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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1881.

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SPIRITUALISM AMONGST THE CHINESE.

The following account of a Chinese séance is taken from an interesting work, "The Folk-Lore of China," by N. B. Dennys, Ph.D., F.R.G.S. The writer states that divination is popular and respectable in China, and that "it is not perhaps going too far to say that there is not a single means resorted to in the West by way of lifting the impenetrable veil which hides the future from curious mankind, which is not known to, and practised by, the Chinese." "The coincidences of practice and belief are indeed so startling, that many will doubtless see in them a sort of evidence either for their truthfulness, or for a common origin of evil." He remarks that he is no Spiritualist, but is puzzled by the fact of such beliefs being in full force in the farthest East and in the extreme West without any apparent connection with each other, and asks, "Is our Western Spiritualism derived from China?" He then quotes from the Rev. E. J. Eitel, Ph.D., some remarks originally published in *Notes and Queries* on "China and Japan" as follows:—

"A certain form of Spirit-rapping is practised among the officials and literary classes of China. A Spirit is sometimes made to appear to communicate, by writing, revelations about the future, and questions are answered as regards the lucky or unlucky result of intended transactions, about success at impending examinations, about progeny to be expected, and so forth. The pencil to be used by the Spirit must be made from the twig of the peach-tree. But this twig should be cut off a branch pointing towards the East, and before cutting the twig the following magic formula consisting of four lines (with four syllables each) has to be pronounced:—'Magic pencil most efficacious, daily possessing subtle strength, now I take thee, to reveal clearly everything.' After the recitation of this formula, a compound character is to be carved into the bark of the tree. This character is composed of two radicles, of which the upper one signifies water from clouds; the lower one means demon, which indicates that the Spirit to be conjured up resides in the clouds. The other characters, 'the mysteries of Heaven wonderfully mastered,' refer to the revelations which the pencil is expected to communicate under the direction of the Spirit. When this compound character has been cut into the bark of the peach tree, a twig from one of its eastern branches, which, moreover, must have a little curvature at its end in the form of a hook, is cut off and fitted into a small piece of wood of about six inches in length, which is intended for being laid on the palms of the medium acting at the ceremony. Everyone who intends to witness it has to purify himself by fasting and ablutions, and to dress in perfectly clean clothes. In the hall where the ceremony has to take place two long tables are placed together. On the upper table sacrifices are placed, consisting of wine, fruit, and confectionery, while the other table is to be covered with fine red sand, which should be rolled even and smooth by a small bamboo roller, so that characters can be traced in the sand without difficulty. All these preparations should be finished before night-fall, when a petition to the Great Royal Bodhit-attwa is to be written on a card, informing this deity that sacrifices are prepared, and requesting that one of the great Spirits wandering through the clouds should be sent to the house of the petitioner, whose name and address is mentioned minutely to prevent any mistake. This card, to-

gether with a quantity of gold paper, is conveyed to the temple of the above mentioned deity, and burnt before the idol's shrine. On returning to his own house the petitioner writes his address, as given on that card, on a slip of paper, which he pastes on one of the door-posts.

"Later in the evening, two or three of the company assembled, go to the door, burn there some gold paper, and make then an indefinite number of bows and prostrations, receiving as it were the Spirit on entering the house. Having conducted him into the hall, an arm-chair is moved to the table, whilst incense and candles are lighted. At the same time the medium approaches, the handle of the magic pencil resting on the palms of both hands, but so that the end of the twig touches the surface of the table strewn with sand. He places his out-stretched hand near the head of the table, and addressing the Spirit with becoming reverence, says: 'Great Spirit, if you have arrived, be pleased to write the character "arrived" on this table?' Immediately the magic pencil begins to move, and the required character appears legibly written on the sand, whereupon all assembled request the Spirit to sit on the large armchair, whilst the deity that is supposed to have conducted him thither is likewise politely asked to sit down on another chair. The whole company now bow and prostrate themselves before the seats of both Spirits, and some pour out wine and burn gold paper. Then the medium approaches again with the magic pencil on the palms of his hands, whilst all assembled say with one voice, 'Great Spirit, what was your august surname? what your honourable name? what offices were you invested with? and under what dynasty did you live on earth?' Immediately the magic pencil is seen moving, and answers to these questions appear written in the sand. After this every one of the assembled may put a question one after the other, but each question is to be written on a slip of paper and burnt together with some gold paper. As soon as each paper is fairly consumed by the fire, the magic pencil writes down the answer to it, generally in poetical form, and each sentence is followed by the character, 'I have done,' whereupon the pencil ceases to move. Then all assembled try to read the characters aloud. If they fail to decipher them, the pencil moves again and writes the same sentence more distinctly, until it is intelligible. As soon as one of the assembly succeeds in deciphering a sentence, the magic pencil moves again and writes on the sand the two characters, 'That's it.' When a sentence is finished in this way, the sand on the table has to be smoothed again with a bamboo roller, and whilst this is being done the whole company address flattering speeches to the Spirit, praising his poetic talents, to which the magic pencil replies by writing on the table the characters, 'It's ridiculous.' If anyone present behaves improperly, displaying a want of reverence, the Spirit writes down some sentences containing a sharp rebuke. The motions of the pencil are quite extraordinary, and, apparently, not produced by the medium on whose open palms the handle of the pencil rests, and who merely follows the spontaneous movements of the magic pencil. In this way conversation is kept up without flagging until midnight (when the male principle begins to be active). Then the Spirit breaks off the conversation, and, addressing the whole company, writes on the table: 'Gentlemen, I am much obliged for your liberal presents, but now I must beg leave to depart.' To this all persons present reply, saying: 'Please, Great Spirit, stop a little longer;' but the Spirit jots down as if in a great hurry, the two characters, 'Excuse me, I am off.' Then all assembled say, 'If there was any want of respect or attention, Great Spirit, we beseech thee forgive us this sin.' All walk then to the house-door burning gold paper, and there take leave of the Spirit with many bows and prostrations."

Clairvoyance is also very prevalent, especially among the lower classes in the south of China, and is employed for the purpose of obtaining communications from deceased relatives.

The clairvoyant mediums are all females, and no males are admitted to the séances.

The descriptions are apparently those by an eye witness of genuine Spirit manifestations, and the superstitious practices by which they are surrounded seem to indicate an ancient origin, though no one familiar with the history of our modern Spiritualism would ask the question which Dr. Dennys asks:—"Is our Western Spiritualism derived from China?"

D. J.

THE CONDITIONS OF HARMONIC MEDIUMSHIP.

Marvellous Experiences.

I venture to give some facts in my experience, especially as I see that "M.A. (Oxon.);" is travelling in the same direction and seeking the same end that I have sought during a series of years.

From my childhood I was a natural somnambulist and sensitive. I was clairvoyant, clairaudient, and impressible. Other forms of mediumship were developed as I grew older. Some physical phenomena were last developed, but hardly sufficient for me to be termed a physical medium. For many years the phenomena were irregular and at times unsatisfactory, though the range was so broad as to take in manifestations rarely seen.

The prophetic sense in my case was such that I foresaw the events of a few days, a few weeks, or a series of years with equal clearness and accuracy. I knew what was happening at a distance. I knew the thoughts of persons, and I answered letters before receiving them; I think in some cases as soon as they were conceived clearly in the mind of the writer.

