

# Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

No. 104.—VOL. II.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1882.

PRICE THREEPENCE.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

The *Daily Telegraph* of December 14th contains a friendly and appreciative article treating of the work of the "Society for Psychical Research." The writer is pleased to say that the Society approaches the subjects with which it deals in a "thoroughly scientific spirit; they take nothing for granted—what they desire is research to attain truth, not inquiry to confirm any prejudice, belief or prepossession." That is a fair description of the aims of the Society. It has, perhaps, gone out of its way, and not unreasonably, being what it is, to make a new departure, and it can at any rate claim that it is not hampered by any inheritance of belief or theory that its predecessors in the field of research have formulated for themselves.

I see there is a demand for "more facts." It is not to be denied that the philosophers have been having what our American friends call "a good time" lately. They have been portentously long in disquisition, and, to the average un-metaphysical mind, they have probably been—well, not clearer than usual. But then the philosophy of Spiritualism cannot be put in a nutshell, nor can it be expressed in the terms of a child's primer. And as to facts, they can't be made to order; or rather, perhaps I should say, we do not want them made to order. There may possibly have been a trifle too much of that manufacture in days gone by. The facts do not come as regularly as they used to come. And he must be a very unobservant student of his subject who does not see that the facts were presented with unbroken persistence during a period of years—so regularly, so rapidly, so astonishingly, that the most careful observer could do nothing but look and wonder. There was no time to speculate, no room for philosophy. Hardly could the attitude of mere wonder give place to a critical and cautious posture of mind. We could not even attempt to classify, to order, to tabulate, to describe. Most of us were carried away by mere astonishment.

But what is the case now? For some years past there has been little or no material addition to the group of facts that were presented to our notice in the early years of modern Spiritualism, and down to, say, 1876. But, instead, the minds of thoughtful Spiritualists, satiated with facts, have turned instinctively, or by inspiration of our teachers, to seek a philosophy that shall comprehend these facts. That crude, disorderly, undigested mass must be arranged; its facts must be put into shape, labelled, and so set forth that their orderly beauty may appear. The surface explanations, roughly arrived at without much care and after short experience, must be sifted. The speculations of all the various schools of thought, that in days of old and in other countries have dealt with Spiritualism and kindred subjects, must have an attentive hearing. The Eastern Occultist makes the tremendous claim that *he has done* what we want to see done. Surely he may be listened to if, haply, he can and will enlighten us. The mystic, the disciple of Swedenborg—all may claim a hearing. Hence this Babel of philosophy, theosophy, and various sects that end in—sophy, without much claim to wisdom. The facts are here; they are our inalienable property, belonging to us and to our heirs for ever. But where is the mind that shall deal with them? Who is the coming philosopher? Which is the sterling system of truth? I cannot tell without listening to all. I am fully sure that order will

come out of present chaos; and during the reign of confusion I lend an attentive and respectful ear to anyone who can establish his power to teach me one iota of truth.

A correspondent sends me two extracts from a book entitled "Poems, Essays, and Sketches; by Janet Hamilton" (Glasgow, 1880). Janet was no ordinary woman, for she did not learn to write until she was fifty, and she lost her sight at the age of sixty. The book contains more than one case of interest to the Spiritualist. That which I am about to quote is curious from the apparent presentation of a symbolic vision to two persons. This is the narrative:—

"The following incident which I have heard my mother relate, took place more than eighty years ago, in the town of Hamilton, where my parents resided at that period. The reader may rely on the truth of the details, but must be left to draw what conclusion he thinks most agreeable to the dictates of his own reason and judgment on such appearances. A man of colour, who went by the name of 'Black Solomon,' who was also a resident in the same town, lay on his death bed. In the night on which he died his daughter and a woman who sat up with her were sitting a little apart from the bedside to let him have air. He was in the agonies of death; but the watchers were unable to leave their seats, for *on the bed of the dying man they saw at his head something white, but of indefinable shape, and at his feet a similar object, but quite black*. At each convulsive gasp of the man the appearances advanced as if to meet, which they did as he expired. Then ensued what seemed a conflict, in which the white object seemed victorious, for it rose above the corpse with a triumphant waving of white drapery, while the black seemed to cower and shrink away. The interpretation of this supernatural scene is very palpable, but I leave it to the serious reader to form his own opinion on the subject."

These two persons would not be likely to understand the mystic symbolism of the vision—the black, typical of evil, presented at the feet, its appropriate position, allegorically speaking; and the white, the symbolic principle of good, also in its proper place at the head; then the conflict between the two, and final victory of good over evil. If a single seeress had seen the vision one would have no difficulty in regarding it as an allegorical representation of the new birth of the departing soul. Such, indeed, it manifestly was, and it is possible that it was presented only to one of the watchers, who described it to the other. If both saw it, it is an almost unique case of a synchronous vision presented to two persons.

