir's Court, and in the evening Mr. Rutherford, of the Free Associate Church, Sunderland, occupied the platform. He discoursed upon "Mental States in Relation to Religion; or, the True Spiritualism." The address shewed a considerable amount of careful preparation. The Chairman, Mr. Hare, said he had listened with pleasure to the highly suggestive and intellectual discourse and he was glad that the lecturer endorsed the idea of Eternal Progression, and felt pleased to shake hands with the adherents of any creed who were one with us in this regard. After a few words from Mr. Mould the meeting concluded.

Our Wreckenton friends are making a stout effort to resuscitate the cause in that district. On Sunday last they held an open-air meeting, which was attended by a large concourse of people from the surrounding villages. Mr. H. Burton, of Newcastle, occupied the chair, and the assembly was ably addressed by Messrs. Gibson, Walker, and Grey. In the evening the meeting was held in the Mechanics' Institute, which was well filled long before the time of commencing. At six o'clock Mr. H. Burton, as chairman, opened the meeting with a few pithy remarks, after which Mr. Campbell, of Pelfuffell, delivered an excellent trance-address. He was followed by Mr. W. Westgarth, who had the pleasant duty to perform of naming an infant Spiritualist. He then proceeded with his discourse, which I am informed by those present was one of the most forcible and telling that they have ever heard him deliver. His declamation against dogmatic theology, his apt illustrations of the absurdity of its teachings, appear to have taken the Wreckenton friends by storm. Mr. Grey gave an inspirational poem upon "Light," and in conclusion the Chairman for a short time held the attention of the meeting with some fine philosophical thinking, which, as many of the audience remarked, shewed at least that "the Spiritualists had men of thought and ability amongst them."—NORTHUMBRIA.

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 Mape, 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. 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 Guldenstätt; Count A. de Gasparin; the Baron and Baroness von Vay; the Baron du Potet; Mons. Léon Favre, Consul-General of France; Victor Hugo.

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 Fries, 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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MONDAY, JULY 11th.—General Purposes Committee Meeting, at 6.30.
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