At full maturity I was set apart by my guides for development. I was entirely controlled as to whom I should see and who should be admitted to the séances I held, which were always private, my mediumship being entirely concealed from all but a few most intimate friends. At this time I knew only one professional physical medium, by whom I had been convinced of the reality of Spiritual phenomena.

Notwithstanding my own experience, I was for a long time a most contemptuous unbeliever in physical phenomena. Long after I was an earnest believer, some physical facts were added to my experience in the way of things being brought to me. This is the only form of physical manifestation that has come to me. My personal tests were that all that was communicated by clairvoyance and clairaudience was exactly true. My previsions always "came to pass," even to a day, whenever a time was fixed.

My life was governed by my guides in a manner that seemed despotic to some of my friends; but I knew that all was consistent with my highest freedom. My rule of life seemed free and easy to me, but intolerable to some, as flesh meat was always excluded from my dietary, and I never tolerated the presence of any one who took tobacco. My development was directed under stringent health conditions, and those who joined my circle were required to live as I did.

For a time I tried to include in my circle the medium through whom I had been convinced, but after a good deal of effort and some fine phenomena, he refused to live to the rule, and lost his mediumship for his disobedience. For some time he could get communications and the physical phenomena if I sat with him, but nothing if I did not. His guides most earnestly besought him to keep my rule. He either could not or would not do so, and he died a few years later with, as I believe, no restoration of his medial power.

Later I became acquainted with an excellent physical medium, who was induced by his guides to keep my rule. A goodly number who joined my circle at the time were as careful as I was in living to the conditions given by our guides.

The results were higher teachings, a wisdom that I have not seen surpassed, a sweet amity among all our members, a prompt rejection of any one who for a time proved unworthy, and the greatest care as to the admission of members. The guides always decided who should be of our séances. I think no member was ever excluded after being admitted, though some were severely laboured with and at times suspended.

Much of the philosophy of life in both worlds was given. The doctrine of evolution, and many phenomena which were alleged to be true by our guides, were not accepted by the physical medium or by all members of the circle. I think I generally accepted them on account of what seemed their innate reasonableness. Of physical phenomena we had the most

remarkable that I have ever known, and most of them in the light.

We had the direct voice, direct writing, and many times Spirits wrote long communications in our presence. On one occasion the room was illuminated like noonday by a Spirit burning sealing-wax in the gas. I have seen solid articles made, and then, after carefully examining them, I have seen them dissolve and pass away like summer mist. These were often works of art of great beauty, and the fabrics that were made left nothing to be desired but that they would remain in our possession.

We had the forms of friends very near and dear, who spoke, wrote, caressed us, and were as familiar as when they were permanently in the form. We have had a friend materialise and remain with us for two hours. He sat at table, ate, drank, and conversed in a manner that would have done honour to any dinner party. He dematerialised out of his garments, and they remained for some little time after he had left them, and melted before our eyes.

The most private actions of our members, and specially of our children, were taken cognisance of, and séances were held specially for improvement. Warning, instruction, and temporary suspension from séances were resorted to for the good of those concerned.

The moral condition of our members was the first consideration of our guides. The most searching analysis was made of those who desired to enter our circle, and we always found the information given us entirely correct. In one case where grave charges were made, they were confirmed two years after.

No influence or relationship could avail a candidate—his or her own merits determined admission.

Many of our phenomena, and many of the teachings connected, must remain esoteric for the present. Our guides say they are too far in advance for present acceptance, or even discussion. I remember an eminent man who was for a considerable time one of our circle, and who still keeps our rule, and could now be of us at any time, who said the teaching, which he considered entirely logical and credible, was enough to take one's breath away—

"And the boldest held his breath for a time."

Now for the Rule that governs our circle: First, a spirit of love that will serve a member sooner than ourselves; a candid spirit, that gladly leaves the life open to the reproof, correction, or commendation of the guides; a spirit of obedience to the demonstrated best, and of confidence in our guides, who we believe know the best, whether they demonstrate it to us or not—consequently we are obedient, though we do not always see to the end what they propose. During 27 years I have not been in the least misled with regard to myself or others.

As to the material part of our Rule—we exclude flesh meat from our diet, and tea, coffee, cocoa, spirits, and malt liquors from our drinks; tobacco and poisonous drugs are never taken by our members. Fish of the wholesome kinds is occasionally eaten. Butter, milk, and eggs, and light wines are used. Bathing, pure air, cleanliness, the proper alternation of work, recreation, and rest are parts of our Rule. Some members do not eat fish or drink light wine. There is freedom for self-denial, but not for self-indulgence.

A person can attend two of our séances, and not keep our Rule; after that, reform of life and habits is the only key that gives admission. We were told to form our circle, if we could get only two or three to keep the Rule. I think it now seems easy to a comparatively large number.

UMBR.

PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECT OF COLOUR.—Professor Schlager, director of an asylum for the insane at Vienna, announces the result of an experiment made by him in relation to the effect of treatment by blue colour. He had a room furnished with windows of blue glass, and had the walls painted of the same colour. He then selected 60 patients, and made them the subject of experimentation for a period of three years, placing them at certain times in the blue room and noting the effect upon them. The abnormally excitable temperaments experienced a remarkable soothing and quieting influence, and he expresses the conviction that with such patients this means should be tried. He does not report any complete cures, but says that in most cases the treatment has proved beneficial, and that, if continued systematically and persistently, the indications are that it will lead to complete restoration. He expresses the intention to continue his experiments, and calls upon all engaged in the treatment of the insane to do the same and make careful notes of their observations.

"DAY GHOSTS."

In continuation of some curious instances of abnormal vision by "Student" in your last issue, I offer the following notes of my own experiences, which you may think worth printing as further evidences in the same direction. I may premise that, like "Student," I have almost doubted my own mental clearness of judgment when some of the visions have been most vivid, and friends of course ascribe them to mental aberration of some kind as an explanation that saves trouble, though I know that my faculties were never clearer, or my mental perceptions keener, than during their occurrence.

The first attack, as I must call it, occurred some years ago during a seizure of what I considered was "brow ague," which I then thought was possibly the physical cause of the phenomenon, but as I have had similar visions since without any perceptible ailment, I am obliged to question the sufficiency of this explanation, especially as the doctor appears to attribute my delusions, as he fancies them to be, more to some occult mental peculiarity or hallucination than to any physical disease he is acquainted with. To come to the facts, however.

I suddenly became completely blind to every real object around me, though it was early one summer afternoon, and my eyes, so my friends told me, presented in every way their usual and natural appearance, and in place of what I ought to have seen in my library (where the attack culminated) and afterwards in my bedroom, the walls seemed to be covered with dark hangings (very different from the paper on them), and a moving procession of people, hearses, mourning-coaches, dogs, and horses, all quite black, kept passing to and fro, some person occasionally stopping at my side and attempting to attract my attention. Some of the dogs would, apparently with the same object, stop and try to climb up where I was reclining. This lasted for about an hour, and though I was repeatedly visited by different members of my family, I could not see any of them or discover anything in the room, save the forms and appearances I have mentioned. My eyes were wide open the whole of this time, and yet every effort I made to penetrate through the unreal to the real failed, and I could not even see my wife, who was talking to me at the couch side, though my eyes were directed towards her while she held my hand.

Towards evening I took a composing draught and went to sleep, and when I awoke it was quite dark, but the same panorama of black objects shortly commenced to revolve before me, though the background appeared to be of *brown paper colour*, instead of black as in the afternoon. During the night very much the same thing was repeated, and though there seemed to be no fixed sequence in the order of the processions, the leading characteristics were similar. On the following day my eyes resumed their normal functions.