Another case I may quote, not because it is especially interesting, but because it is a fair instance of many stories which are susceptible of an explanation consistent with natural causes, which explanation we are bound to give and to admit as good and sufficient. And yet, conceding this, I cannot but believe that there is an unseen agent utilising this natural cause, and operating through it. I believe that we shall err if we limit the action of spirit only to such cases as are not susceptible of explanation in accordance with known laws. The spiritual and the supernatural are not conterminous. We cannot tell when, where, and how spirit acts. But there are some of us who think they know that its action is ubiquitous, and that some of the most apparently trivial acts of our lives are overruled and guided by unseen counsellors and guardians. We can, in great matters, trace the influence and even recognise the guidance. In smaller matters, if we cannot always tell whether chance has directed or fancy deluded, we can carry on our faith and believe that great causes are not used to produce small effects, but that the natural may be utilized by spirit for its spiritual purposes. So the domain of law, as we understand it, is, as it seems to me, pervaded by the action of spirit, and our thoughts and acts, that seem most surely our own, may be the suggestion or inspiration of unseen but not unknown friends.

The story runs thus:—

"There was a Mrs. Rae who lived in our neighbourhood, and was an intimate friend of my mother. This woman was, by



the death of a favourite child, thrown into great grief and distress of mind, pining after him day by day, and often expressing a wish to see him once again. My mother did what she could with her, by entreaty and prayer, to submit to the will of God in this dispensation, but it was in vain. She began to neglect her person and family, and would still repeat the sinful words, 'O! that I might see him once again!' My mother had not seen her for some days, and was surprised by a call from her. She was washed and dressed, and wore a look of resignation, almost cheerfulness, so that my mother could not help expressing wonder at the happy change. 'Dear Mary,' she said, 'in my rebellious and sinful grief I would not listen to the voice of man. I needed a reproof from God, and I got it. Two days before this, I was sitting alone, mourning for my lost darling, and still the wish rose from my heart to my lips: 'O! that I might see him once again,' when, lifting up my eyes, I saw, as it were, in the air—so near me that I could have put my hand on the place—the appearance of my child just as you saw him at the moment of dissolution, his face distorted, and his little hands twitching in strong convulsions. My eyes were fixed upon the sight, for I was powerless to look away. It remained so long that I had time to say more than once, 'God in mercy remove this sight from me!' It was removed, and my conscious heart said, 'Thou hast had thy wish, art thou satisfied?' I fell on my knees, and with tears besought God to pardon my guilty murmuring and sinful wish. It was remarked of this woman, that although afterwards she met with many severe trials and bereavements in her family, she sustained them with true Christian resignation and fortitude. Some will say that this was an instance of spectral illusion. It may have been so; but she never having before nor ever after had any visitation of the kind, this view of the matter is doubtful, but there is one thing certain, that whatever the cause might be, the effect was good, and that good remained with Mrs. Rae during the remainder of her life." M.A. (Oxon.)

### THEOSOPHIC TEACHINGS.

By the Hon. Roden Noel.

#### No. III.

I have now explained that, though the Logos is a *Common Nature*, we Christians believe Him to be also *Personal*, and that we are in Him as He is in us. "I in you, and you in Me," were the words of our Blessed Lord. And He had atoned His God-consciousness with that of His soul.

When "C. C. M." says that the material upon which the antecedent energy of thought works, so as to produce the sense of individuality, is "not a pure evolution from a transcendental source or content," I disagree with him. It must be so, because all phenomena are. Or else, what is the account of them? Whence do they arise, and what is their sufficient reason? Spiritual energy imposes a form on a given material, says "C. C. M." Quite true. But whence the given material? It can only be the spiritual energy itself in a lower stage of development, in process of self-development. And even from the first, the Ego is double—subject-object, though in early sensation the elements are implicit. In Aristotelian phrase, the Active is developing the Passive reason. Moreover, in so far as the material is necessary to a particular potential individuality, it is an integral factor in the transcendent individuality, and is only *before* it in conditional or phenomenal time-existence, not in true being. Even if you regard it as belonging to other systems of intelligence, that is true, for all is in all. In the eternal, we are not isolated as we are here and now, but we are in and by one another. But the potential object having become our object, it is henceforth part and parcel of ourselves for ever—though it will undergo transfiguration in thought. (By *objective*, however, remember that the Germans mean necessarily true for all—even the book would have a relative objectivity, because it is a percept for Jack, Tom, and Harry; but your experience as *yours* would be *subjective* only.) The "antecedent energy of thought" is more correctly to be regarded as transcendent, though, no doubt, we have existed in other spheres and states. And other Spirits are concerned in our manifestation. Do not understand me to deny that our actual subjectivity is phenomenal only, just as external objects are; but the Real underlies both, and the Real glorifies, reveals, fulfils, not annihilates.