I have occasionally since experienced something of the same kind without any previous bodily disturbance, but now a new phase of optical illusion has arisen and frequently happens in the most capricious manner, without any apparent cause or warning. For instance—I may be walking along the pavement on my way to the railway station or the City, either alone or with others, when some common object, such as a horse with or without a rider—a dog, a tramp, a match, or flower seller—will suddenly appear close to me and persist in accompanying me, always keeping at exactly the same distance, stopping when I stop, advancing or retreating, and following all my movements, so that I cannot get nearer or farther away. And this self-constituted companion will sometimes remain with me until my journey ends; sometimes disappear suddenly in a few minutes, or be succeeded by another object equally persistent in accompanying me. In some instances the figure of a beggar or tramp has appeared to threaten me by lifting an arm or pointing something at me; and again I have been offered something by other figures with their outstretched hands. All the figures appear solid and substantial, and not by any means diaphanous, as I have never seen through them. I experience no particular pain or physical warning to indicate their approach, and am very much amused and interested by them. Medical men to whom I mentioned the occurrences have either looked wise and said nothing to the point, or smiled incredulously, as if either my sanity or truthfulness must be at fault.

Such of my friends as know of these attacks think me the victim of fancies and imagination, though a life-long vocation in the exact sciences, and present occupation in the same direction, give no warrant for such an explanation. I do not attempt to account for the occurrences, I only, as faithfully as I can, describe them.

Lest it should be thought that some of these ghosts were real persons, I may state that such as I allude to appear always close to me—within arms' length—and have often accompanied me into the train and have seemingly occupied seats next to me, which were really occupied by my friends. I may mention that a relative died shortly before one of these funeral visions, but at the time I did not think of there being any connection between the two events, nor do I now hold that there is.

W. H.

SIR ARTHUR HELPS ON SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I was somewhat surprised to find, the other day, in a book by Sir A. Helps, an urgent appeal to men of science and others to investigate Spiritual phenomena.

I enclose you a quotation from his book, "Brevia," thinking you might not know it, and that it might be worth a corner in "LIGHT," and as being in singular harmony with Dr. Thornton's and Canon Wilberforce's utterances at the late Church Congress. —Respectfully yours,

J. S. CRISP.

Ashville, Lewin-road, Streatham,
October 26th.

"I wish I could persuade men of science, and men who have peculiar gifts of investigation and examination, that it would be most desirable for them, and a worthy employment of their gifts, to examine what, for want of a better term, we may call *Spiritual phenomena*. Let them remember that to dispel error may be nearly as important as to ascertain truth. Then let them recollect that almost all great discoveries have been accompanied by a great deal of quackery and imposition. Let them think how much these investigations might tend to promote medical science. Let them reflect how important a thing it is to investigate the value of testimony. Let them further reflect what a world of mystery we live in. . . . There are numbers of statements, apparently well authenticated, in which it appears that the last thoughts and wishes of a dying person have had great influence over relatives and friends, divided from these dying persons by large distances of land and sea. Let us carefully record and examine into all these statements. It would be an unutterable comfort to many minds to have it well ascertained that there was any influence after death of one mind upon another.

"But I do not rest my case upon these high metaphysical grounds. I rest it upon three other grounds. First, that in investigating these so-called Spiritual phenomena, we should ascertain more about the laws of evidence; secondly, that we should ascertain whether there are any powers, forces, or influences of which we are at present not aware, that have their place in the creation; and thirdly, whether disease brings into operation faculties of hearing, eyesight, or imagination of which we have at present no adequate conception, medically, morally, metaphysically, or scientifically. These questions demand the most careful investigation from our best weighers of evidence, and from our most accomplished scientific men."—"Brevia." By Sir Arthur Helps, pp. 33, 34. 1871.

We are glad to see amongst the promised publications of the season announced by Messrs. Longman, a *Life of the late Professor de Morgan*, from the pen of his widow. The late professor, while one of the greatest mathematicians of the time, was a believer in Spiritualism, a belief shared by our great naturalist, Wallace, and in some degree by our able physicist, Crookes.—*Ladies' Pictorial*.

"Little Hearts and Little Hands" is the title of a monthly magazine for children, to be edited and published by those well-known Spiritualists, John S. Farmer and J. J. Morse, London, England. They send out inviting a subscription list of 300 names, in order that its success may be sure, and so soon as that many persons subscribe, its first number will be issued. J. J. Morse, 53, Sigdon Road, Dalston, E., will accept subscriptions. The names of the editors guarantee the excellence of the magazine.—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

THE SPIRIT OF WASHINGTON.—In one of Josiah Quincy's "Leaves from Old Journals," published in the *Independent*, he says that his father, while occupying for a night the room in which Washington died, saw the spirit of the Father of his Country. "If," explains the writer, "I give the particulars, I should feel bound to give a full explanation of them by Dr. Hammond, or some other expert in cerebral illusions; and this would occupy too much space for an episode. It may be worth while to say that nothing my father saw, or thought he saw, was useful in confirming his belief in a spiritual world. His assurance in this matter was perfect, he believed that brain action (if that is the correct expression) was at times set up in us by friends no longer in flesh, and that his own life had been guided by these mysterious influences. Shortly before his death, he spoke of reunion with those he had loved, as men speak of what they know; not as they speak of what they hope or believe."

TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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

Our Correspondents will greatly oblige us if they will take care, in every case, to write on ONLY ONE SIDE of the paper.

NOTICE OF REMOVAL.

We have taken new and commodious offices, into which we shall remove in the course of a few days. Henceforth all communications should be addressed to "Editor of 'Light,' 4, New Bridge-street, Ludgate-circus, E.C."

NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

It is curious to reckon up the various methods by which human ingenuity has striven to pry into the future. *Vanity Fair* of a recent date enables me to enumerate some of them. If any one of my readers is anxious to rival Zadkiel, and to publish a prophetic almanac, he may adopt one or more of scores of expedients. He may try Electromancy, trace a mystic circle, divide it into twenty-four spaces, put a grain of corn in each, and then set a game-cock to pick them up. If he watches him carefully he will know all about it. If this does not succeed he may try Catoptromancy, look into a magic mirror at midnight, and see the devil, or his fate. Bottonomancy, or divination by the roots of a fern divided by a magic knife, may help him. Daphnomancy:—laurel boughs thrown into the fire are sovereign indicators of the future. Lampadomancy—akin to the winding-sheet in a candle that we knew of in our early years—may shed some light. Gastromancy, or divination by torches and globes of water arranged alternately in a magic circle; Onomancy, or divination by names; Pyromancy, or divination by fire; and Astragalomancy, or prophesying by means of magic dice, may be found useful, if he does not like to try Necromancy. If this will not do, let him get a salt-cellar and try Alomancy; or a bit of barley-bread and have recourse to Alphotomancy; or some birds for Ornithomancy; or a divining-rod for Raddomancy. When the hollowness of all is clear to him he will still be able to have recourse to Theomancy, the sublimest art of all. Verily curiosity is a mighty incentive to invention. I have left unmentioned a vast number of divination schemes, the very names of which are appalling.

Was there not, behind all these various devices, a belief in the intervention of some unseen Intelligence that knew the future, and so could guide the acts? If a man set a game-cock to pick up corn, or divined by means of lights, or by the mystic twig, or if he had the lines of his fate read in the palm of his hand, had he not, presumably, a belief that these devices were but the external methods used by Spiritual Intelligences? If he tried to read his fate in the broad face of the heavens by the movements of the stars, was it not that he regarded himself as a unit in creation, whose physical body was correlated with the visible universe, and whose spirit was in communion, more or less obscurely, with the universal Spirit—the *Anima Mundi*?

"Bainbridge Holme"* is a novel with a purpose, and that purpose is the popular exposition of some of the facts and theories of Spiritualism. The volumes are pervaded throughout with what will sound to the general reader the most extraordinary and wild conceptions. Even to the Spiritualist, who is familiar with the phenomena that are now occurring amongst us, the expedients resorted to by the author are startling enough.

* "Bainbridge Holme," By Charles Henry. Remington and Co. 1881.

Materialisation is the favourite *Deus ex machina*; and, when any knot has to be cut, people fall asleep in the most promiscuous manner, with the invariable result that an apparition makes its presence felt in bodily form, passing from room to room, or even standing out on the top of Skiddaw in the gruesome silence of midnight. A villain is to be startled before he leaves the scene, and the inevitable apparition steps in. "Merciful Heavens! It is true and I am lost!" Following the direction of the glaring eyes, the lawyer turned and saw standing in solemn silence the figure of his former friend and client. . . . The lawyer excepted, no one knew why it was that one of the police officers had fallen asleep in Robert's bedroom whilst such exciting events were transpiring close at hand!" This is but a sample of the author's heroic expedients. The plot is a good one, but the working out of it betrays the hand of a novice. The style, too, is disfigured by such pieces of would-be jocularly, most offensive to good taste, as this. "A sanguineous fountain of mundane existence, characterised by an effeminate and shrinking inactivity, can never augment the totality of its possessions by the acquisition of a bewitching Venus." This stupid trash is the more to be regretted that the book is really calculated to do some useful work in presenting to the public a dramatic version of psychic phenomena. If the parts offensive to good taste were cut out, the marvels diminished by excising three-fourths of them, and the plot worked out carefully in three volumes instead of two, a very readable and interesting novel would result. As it is, the book is the first that has dealt with Spiritualism without seeking to disparage or misrepresent it.

I am not about to revive the fruitless controversy as to whether Spiritualism may or may not properly be called a religion. A little preliminary definition would easily settle that point. But I have been struck with the conclusion of Professor Barrett's excellent letter on Spiritualism and Christianity. He points out most rightly that "there is a lower as well as a higher region in the Spiritual world: a region of dangerous spiritual parasites, as well as of helpful, ministering angels. The former drag us down to the phenomenal . . . the latter teach us self-discipline, self-sacrifice, self-surrender to a higher ideal, until, like Isaiah, we gain a vision of God." What is this but a religious education of the highest and truest value? Is that not rightly called a religion which leads to such heights of spiritual knowledge and practice? Does not the average man get out of Spiritualism, assuming him to make acquaintance with something more than its phenomena, a view of truth and duty, and a spiritual development, clearer and higher than an average man gets out of his special sectarian Christianity? The man gets, in either case, what he can assimilate: and the chances, in my opinion, are that the clear-cut, new, and impressive teachings that are enforced by a man's personal experience of a Spirit-world near and about him, will be more potent than any glib familiarity with the well-worn shibboleths of a hereditary faith, into the actual validity of which he has, most likely, never set himself to inquire. If his spiritual perceptions be awake, he will not content himself with these; he will probe and try, and seek after new views of old truths, as so many of the best minds now do, and he will take to himself that which he finds serviceable. In the same way, if he be a Spiritualist he will discern and discriminate and will find his greatest helps to personal religion, in the truest sense of the word, from those who have preceded him, and have returned to stretch out a helping and guiding hand to those who need and can appreciate the help. If his spiritual perceptions be not thus awakened, he will see in Spiritualism only a formless mass of phenomena, and in his special form of religion only a cut and dry system which has for him the prescription of antiquity and the hallmark of fashion, and to which he assents without that living faith of which Professor Barrett speaks. It is a matter of individual condition, and of personal power of assimilation.

To call Spiritualism, in itself, broadly and necessarily a religion is, in one sense, absurd. But to claim for it a revivifying power, to say that it casts a flood of light on the culture and development of the spirit, and that it is elucidatory of old systems that have, in many cases, lost their power over thinking men; to regard it as a most valuable means of re-stating and enforcing eternal truths in terms suited to present day needs—this is another thing. In this sense it is in very truth a religion. And do we not forget in our discussions that the religion of Christ is not the only one by means of which the

Great Spirit has been revealed? When Dr. Thornton tells us that the one test by which a Spirit is to be tried is that of confession of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, are we to understand that every Spirit who may not answer to that test is of evil, and to be denounced as diabolic? Are there not, then, many whose earthly religious training, and that of no mean order, has been gained in the pure and elevating system of the Buddha? To shut up God's revelation within any single system seems to me a piece of sectarian narrow-mindedness, and to prescribe such tests little else than to invite confusion. As interpreted in these days, we may admit that Christianity is far from perfection, and this, without a feeling of anything but perfect reverence for the pure and holy teachings of the Christ, so far as we are able to disinter them. Nor should it be impossible for such a mind to pay its tribute of appreciation to what in Buddhism and other systems is so near akin to the best teachings of Christianity; nor again should it be hard to see how on both the illuminating touch of a later Spiritual revelation may even now be falling.

Such illumination may not be needed by some. There will always be a large class to whom the disturbance of thought incident to theological speculation is unwelcome. There are some, no doubt, to whom it seems irreverent. Others have framed for themselves a personal ideal round which centres all their religious life. This latter class needs no new light, for the ideal is evolved from within and is illumined by the fervour of their own religious aspirations and longings. These attain by virtue of a living, burning faith to what they never would reach by any other method. They are to be found within every religious system, in almost every sect; and not only this, but outside of any known system altogether—self-contained, and broad in sympathy with all religious faiths, without being able to accept any one unreservedly. Spiritualism has little attraction for them, and is of no use to their development. It appeals to the mind that has severed itself on intellectual grounds from old religious beliefs, and in the process has lost its hold on what was accepted rather than assimilated by it in Christian theology. To such it offers scientific demonstration of perpetuated life after death. It appeals also to the mind that rejects much theology that man has piled on Christ's teaching, and it is, in that appeal, purely a religious factor in spiritual education. From various points of view it is a science, a philosophy, a religion; and it is from confusing the various points of view that the confusion in argument seems to have arisen.

M.A. (OXON.)

PROFESSOR BARRETT ON SPIRITUALISM.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In your last impression there is a letter by Professor Barrett on Spiritualism, excellent in tone and quite in harmony with my own views.

The concluding sentence, however, calls for some examination. The writer says:—"It is the dissatisfaction with Spiritualism as a goal of faith that has led to the growth or revival of Theosophy, and this same feeling will, I trust, in time lead Spiritualists as a body to find in Christianity that which neither Spiritualism nor Occultism can give."

Professor Barrett does not in this sentence recognise that there are various directions taken by the students of the Occult.

There is one branch of Occultism which devotes itself to the study of magic or Spiritual knowledge; but there is another branch of Occultism which devotes itself to the study of Occult Christian Doctrine, Life, and Power.

Jesus said to his chosen disciples:—"To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to the people we speak in parables." And Origen, who lived at the end of the second century, says:—"To the literal-minded we teach the Gospel in the literal way, but to the proficient, fired with the love of Divine wisdom, we impart the Logos."