Of the Divine Spirit "C. C. M." says, "This noumenon, abstracted from all object or phenomena, is necessarily impersonal, inasmuch as individual consciousness is the opposition of subject and object." Quite so. But who told "C. C. M." that It is abstracted from all object? The Father-Spirit is not so, if He has the Son, the Word, the Christ for object, and all other Spirits in Him. It appears that the Adept teachers have told "C. C. M." otherwise. There is a very curious editorial note in the last (November) number of the *Theosophist*, in which it is claimed that there can be no Personal or Impersonal God, because the Brothers, though able to project their astral bodies, have not found Him. Now, really, how should this help them?

Seeing that God is to be found by concentration, and not by dispersion? "Closer is He than breathing, more near than hands and feet." The Occultists have just been assuring us that in the astral region God is utterly absent—a country of mere shells, and elementaries. If He is anywhere, He is in the spiritual region, with which astral bodies have nothing to do—in love, charity, self-renunciation—though I myself do not think Him altogether absent from the astral, or even the physical, sphere. Is He absent from art, science, philosophy? St. Catherine, Augustine, Leibnitz, and Newton could promenade their physical bodies, and one of them her astral body, and they found God. Bradlaugh, Baron D'Holbach, and a few very degraded savages, can promenade theirs, and find Him not. This sort of argument proves little. Our Lord knew the Father, and I suppose Gautama did not. Perhaps it was his loss, and the loss of many beside. But "C. C. M." argues that the impersonality of the Spirit (how does he reconcile this with the teaching of his Gurus, that there is no impersonal God?) is proved by the fact that It makes us impersonal, causes us to merge our individuality, as he reminds us the mystics have always sought to do. Now this I have by anticipation answered in my letter about "The Perfect Way" in *LIGHT*, 25th November. Love transports us out of ourselves, but the lover remains implicitly, with the beloved for his adored object, else there is no love possible. In the final aspiration of Shelley's "Epsychidion," Love herself is slain in a barren and monstrous identification of her two necessary factors. We know and can imagine nothing beyond. The Abyss, Being, the Ungrund, the Nothing, these are but abstractions of our mind.

With respect to the *number* destined to annihilation, my strong impression is that in "Isis Unveiled," and in the letters of Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky to the *Spiritualist*, a great majority was spoken of as thus doomed; possibly I am mistaken, but the numbers are certainly described as great. Look at the extract from the Book of Khin-te in the November *Theosophist*. All the *negative* people, all the drones!—only the very good and—God save the mark!—the very *bad*, are immortal! Are not the negative, humdrum people the *hoi polloi*? They are to perish "by millions as self-conscious entities," &c.

What I admire most in the speculative teaching of the Orientals is their grand intuition of the Universal, and the altitudes of Being, Spiritual Calm, of the Central, as distinguished from the vicissitudes of atomistic, self-centred, earthly-passioned, vain, mortal, suffering, unreal existence—their strong sense of the impermanence of all this, of its constant subjection to interminable births and re-births, all restless with thirst unquenchable, which is fire. "In God's will is our peace," in the merging of our own in His—that has been the one grand fundamental truth of all great religious teaching, and has been insisted on by the mystics of all creeds especially. But there is no rest of our wills in God's when our wills and God's are merged in one common grave. And we of the West have our supplementary idea, though, perhaps, emphasising it unduly, of the transcendent value of every human, nay, of every individual soul, as also of the symbolic manifestation, and necessary self-development of the Absolute Spirit through the world of phenomena, even through evil, sin, sorrow, and pain, as well as their corresponding opposites; so that the latter is not for us, as for Easterns, *pure* Maya and illusion of Brahm, but the Actual Substance of all, viewed imperfectly from our standpoint, and, therefore, under conditions of illusion, needing to be correlated with the sum total of conditions, in order to be harmonised with Divine Reason. But because I have criticised these particular teachings from the East, let no one imagine that I have not been deeply impressed with the Bagavad-Gita, and other grand monuments of Oriental thought. I protest, however, against the Nihilism to which these teachers would dogmatically conduct us, though, no doubt, after a more lengthened promenade in the worlds of phantasmagoria than their brethren of corresponding schools of Nihilism in the West are willing to accord. Yet Spencer and Tyndal, Huxley and Hartmann too, have their "unknowable" and "unconscious" beyond matter and mind, though all, ultimately, are to vanish into that "infinite azure of the past." Spiritualists, dissatisfied with Christianity, thought they at least had secured some foothold in the void. These portentously learned, and miraculously gifted persons have come to deceive them, though graciously promising them their "alliance" against that effete and mischievous superstition, called Christianity.