This is what Christian Theosophy endeavours to do. It endeavours to shew that the simple love of God and Christ is all sufficient for the mass of mankind, but that for those who desire to penetrate to the hidden or occult mysteries of Christ, there lies a region of inexhaustible theosophic wisdom—a science of the Christian religion, which is a key to all Science, all Philosophy, all Wisdom, and all Knowledge.

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

12, Great Cumberland-place, Hyde Park.

No one can be said to die suddenly who has lived long.

MR. FOWLER'S CHALLENGE TO THE CONJURERS.

£1,000 to £100.

The following has been handed to us for publication:—

For two or three weeks special and more than usual popular attention has been directed to Spiritualism. Even the Bishop of Liverpool has evinced an interest in Mr. Stuart Cumberland's *exposé* séances so far as to occupy the chair for him on Wednesday evening, October 27th, at a largely attended meeting of the respectable citizens of Liverpool held in St. George's Hall.

The Bishop confesses his entire ignorance of Spiritual phenomena, never having sat at a single séance; so that he is out of court as a witness, and his utterances are of no value.

Mr. John Fowler, of Sefton Park, Liverpool, sent the Bishop the following challenge:—

To the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Liverpool.

Seeing that you are being made a tool of in the hands of a conjurer who wants to advertise himself cheaply and impose upon innocent people for the sake of making money, I hereby beg to make a proposition, viz., that I will give £500 sterling to the Seaman's Orphanage and £500 sterling to any other charity or hospital you like to name, if Stuart Cumberland produces before a committee (half of whom are to be chosen by your Lordship and half by myself) and under the same conditions—all in the light—the same phenomena which are produced in the light by Spiritualists. If he fails, he or some one for him is to give £50 sterling to each of two hospitals or charities to be named by me.

This challenge I wish to be made before the audience in St. George's Hall this evening, your Lordship being advertised as chairman. The money to be lodged at any time to be named by you; mine is ready now.—I remain, your Lordship's most obedient servant,

JOHN FOWLER.

Liverpool, October 27th, 1881.

This challenge remains in force, and applies to all expositors of Spiritualism by means of conjuring.

Mr. Stuart Cumberland declined the challenge, and has been very anxious to make it understood that he did not expose genuine phenomena, but only the frauds of some Spiritualists!

[Mr. Fowler is the gentleman who spoke so ably and so manfully in defence of Spiritualism at the late Church Congress. By this spirited challenge to the conjurers Mr. Fowler does great service to the cause. Many persons who could be reached by no other evidence or arguments, will feel that he is very sure of his facts or he would hesitate to stake so large a sum of money on their verification.—ED. OF "LIGHT."]

AN "INCORRIGIBLE MATERIALIST."

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—It is very clear from the tone of the letter signed "G. Damiani," in your issue of Saturday last, that he and I look on the phenomena of "Spiritualism" (so-called) from two different stand-points. The experience I have had confirms me in the belief that the several facts elicited by the experimenter have none other than a decidedly physical basis. Spiritualists, like physiologists, are too prone to run after entities, and to mistake effects for causes; whilst the former deal only with Spirit, i.e., the Spiritual or the immaterial, the latter talk glibly of Life, and Mind, and Will. But these several words—Spirit, Life, Mind, and Will—reflect or represent nothing more nor less than the qualities or endowments of matter—the functions of portions of the material structure—of the organism of man and beast.

Therefore it is, I hold to the propriety and truthfulness contained in the sentence quoted by "G. Damiani" from the pamphlet of mine entitled "Transference of Sense." I need hardly add that Bristol has in it but one doctor of the name of Davey, and that he still persists in being the "incorrigible Materialist" your correspondent has described him.—Your obedient servant,

JAS. G. DAVEY, M.D.

31st October, 1881.

"SPIRITUALISM AT THE CHURCH CONGRESS," with Notes and Comments, and Advice to Enquirers, by "M.A. (Oxon.)." We have printed 15,000 of this pamphlet, and they will be sent out by post within the next few days to Clergymen, Nonconformist ministers, and others. We shall then go to press again, and shall be prepared to supply copies to any friends who may desire to purchase them. The terms on which they may be had will be announced in next week's "LIGHT."

THE "DAILY TELEGRAPH" ON SPIRITUALISM.

"Honeycombed as modern Spiritualism is with wretched imposture, there are men eminent in literature and science, who, after long and careful investigation, have declared that there is a new force unknown to science behind some of the manifestations. Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace is not only a great explorer and a brilliant writer, but as a scientific investigator second only, if second, to Mr. Darwin himself. Mr. Crookes and Professor Zöllner are men of science with high reputations. All three had everything to lose and nothing to gain by expressing their belief in any reality behind modern Spiritualism, and in doing so they have confronted an immense mass of scientific prepossession and a vast fund of social incredulity. Had they declared that after years of investigation they had discovered that all was false, their testimony would have been accepted by the world as conclusive. That such men should have been 'perverted' to even a partial belief in what the majority regard as simple imposture is in itself a curious phenomenon of our day. It may be that sooner or later Science will unveil these mysteries dealing with the mind of man, and lay bare for us the origin of all impressions and all beliefs. Meanwhile it becomes nobody to declare that what believers call faith and unbelievers credulity implies intellectual inferiority. Dr. Newman, one of the greatest minds of our day, accepts with submission stories of mediæval and modern miracle that seem gross and palpable inventions to the most ordinary understanding. Faraday, the most eminent of our scientific men, belonged to an obscure sect holding eccentric tenets accepted by a few hundred Englishmen, and rejected by all the rest of the world as absurd. It would thus appear that belief in the most extravagant instances of supernaturalism or acceptance of the most extraordinary doctrines is no proof of mental weakness. 'Faith' and 'superstition' seem so intertwined that it is difficult for the unbiassed inquirer to say where one commences and the other ends."

VISIT OF A DEPARTED WIFE.

The *Argosy* narrates the following incident in the life of John Donne, an earnest and eloquent clergyman, whom James I. made Dean of St. Paul's:—

One night Donne was sitting up in the library of a friend in the country, with whom he was staying. He had been absent from home but a few days, and he had left his wife and children all well and happy when he took leave of them. He had become absorbed in some old folio, and he sat on till the whole of the rest of the house was sunk in silence and sleep; no sound was audible save the wind rising, now and then, to breathe a long sigh, or the noise made by a falling cinder as it dropped from the dull red fire. The student chanced to raise his eyes from his book and glance around the large room, which was all wrapped in dark shadows that folded themselves about the tall book-cases, and crept up and down the oak-panelled walls, and lay lurking in distant corners. There were only two bright spots, one made by the fitful glimmer of the fire-light round the hearth, the other by his lamp. Suddenly, amid the dimness at the further end of the library, he fancied he saw something moving. He looked and wondered, for he was certain no one had entered the room—besides, there was not a single inhabitant of the house up except himself; he looked and wondered, and then concluded it was a passing illusion. But no, there it was again, a white object, glimmering out amid the dimness. A great awe fell upon him, he could not stir or speak. Slowly, out from among the shadows a white-robed female form glided into the light of the lamp, until the yellow rays fell full upon it. Then the form turned its face towards him, and Donne was gazing into the eyes of his wife. She was very pale; her hair hung loosely round her; she held a dead child in her arms; she fixed on him one long, wistful look of love, and then she vanished. Next morning a messenger from London came hastening to the house where Donne was staying, with the sad tidings that Mistress Donne had died last night in giving birth to a dead child.