"C. C. M.'s" reply, though very clever, does not seem to me to touch my arguments. I fear that, as in most philosophical controversies, we shall have been reminding the reader of two combatants vigorously striking the air on either side of one another, supposing that they are inflicting mutual damage, but not really touching each other at all. And for Spiritualists, who believe themselves the fortunate recipients of ready-made, if somewhat contradictory, revelations on all subjects and sundry, obtained through tilting tables, dead men materialised, and trance addresses more or less impromptu, it must seem rather hard to be asked to go through so much thinking for themselves, like any ordinary mortals not so favoured!

However, the third paper of "C. C. M." is extremely interesting. Indeed, all are lucid philosophical expositions of the philosophy he has espoused; and if the people over the water were not such very great people as we are told they are



(shrouded in mystery, only a glimpse of their glory can be vouchsafed to us—herein again unlike Christ—“*omne ignotum, &c.*”), they would surely feel themselves under a real obligation to him for thus forcibly representing and defending their views. All the opening sentences I agree with, I feel the value of, down to the words, “we moderns take for reason.” I should have drawn the inference from them that *we* are immortal. But “C. C. M.” proceeds to shew the utter fallacy of such an innocent, and unphilosophical assumption. For, says he, our personality is a phenomenal experience, and depends on external conditions. Let them pass, and it must pass too. I suppose here we come to a distinct, and very palpable issue. My answer is, as before, it does no such thing. All particular experiences have particular causes, or special individual energies of the substantial noumenon as basis of them; else they remain unaccounted for. And Being would be Being, with a big B, to all eternity, with nothing coming out of it, simply because there is nothing in it, all alone in the solitary glory of its abstraction. It was well said of Spinoza’s substance that it was a lion’s den with many footprints turned towards it, but none returning; indeed, there would be no footprints even approaching, and the all-devouring Lion would himself perish of inanition—or rather, he could never himself be. Even poor Being would find itself in a bad case, for all the sublimity of its too simple and vacuous content. Our Supreme Lord, *Zero!*—“These be thy gods,” O Occultism! And how does this explain God’s rich world around us, so prodigal of life and beauty, and all infinite variety? It is a vain, dissolving dream, answers the recluse. Nay, it is life we want—“Of life—more life—our nerves are scant.” Which is the very reprehensible state of mind characteristic of the wicked, according to the Eastern hermits, by the way (see last *Theosophist* for November). The truth is, that the passive, and the active temperaments will not easily be reconciled! And temperaments are the framers of systems, East, West, North, and South.

Those systems provide no link between the One and the Many. But without such a link neither is possible. And as to the worldly conditions perishing, if they are modes of consciousness, as “C. C. M.” admits, they cannot; they only seem to do so because they fulfill themselves in “the other;” but all that can only take place by virtue of their integration, differentiation, and identification in a subject, and subjects. The conditions are the result of our limitations. But we make them, though not alone. They do not make us. They dominate us, but not for ever. But “C. C. M.” proceeds to the proper topic he set himself to discuss. And he positively tries to convince me that there are other phenomenal worlds besides that of our five senses! Why, if he had attentively read the book of mine he was so kind as to review in “*LIGHT*,” he would find that I believe in as many kinds of phenomenal worlds as there are diversities of subjective intelligence—and I know not how many there may be of those. Nor ever in my life have I objected to the astral light and the pictures in it as a phenomenon, if it can be scientifically proved, though the position of the authors of the “Unseen Universe” is seriously objected to by scientific men. Still it is quite possible that the Brothers may be competent to assert this as a fact.

But alas! how impossible it seems for philosophical controversialists to understand each other! This, then, is what “C. C. M.” has all along been supposing me to object to, on the ground of my idealism! Of course, his answer is perfectly crushing to any one so objecting. If there is a world of physical law, the domain of physical science, there may be a domain of “astral” law, the domain of occult science, and idealism has nothing whatever to do with it. Why of course—of course—“what fool,” as Mr. Swinburne says to somebody, “is foolish enough” to deny it! It is a question of evidence only. But does not “C. C. M.” see that these theories of shells, &c., are metaphysical theories? Shells are bodies—all right; as much as ever you please. That is what “C. C. M.’s” friend says in this last number of “*LIGHT*.” But they are also *thinking* bodies! Well—here we are pulled up. That is a metaphysical theory—it is not a question of evidence for phenomena at all. A shell is a body able to give tests of personal identity, and with no personal identity, or synthetic principle of thought and sense differentiation behind it. Well, there I demur. Because even infallible “Mahatmas” may not assert a contradiction in terms. If it were a person, it might see pictures in the astral light. But if it is not one, it can do no such thing. And it is not one; therefore it cannot. Q. E. D. “G. C.” says it has “a species of personality.” Now what is that? It is either a person, or it is not. Choose. Personality is not a sort of wash or paint, of which you may give a thin coating to something else, which is not personal. “C. C. M.” compares these astral light representations to statues. With all my heart. He argues irrefragably that, though idealism be true, yet there are statues. They must be in some consciousness, but there they are, and the Adepts are not necessarily ignorant of the fact, because they do not refer to it. Is “C. C. M.” sure that they would admit the fact? I should imagine from the words of their disciples that they would not. However, the general principle of “C. C. M.” is indisputable. But what “C. C. M.” and his friends argue, is that these shells are animated, thinking statues, giving tests of human identity, and

yet with no human individuality, which alone, by “synthetic unity of apperception,” makes human thinking possible.

Certainly the pictures might be understood and translated by persons; but if my body without myself behind it walked into the Royal Academy, what does “C. C. M.” imagine it would make of the pictures there? Yet these are equally products of human thought, and expressive of it. Statues—yes; but the animated statue of Pygmalion, with no living woman behind it! We read in Dante that trees bled, and spoke; but then they had individual lost souls within them. “G. C.” puts the thing very plainly, and surely the result is simply grotesque. He says the converted man drops his bad habits with his astral body—or some other body, I really don’t know which—“Kamara-Rupa”—it does not much signify. Well, if one leaves off one’s bad habits, how very obvious that one must leave them *somewhere!* If I change my old coat (or habit), *there it is*, and another man may see it lying on the chair. So of my old *habits!* Surely they must be floating about somewhere, if I have dropped them? Only my old coat cannot give tests of identity, and my old habits can. This is really the funniest doctrine for philosophers of supernatural pretensions to preach. To the uninitiated it might even appear to issue from a far different and nearer place than the Himalayas, a place I will not name in such a connection, as it might sound profane! A more general sense of humour would surely have secured us immunity from many a strange system of philosophy.

The simple question is—*Can bodies think?* Yes, says “C. C. M.” This is not a materialistic assertion at all, though it might seem so. Your idealism should be above taking alarm at it. If it does, it is a very crude idealism. Bodies *can* think, for bodies are themselves phenomena of consciousness—objects of thought—in thought. Well, this argument would prove a good deal. It would prove that a carpet can think, that a tea-caddy can think. And that, I suppose, is the doctrine of Occultism, which seems identical with the animism of savages. The elements, they say, think. Hydrogen thinks. To most of us, however, that seems nonsense. To say the brain, or the tea-caddy, is necessarily an object of, and in thought is *not* the same as to say, the brain or the tea-caddy think—thought is an energy of brain, or tea-caddy. But thought may be concocted there, says my honourable opponent. Now just examine what this really means. The brain is not a witches’ cauldron, or a stewpan, and thought a broth of any kind, hellish, or heavenly. Granted; we both know that; we are both idealists—(much to the bewilderment of the good readers of “*LIGHT*,” by the way! So much the worse for them—they must wish us anywhere!) Brain, then, is—and astral body also is—a complex phenomenon *constructed* by thought; in this, says “C. C. M.” thought may arise, be concocted. Now that cannot mean, I presume, that thought arises in a confined space (brain), for space is a thought, and presupposes it. It must mean *particular* thoughts of ours arise *in connection* with other thoughts we call “brain.” When I feel hot, or see a colour, I might (*though I don’t*) also see a vibration of certain nerve-ganglia, and nerve-fibrils. It can mean no more than that to an idealist, whether crude like myself, or advanced like “C. C. M.” and the Occultists. And I *might* perhaps conceivably on such occasions also perceive an ethereal—or astral light—vibration. If that is all you mean, I agree with you, but then you seem to palter with words in a double sense, because what modern thinkers in general mean by such a phrase is that brain (or astral body) is the substance, or noumenon, and thought is the quality, or function thereof. You, if an idealist, mean just the reverse; therefore you should not use your adversary’s pet chosen phraseology. But, “C. C. M.” urges upon me, that we individuals are not alone, and do not think alone—a curious lesson to read one who has written the book “C. C. M.” has so kindly reviewed, and one who on that subject agrees with Fechner. “We think into the World-Soul,” and are supported by it. Our thoughts, therefore, go out of ourselves, and may be percepts to others—precisely the doctrine of my own book! But what is the inference? That they go out of us—into no other intelligence—but gad about all by themselves? Why is it to be charged on them that they are likely to behave in so lunatic, indecent, and utterly unconscionable a way? They being essentially thoughts *constructed* by thinkers, and being impossible out of thinkers, cannot possibly do anything of the kind, and if “C. C. M.” thinks otherwise, there is no more to be said; his idealism and mine are utterly incapable of ever meeting and coinciding—though whether his or mine be the crudest I will not presume to determine. Our thoughts may go into the World-Soul (mind you, a highly personal Soul, far more so than ourselves); then the thoughts of the World-Soul—and inconceivably many others besides—may come into us (the brain, and astral body are thoughts of others, or of ours), but they all *go from* and *come into* synthetic unities of apperception, which is what I mean by persons, or individuals, or Egos, or selves; for them to be in another position, and hang about between, is as impossible as for two and two to make five; simply because the very differentia of thought is that it belongs to a thinker.