B. N. A. S. CONVERSAZIONE.—We remind our readers once again of the conversazione to be held at 38, Great Russell-street, at seven o'clock on Monday evening next. As this will be the first social gathering of the season, it is very desirable that there should be a good gathering of the members and friends.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

"The Spiritualist."

The opening article is devoted to a series of suggestions to the Newcastle Society, as to how they should conduct their pending experimental researches into the phenomena of materialisations with the apparatus supplied them by Mr. J. Blackburn, of Manchester. This apparatus appears to be the same as that which was formerly placed in the offices of our contemporary, for the editor writes:—"Very valuable results might probably have been obtained with this apparatus, especially with mediums who can get good manifestations in strong daylight, and it is to be regretted that the evil influences which have been rampant of late, caused the cessation of the experiments."

Liberal quotations are given from the *Daily Telegraph* "Ghost" correspondence; and there is also a narrative of a haunted house at Brighton—quoted from the *Brightonian*—in the course of which the writer remarks:—"I am merely stating facts, and have used no embellishments, when I say that four hard-headed men were literally horror-stricken or paralysed by this extraordinary manipulation. We left the place at two, and not one of us would pass another night in it for any money."

An article from the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* describes an alleged appearance of one of the Theosophic brothers, whose very existence some have called in question.

"The Medium."

Writing concerning the criticism, in a previous number, upon the late Church Congress, the editor plainly conveys his opinion that the Cause has more to fear than to gain by the action taken at that assembly, and enforces the idea by saying that:—

"The enemy that is now contemplating the ruin of Spiritualism will not approach us as an enemy, but as a friend. This is the invariable tactic of the Jesuit and the false prophet. He makes your Spiritualism as much as he can a worldly matter. He eagerly clutches at paltry expediences. He runs after great names and lusts for power and dominion. When he wants a saint or a hero to be held up as a representative of the Cause, he seizes the most infamous person that can be obtained, and holds that one up as an object of admiration and love. Spiritual truths spoken by honest well-tried Spiritualists are ignored, and the true spiritual-worker is vilified, while arguments in support of the Cause are sought for in directions where Spiritualism is most bitterly hated and denounced. We therefore warn Spiritualists to follow no man, set of men, or human leadership in any form. The Divine light is within every soul; that will shew the way."

"The Herald of Progress."

In the course of a letter from T. M. Burnside, headed "Dr. Sexton and Spiritualism," the writer says:—

"I see that Dr. Sexton is receiving a very severe castigation at the hands of pronounced Spiritualists, he having according to the latest issue of the *Herald*, 'from being a firm believer in Spiritualism, turned right about and proved himself a turncoat'; and that the Doctor has 'denounced all mediums as rogues and vagabonds, and the communicating intelligences at séances to be debased lying spirits.' In view of this, and the Doctor happening to be in North Shields preaching and lecturing for the Methodist New Connexion, I determined to avail myself of the opportunity; consequently I heard the Doctor preach from the text, Hebrews xi. 27—'Seeing him who is invisible,' and I came away with the impression that the Doctor had either a variety of beliefs, or else he was not far from being a Spiritualist. In fact I considered his discourse highly flavoured with the Spiritualistic element."

The leading article, "Our Trust," closes with the following sentiments, which most readers will endorse:—"Those who have studied Spiritualism most thoroughly know how absolutely impossible it is for those even most gifted with a ready pen, or highly endowed with skilful descriptive ability, to convey any adequate idea of the strange and mysterious power at work in our midst to-day. The best attempts, if they don't suggest the idea of a solemn farce, convey no higher conception than may be obtained by a reading of some fairy tale, but a *personal investigation* of the phenomena brings us face to face with facts; staid and sober they may be, but they are as permanent and enduring as the rock of ages."

"The Banner of Light."

The leading article is devoted to the subject of "Spirit Occupations." The writer says:—"A man is very likely to direct his sympathies, as an enfranchised Spirit, very much in the same channels in which they moved while he was in the mortal. But the law of differentiation still goes on there as well as here, and in the progress which human Spirits make under more favourable conditions each finds his own place and sphere there with but little effort and waiting. The difference of native inclination will sufficiently account for the continued interest which departed Spirits take in earthly affairs, guiding and directing, as well as inspiring them in a far greater degree than is generally believed or suspected. The Spirits interest themselves profoundly in our politics, in our social movements, and in all those other things which specially pertain to the mental and moral welfare of the race. Our arrangements for

government, our ideas of justice, our aspirations for a larger and higher freedom, are all imparted to us by Spirit societies which have first acted upon them for themselves. Our lives are bound up indissolubly with theirs. They co-operate with us or we should be powerless. The inspiration of our actions comes from them. And this is reason enough why, so long as we are ourselves occupied, they are occupied also."

"The Religio-Philosophical Journal."

The editor, writing upon "Camp and Grove Meetings," says:—

"Our correspondents, from Cape Cod to Nebraska, have made reports of most of them, which have been read with much interest. It would not be an over estimate to say that 200,000 persons have been present at these gatherings, in audiences of from 200 up to 15,000, and of this number a larger proportion heard and thought, than in camp meetings among the orthodox sects. Spiritualists have been the leading persons in almost all these meetings, and the spiritual ideas and facts have been their central inspiration. One most encouraging fact we gladly state—the good behaviour of the people at these gatherings. Reports in leading newspapers and the statements of persons in attendance, as spectators but not believers, unite in bearing witness to propriety and safety and good order."

"The Two Worlds."

In an article entitled "What it Means," the editor writes:—

"The practical meaning of Spiritualism is too generally overlooked or too narrowly conceived, by both its friends and its enemies. The knowledge of spiritual truths and laws, and of subtle forces, which spiritual phenomena have brought into recognition, when rationally acted upon, will greatly change many of the habits and customs of life, and eventually revolutionise even the forms and institutions of society. For example, when it is known and fully realised that the spirit or spiritual body of each person exists and is built up within the physical body day by day, and consequently partakes of its characteristics, is affected by all its conditions, — and that both the present and future perfection and well-being of the spirit depend on the health and purity of the physical—then a powerful motive exists to learn and obey the laws of physical health and purity, and to avoid all foods, drinks, habits, practices whatsoever which tend to injure or defile this temple of the spirit. This, surely, should be one of the first lessons of Spiritualism to every one who is convinced of its basic facts."

Dr. Crowell, writing upon "Trances and Visions," says:—

"From what I have been able to learn of the trance state, I am of the opinion that the spirits of entranced persons nearly always remain in the body. There doubtless are exceptions to this rule, but they are not frequent, and even then the liberated spirit can remain absent but a very brief period of time. In these rare instances my Spirit-friends assure me that the spirit cannot visit the heavens, even the lowest of them. When entranced persons have visions and, apparently, are conducted by Spirit guides by spiritual paths, amid spiritual scenes and objects, and hold converse with Spirits apparently in their own heavens, their minds, I am told, are only psychologically impressed by Spirits with mental pictures of these scenes and objects, these being but the reflected ideas of the Spirits, assuming form and shape in the minds of the subjects, precisely as the minds of lucid subjects are impressed with the ideas of mesmerisers."

"The Cornubian."

In his notes in the above journal, "Drus" writes:—

"I learn that the Rev. C. Ware, of Plymouth, and Mr. J. J. Morse, of London, are announced to lecture on Spiritualism in the Town Hall, Falmouth, the former on the evenings of November 3rd and 4th, and the latter on the 6th and 7th. There will be no admission fees, but the attendants will have opportunities of contributing towards the expenses. I sincerely trust that those who listened to Mr. Douglas's lecture in opposition to Spiritualism will hear the other side. Perhaps ere long the people of Redruth may have the privilege of listening to the same gentlemen."

"The Psychological Review."

The November number, besides the usual "Notes and Comments" and "Monthly Summary," contains three original articles: "The Christian Saints, their Method and their Power," by Dr. Geo. Wyld; "Forms that have Passed Away," by Mr. G. S. Farmer; and "Thoughts regarding the Mystical Death," by Mr. Howitt Watts. The latter is an interesting and beautifully written description of the closing days of the earthly life of the last warrior of a band of social reformers who, 40 or 50 years ago, were endeavouring to work out ideas then understood or believed in by very few. They were pioneers, and the influence of their lives and writings has extended to many who are unconscious of the source. Speaking of the last hour, the writer says: "At least we had seen him setting forth for that blissful goal, and fondly pictured to ourselves how, possibly, no great break in the gentle sequence of events occurs in a harmonious and quiet passage of a spirit such as his, over the 'border-land'! May not the transfiguration of the earthly state—the revelation of the spirit within it—

rather than utter severance from the past, be one of the mysteries of the change called 'Death?' This we must fully believe to be the case, especially with those—

"Whose lives e'en now,

Shew somewhat of that happier life to come—"

those who, in the language of the mystical writers, live in the spirit.

Dr. Wyld's article also illustrates the beauty of "a life of purity in body and soul—a life of self-denial in all things, including a simple diet with occasional reasonable fasts, a life of continual desire for all good." His account of the Curé d'Ars is especially interesting.

Of Mr. Farmer's little story we have pleasure in saying that it is one of the sweetest and most poetical descriptions of Spiritual experiences which we have ever read.

Certainly the *Psychological Review* is in every way an honour and a credit to the Cause; a magazine of which Spiritualists have reason to be proud.

"Revue Spirite."

A correspondent at Brussels announces the presence among the Spiritualists there of Mr. Henry Lacroix, from the United States. He proposes to remain in Europe a few years. He is re-organising circles, assisting at conferences, and giving lectures. At one of these in a neighbouring town he had a very large audience. Spiritualists are numerous in and about Brussels.

"La Chaine Magnetique."

EXPERIMENTS IN ANIMAL MAGNETISM.

A correspondent of the *Chaine* writes:—M. Lemoyne, Chief Engineer of Rochefort, had one evening, in the year 1839, about 30 friends in his salons. Magnetism and magnetised water were talked of. To enlighten doubters as to the latter, M. L'Ancien, who was present, called for six tumblers of water, asked all to leave the room except two, who should remain with him as witnesses. He magnetised for a few minutes the water in one of the tumblers. The company returning, one by one tasted the water in each of the tumblers. All whose taste was not blunted with tobacco distinguished the magnetised water.

Let A B C, continues the writer, be three glasses of water; let A be magnetised by one person and B by another; a sensitive, or psychometrist, will perceive the different magnetisms in each, and will always know that C is plain water.

The *Chaine* returns to the book presented by Dr. Baretti, of Nice, to the Paris Biological Society, on the "Physical Properties of Neuric, commonly called Animal Magnetic, Force." Scientific circles may be less coy in studying human magnetism under the name of "Neuric Force," force conducted by the nerves, proposed by Dr. Baretti. He details his processes of experimenting, which are the same as those employed in the study of optics—with the lens, mirror, and prism. He finds that it obeys, with these instruments, the same laws as the rays of light. According as bodies interposed between the source of the force (the *Chaine* does not enlighten us further upon this point) and the object in experimentation, permit its passing through as glass, or absorb it as water he classifies them as dianeuric and non-dianeuric.

According to Dr. Baretti, there are three kinds of rays of the force, emanating from different sources, viz., the extremities of the fingers, the eyes, the lungs.

His experiments were made by directing these rays upon the hand of a young hysterical subject, or—as Reichenbach would have called her—a sick-sensitive.

The Geneva correspondent reports that the Société Magnétique in that city held its annual banquet, sweetened with music and singing, on Mesmer's anniversary. The society was instituted 12 years ago, and numbers 100 members. It holds conferences at which instruction is given in the application of mesmerism to the alleviation of pain and restoration of health.

CHILDREN'S DAY.—Our Public Free Circle, on Tuesday afternoon next, October 11th, will be devoted exclusively to the little ones in Spirit-life who are desirous of sending messages to their dear parents and earthly friends. Seats free to all.—*Banner of Light.*

The beauty and the utility of prayer consist in the fact that no human mind or heart is beneath their reach. The utility of prayer can never be impeached until its assailants shall have radically changed human nature itself.—*Evening Telegram*, New York, U.S.

DREAMS IN DELIRIUM.—The late lamented President in his delirium used to dream of the home of his youth. An American army surgeon writes, with reference to this:—"During the war, when the sick or wounded soldiers grew delirious in the miserable hospital tents, they commonly dreamed of home, 'babbled of green fields,' and imagined themselves far away at some white-walled farm house with father, mother, brothers, and sisters about them. In this delirium death took on a pleasing shape, and many a dying soldier, whose mother was never to see his dead face or know his last resting place, passed away dreaming that her arms were about him and her lips pouring messages into his ear."

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON AND THE PROVINCES.

DALSTON.

On Monday evening last the members of the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism opened their winter session with a soiree, which was numerously attended, the rooms being thronged with members and visitors. The proceedings consisted of a vocal and instrumental concert, the performers being chiefly friends of Mr. Louis Freeman, who, at the request of the council, very generously promoted the musical exercises of the evening. An interval was allowed for refreshments, which were supplied in the usual excellent manner customary at the soirees held here, after which the remainder of the evening was devoted to a carpet dance, to the evident satisfaction of the more youthful portion of the company. Mr. J. J. Morse, the president, and Mr. J. Taft, the hon. sec., were in attendance to receive the visitors; and the general arrangements for the comfort and refreshment of the guests were carried out under the personal superintendence of Mrs. Morse, and appeared to give universal satisfaction to all present. The following programme was gone through in the earlier part of the evening: Piano solo, "Martha," Sidney Smith, Miss A. Sparey; song, "Yeoman's Wedding," Poniatowsky, Mr. H. Presley; song, "The Armourer," Reyloff, Mr. Frank Everitt; song, "Comin' thro' the Rye," Miss Bessie Freeman; recitation, "Elihu," Mr. W. Ming; song, "The Anchor's Weighed," Braham, Mr. Louis Freeman; song, "Ruby," Miss Sparey; song, "The Pilgrim of Love," Bishop, Mr. Sidney Matthews; song, "Sailing," Marks, Mr. H. Presley; recitation, "The Wanderer and Outcast," Mr. W. Ming; cornet solo, "Dreaming of Angels," Mr. W. Sparey; song, "My Sweetheart when a Boy," Morgan, Mr. Louis Freeman; song, "A Summer Shower," Marzials, Miss Bessie Freeman; song, "The Key of Gold," Diehl, Mr. Frank Everitt; and trio, "A Little Farm Well Tilled," Messrs. Louis Freeman, W. Ming, and H. Presley.

GOSWELL HALL.