But though we “think into a world-consciousness,” and into other minds, our thoughts still belong to us, and will come home to roost,—will return to their parent, when he, and others are more perfect, more at one in the Universal.

ERRATUM.—In my last article on p. 575, for “a cluster of memories” read “a bevy of memories.”—R. W.



## OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"

4, NEW BRIDGE STREET,  
LUDGATE CIRCUS, E.C.

## TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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

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

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## SPECIAL NOTICE..

We are pleased to be able to inform our readers that Professor Barrett has kindly promised to place in our hands, for publication in "LIGHT," records of several cases of great interest relating to psychical phenomena, which have occurred in private families, and in regard to which he can himself personally vouch for the trustworthiness of the testimony. Professor Barrett has devoted himself, with remarkable assiduity, for many years, to the careful study and investigation of these phenomena and no one is better able than himself to sift the chaff from the wheat—to distinguish between the merely apparent and the real. We believe our friends will gladly welcome the appearance of these records in our pages.

## 1883.

With the new year the price of "LIGHT" will be reduced to twopence, or post-free 10s. 10d. per annum, paid in advance; while the size and number of pages will remain the same as at present. This reduction has been determined upon in consequence of very strong representations which have reached us that the change will add very materially to our circulation, and thereby greatly extend the sphere of our usefulness. We hope that the friends to whose suggestions we have thus deferred will do their best to ensure the fulfilment of their own prognostications.

Those of our readers who have already forwarded subscriptions at the present rate, will either have their term of supply proportionately extended, or will for a time receive an additional copy of the Journal. In the absence of instructions to the contrary, the latter course will be adopted, in the hope that the second copy will be forwarded to persons who may thereby be induced to become subscribers for themselves.

Many of our friends can well afford to aid in the extension of our circulation. Let them begin with the new year to take two or more copies instead of one, and so introduce "LIGHT" amongst their friends and neighbours. They will thus be doing a good work, and at the same time make our success secure.

## MRS. HARDINGE BRITTEN.

Our London readers will be gratified to learn that we are about to have a visit from Mrs. Hardinge Britten, and we cannot doubt that they will give her a very cordial welcome. Mrs. Britten's brilliant talents, and her long and distinguished services to the cause of Spiritualism, justify this confident anticipation—to say nothing of the fact that she has in London many personal friends who will be delighted to see her amongst them once again.

Mrs. Britten has cheerfully consented to attend the rooms of the Central Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell-street, at seven o'clock, on the evening of Monday week, January 8th. The first part of the evening will be devoted to social intercourse, and an exchange of friendly greetings, after which Mrs. Britten will kindly reply, under Spirit influence, to any questions which may be put to her, in relation to topics in which the company may be generally interested—the questions having reference of course to Spiritual subjects. For the sake of order it would be well if friends having questions to put would hand them in written form to the chairman. It need hardly be added that admission will be perfectly free to all members and friends.

On Sunday, January 7th, Friday, January 12th, and Sunday, January 14th, Mrs. Britten will lecture in St. Andrew's Hall, Newman-street, Oxford-street, under the auspices of the Metropolitan Spiritual Lyceum, and on Wednesday evening, January 10th, a public reception will be given her at the same place. Further particulars regarding the Sunday services will be found in our advertising columns.

CLAIRVOYANCE—A REFUTATION  
OF MATERIALISM.

By George Wyld, M.D.

On Friday evening, the 22nd inst., Dr. George Wyld read a paper on this subject before the members of the Central Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell-street, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers in the chair. The paper was a very valuable one, but much too long for our pages. We have pleasure, however, in presenting the following extracts to our readers:—

The term clairvoyance is French, and means clear-seeing, but it appears to me to be an inadequate term, because it might signify clear optical vision or clear mental vision, whereas what is signified by the term is the power which certain individuals possess of seeing external objects under circumstances which render the sight of these objects impossible to physical optics. In short, by clairvoyance we mean the power which the *mind* has of seeing or knowing thoughts and physical conditions, and objects hidden from or beyond the reach of the physical senses; and if the existence of this faculty can be established, we arrive at a demonstration that man has a power within his body as yet unrecognised by physical science. I regard mind-reading as the most common form of clairvoyance, and the capability of seeing the contents of closed boxes or envelopes as the most rare form, because, as I believe, the faculty is generally connected more or less with the known, or it may be, the unknown sympathy of human beings; and hence the clairvoyant diagnosis of hidden disease is much more common than the seeing of inanimate objects inside inanimate envelopes or boxes.

The instances of clairvoyance which I shall present for consideration have been gathered either from my own experience or from the records of my personal friends. I have selected these in preference to cases from books, partly because those which are published are already open for inspection, but chiefly because instances occurring within one's own experience, or that of personal friends, are brought before the mind with more detail and intensity, and are capable of more thorough investigation; and in order to increase confidence I have, where no objections were made, given names and addresses.

In attempting to analyse and classify cases of clairvoyance, they appear to me to arrange themselves in the following order:—

Thought-reading.

Brain-reading of forgotten or absent thoughts.

Seeing bodily diseases, as if the body were transparent.

Psychometry as described by Professor Denton, namely, the knowledge the psychic obtains by a *clue*, such as a lock of the hair of some absent person, or some portion of a distant object.

Travelling clairvoyance, or seeing things at a distance beyond physical vision.

Seeing objects secreted in boxes or envelopes, or otherwise hidden or unknown to any one present.

Seeing future events.

Entrancement and clairvoyance, as produced by the use of anesthetics.

## Thought-Reading.

A young lady, who has suffered much inconvenience as a thought-reader from her childhood, having been lately called upon at a public institution to pass an examination in harmony, had a lesson set her on the black board, her own teacher being present. The solution of the problem was much beyond her ability, but her teacher, anxiously desiring that his pupil should succeed, but having no knowledge of her thought-reading powers, harmonised the passage in a complicated form in his own mind, when, much to his surprise, immediately the young lady took up the chalk and *note for note* wrote down on the black board the harmony as it existed in his own mind. This, I think it will be admitted, is not only a striking, but a very interesting illustration of the faculty of thought-reading; and, in estimating the force of this instance, it must be remembered that the mother, the teacher, and the pupil all assert that the exercise accomplished was much beyond the normal capabilities of the young lady. Does this case not suggest that successful pass examinations may sometimes in part be the result of brain-picking?

## Brain-Reading.

This differs from thought-reading in this, that the thought-reader desires you to think strongly of the subject to be read, but the brain-reader often not only reads the thoughts which are at the time absent from your mind but he often reads thoughts



which you have not only forgotten, but the existence of which you deny, until subsequently they are recalled to your remembrance.

As an instance of brain-reading, I may mention that on the 25th November I experimented with Mr. Hopercroft, 47, Tavistock-crescent, Westbourne-park, and having entranced him, I presented him with twelve playing-cards enclosed in twelve envelopes, and asked if he could name the cards. This he entirely failed to do, but he at once said, "Those cards were not put into these envelopes by yourself—they were placed there by a lady; a tall, rather stout lady about fifty years of age. She has been in *Devonshire*, and you were not in the room when she placed them in the envelopes—you went out of the room in order that you might say you had no hand in it." All this was exactly true, and there was no one in the room but myself and the psychic. It was not thought-reading, for my thoughts were all in the direction that the sensitive should name the cards. I then presented him with an iron ring which I always take with me when I attend sésances. And he at once said: "You take this ring to sésances. You often visit a medium quite near your house. She is not a professional: she takes no money; she is married to a gentleman, and their people are *fighting* people; one is Cap—Cap—Captain J—J—James." He did not mention the lady's father, but he was also a *fighting* person, namely, General S. I do not think this was thought-reading, for my thought and wish were that he should give me some ideas as to my experiences with the iron ring.

#### Clairvoyance in Disease.

This is a most interesting faculty in itself; but it has this further to recommend it, that its object is not mere curiosity, but the benevolent relief of human suffering.

Eighteen months ago I had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of Mrs. D. I told her I had a very dear friend who for years had intense agony for hours every night in his back and chest, and that latterly he had been obliged to sit up all night in a chair, and that his legs had begun to swell. Mrs. D. expressed great sympathy for my friend, and most kindly begged I would let her see him, as she thought she would be able to suggest something for his relief. This gentleman had regularly for three years been under many of the leading physicians of London. Some said that there must be some obscure heart affection. Others said it was neuralgia; one said it was gout; and the last consulted said it was malignant caries of the spine. My friend met Mrs. D. in my house, and she merely looked at him, and asked a few questions of an unimportant kind. I then perceived that she wished to speak to me, and so I asked my friend to go into the next room, and when we were alone she said—

"I have seen what the disease is; I saw it as distinctly as if the body were transparent. There is a tumour behind the heart, about the size of a walnut; it is of a dirty colour; and it jumps and looks as if it would burst. Nothing can do him any good but entire rest."

I at once saw what she meant, and sat down to write to my friend's medical attendant as follows:—

"I believe I have discovered the nature of Mr. —'s disease. He has an aneurism on the descending aorta, about the size of a walnut. It is this which causes the slight displacement which has been observed in the heart, and the pressure of the tumour against the intercostal nerves is the cause of the agony in the back, and the peripheral pains in front of the chest. You are going to-morrow to see Sir ——— in consultation; shew him this diagnosis, and let me know what he says."