On Sunday morning last the discussion meeting was particularly instructive. As no definite subject was on the list a friend offered a few practical ideas on the best way to place Spiritualism before the outside public. This brought out the views and experiences of all present, from which good, no doubt, will result. In the evening Mr. Iver McDonnell once more occupied the platform and delivered one of his usual interesting lectures. The subject was "Original Sin." At the close a well-merited vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. McDonnell, which was suitably replied to. The friends here have an extensive programme for their soiree on the 17th; the artistes are mostly well known and possessed of exceptional abilities. Our respected friend, Mr. J. J. Morse, has kindly consented to preside, and a pleasant, and financially, successful result is anticipated.—*VERITAS*.

LADBROKE HALL.

The friends are informed that Mr. Walter Howell, trance-speaker, will occupy the platform at this hall every Sunday evening during the present month. Attention is also directed to the séance that Mrs. Olive will hold on Sunday next for the purpose of aiding our funds. Particulars will be found in the Ladbroke Hall advertisement.—*W. HARLING, Hon. Sec.*

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

On Sunday last Mr. Dodds, of West Pelton, occupied the N.S.E.S. platform with considerable ability. On the Monday evening the quarterly meeting of the Society was held, Mr. John Mould in the chair. The report shewed that about 138 paying members were on the roll; that the library contained 256 volumes; and that the debt had been reduced to a little over £38. Séances and lectures had been in quality and attendance somewhat the same as in the few preceding quarters. A paper was read from Mrs. Hardinge-Britten upon "methods for the higher and better propaganda of the movement," which led to the adjournment of the meeting until the 14th November, so that the paper might be printed and its ideas ventilated prior to its discussion.

Gateshead.

A short public service was held at the Temperance Hall, Gateshead, on Sunday last, at which Mr. Grey officiated admirably. On the conclusion of the lecture, Mr. Burton, the chairman, requested that those persons who were interested in the movement would stay behind and consult with those who were already members, upon the best methods of advancing the movement in the borough. About 40 persons put their names down as members and proceeded to form a constitution and choose an executive. The following were unanimously elected to the positions: Mr. H. Burton, President; Mr. N. Martin and John Walton, Vice-Presidents; Mr. J. M. Routledge, Secretary; Mr. W. Pickering, Treasurer; Mr. T. Dawson, Librarian; and as committee Messrs. Westgarth, Bruce, Gillespie, Grey, Shield, Stephenson, Eaton, Hall, Dobson, Riley, Hope, Fairweather, Burny, Ramsey, James; Mesdames Martin, Brewis, and Kells. It was resolved to clear off the

balance of rent for the Hall, left unpaid by the late Society, and Mrs. Brewis, who has consented to preside at the harmonium, handed over the book of the late library to Mr. Dawson, who is open to receive gift of books for the same, and free literature for distribution from the book stall which he intends to open.

Bishop Auckland.

Last week Mrs. Hardinge-Britten delivered two lectures before the friends at Bishop Auckland, in the South Durham district. Each discourse was marked with that clearness of argument and diction which is the peculiar characteristic of this lady's oratory, and did not fail to leave behind an influence which the Auckland friends have not experienced for some considerable time. I wish we could have this lady in Northumberland and Durham for a month or two; she would do a grand and useful work.—*NORTHUMBRIA*.

"M.A. (OXON'S) TRIBUTE TO GARFIELD.—The distinguished scholar and fearless Spiritualist whose name appears above, and who is one of the chief bulwarks of the cause in England, is now contributing editorial "Notes by the Way" to the new London journal "LIGHT"—which essays-in-paragraph must be interesting and instructive to the readers of that paper wherever it may circulate. Under this "Note" heading, in "LIGHT" for October 1st, he speaks of the late President, his premonitions of death, &c., and gives utterance to sentiments regarding the lessons and results to be hoped for from his cowardly assassination, which we feel sure will find an answering echo in every American heart.—*Banner of Light*.

A WONDERFUL MOULVIE.—During the past few days there has been an unusual stir in town in consequence of the arrival here of a Moulvie from Mecca who possesses among the natives the reputation of effecting marvellous cures. He is not only credited with being able to cure every known disease, but is said to have given proof of his ability by curing many who have been suffering for years past with disease which had been long since pronounced incurable, even leprosy. The Moulvie, up to yesterday, occupied a site on the banks of the river in the neighbourhood of Baboo Ghat, where he was visited by large crowds of people, who received from him water which he blessed and breathed on. Some rather extraordinary, and no doubt highly coloured, reports are current regarding the doings of the Moulvie. The following is one of the reports which is at present being circulated:—On Monday last a Baboo, who had been suffering from some disease for some time past, waited on the Moulvie and described his symptoms, when the Moulvie gave him the usual blessed water, directing the Baboo to drink it; the latter, however, took it home and ultimately threw it into a tank, when the whole of the tank water commenced seething and bubbling. The Baboo, observing what had occurred, hastened back to the Moulvie and related the occurrence to him. He was then requested to take from the tank in question the exact quantity of water which he had poured into it; which being done, the water subsided into its usual calm.—*Englishman*.

DREAMS AND VISIONS.—Dr. R. F. Littledale, of Red Lion-square, W.C., contributes the following narrative to the *Spectator*:—"In 1865, I was on my way from Belgrade to Constantinople, and was waiting for a Danube boat to pass at midnight by some no-man's-land, where I was at the time, not far from Simlin—a place wholly new to me. I fell in with two companions, a Montenegrin officer on a diplomatic errand somewhere for his prince; and another, whose nationality I forget. We agreed to dine together, which we did in a little summer-house in the inn garden; and after dinner we got into conversation, talking a *lingua franca*, partly French, partly Italian, and partly anything which came handy. Suddenly there flashed across me the impression that I had been through it all before, in the same place, and with the same companions. Accordingly, I said to myself, 'I will test it. If I have been here before, the next thing that man opposite will say is so-and-so.' And he said it immediately. I should add that it was, to the best of my recollection now, an entirely fresh subject which he started, and not anything arising out of the previous conversation, which might, of course, have been guessed by a quick-witted observer. Had I dreamt it all beforehand, and forgotten the dream?"—The editor in a foot-note to the above narrative remarks that "this flash of recollection is usually believed to arise from the two halves of the brain not keeping perfect step," but naïvely adds that "that will not explain Dr. Littledale's story." We should think not!

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—FALMOUTH, The Town Hall, Sunday and Monday, November 6 and 7; NOTTINGHAM, November 13; CARDIFF, November 20; GOSWELL HALL (London), November 27.—[*Adv.*]

MRS. HARDINGE-BRITTEN'S WORK.—By the desire of the friends of Spiritualism in the North of England, Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten announces that she is engaged to speak as follows:—Sunday, Nov. 6, Sowerby Bridge; 13 and 14, Keighley; 20, Liverpool; 27 and Dec. 4, Nottingham; 11, Oldham; 18 and 19, Halifax; 24, 25, and 26, Batley Carr.—Mrs. Britten can still form some week evening engagements, but her Sundays up to the third Sunday in January next are all promised.—[*Adv.*]

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; 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 Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of the U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; the late Hon. J. W. Edmunds, sometime Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New York; the late Professor Mapes, the eminent chemist, U.S.A.; the late Dr. Robert Hare, Professor of Chemistry at the Medical University of Pennsylvania, U.S.A.; Bishop Clarke (Episcopalian), of Rhode Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, of the Treasury Department, Washington.

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

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 Friesé, 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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