Next day the patient had this consultation, and at once Mrs. D.'s diagnosis was confirmed, and afterwards all the doctors who had, during the last three years, missed the true diagnosis now confirmed it. They also all agreed with Mrs. D. that the only thing to be done was to take entire rest. This treatment during the last eighteen months has been more or less followed up, and with the result that the pains have been reduced to a minimum. It is true that the diagnosis cannot be absolutely confirmed during life, but as the profession unanimously pronounce the disease to be aneurism the diagnosis may be accepted as correct. This diagnosis has probably saved this gentleman's life, as before Mrs. D. saw him he was allowed to shoot over Scotch moors, and to ride, drive, and play billiards.

#### Psychometry.

Dr. Buchanan, in 1849, found that out of a class of 130 students at the Eclectic Medical College, Cincinnati, forty-three signed a declaration that if they took into their hands certain

medical substances, concealed from them in paper, they suffered sensations and effects analogous to those experienced on swallowing those medicines—for instance, if they took ipecacuanha, concealed in paper, into their hands, they suffered from nausea and sickness. Reasoning and experimenting in the same direction, Professor Denton, geologist, Boston, wrote a book called "*The Soul of Things*," which has passed through several editions. I believe that wearing apparel, rings, or hair belonging to an individual, can often act as a clue to the clairvoyant, and this is what Denton calls Psychometry. I have two instances of this to offer you.

For fifteen years I have worn a ring which my uncle wore for the last forty years of his life. On one occasion, I placed this ring in Mr. Macgeary's hand, when instantly he was seized with spasms at the heart, and gasped for breath. My uncle had suffered from those symptoms, having died of advanced heart disease; but this Mr. Macgeary could not have known.

On another occasion, I placed this ring, which contains my grandfather's hair, in the hand of Madame Blavatsky, and asked her to describe my grandfather. She said he was a tall and slender man, with a red face; he took a good deal of port wine, and he had *blue* eyes. This was quite correct, but it was not mind-reading, as my thoughts were on my grandfather's character.

Professor Denton gives another instance. "A doctor was on the ice, and witnessed the death of a negro, who was accidentally dashed out of a swing against a block of ice and killed. The doctor went home, and began in the presence of some people to describe the accident, as he at the same time compounded and rolled in his fingers some pills. These pills were sent to an old lady, who had no knowledge of the accident to the negro, but she took the pills, and that night had a vivid dream of the catastrophe, in all its details, as if she saw it."

#### Travelling Clairvoyance.

Mr. Rouse, being in business, does not want his address published, but he permits me to give it in confidence. On the 18th November he gave me the following narrative:—When Mr. Gladstone disestablished the Irish Church, the title-deeds of a good many properties had to be examined; and among others the title-deeds of Sir Benson Maxwell, of Donegal, were demanded, but could not be found, and the advice of the lawyers was that the property should be placed in Chancery pending an arrangement. Matters were in this position, when a friend suggested that a clairvoyant might be consulted as to the lost deeds, but this suggestion was scouted by the family. However, the late Mrs. General Robertson, of 49, Victoria-street, taking a great interest in the case, on her own responsibility, consulted Mr. Rouse. She sat with him at the table, and almost immediately Mr. Rouse was convulsively moved to take a pencil and a sheet of paper, and to write in large letters, "*Go to Exeter and make inquiries*." This message being sent to the family in Ireland, was by them regarded as absurd; but when Mrs. Robertson went back to Mr. Rouse, and sat at the table for further instructions, the same message, with increased energy, was given, "*Go to Exeter and make inquiries*." At this stage of the case a friend in Ireland one day said to Sir Benson Maxwell, "Your father was very intimate with the Rev. Mr. B. when he was settled here; why not talk the matter over with him?" Then it transpired that Mr. B. was now at Exeter, and Mr. Rouse's enigmatical instructions were called to mind. One of the family accordingly proceeded to Exeter, and had an interview with Mr. B., who examined the contents of a large box in his attics, and found the lost deeds. Mr. Rouse had no knowledge whatever either of the deeds or of Mr. B., and I may add that the family were very grateful for his services, and sent him a large present in acknowledgment.

In the *Spectator*, November 11th, there is a review by the editor of the "*Life of Professor De Morgan*," by Mrs. De Morgan, in which the following case of clairvoyance is given. The Professor was dining in a house which Mrs. De Morgan had never seen. At this time she was engaged in mesmerising a girl for the cure of epilepsy, and the girl became entranced, and said, "I see the Professor; he is in the drawing-room, talking to the ladies and gentlemen;" and she also described the room and furniture, and said, "I see a tray with wine, and water, and biscuits." Mrs. De Morgan thought this must be a mistake, and urged that it must be coffee which she saw; but the girl would not give in, but insisted that it was wine, water, and biscuits. Shortly afterwards the Professor returned home, and confirmed the girl's story in every particular as to the room and furniture, and the wine, water, and biscuits.



## Hidden Objects.

Mr. Adolphe Didier, of 10, Berkeley-gardens, Campden Hill, has narrated to me the following interesting cases, and I should say that I have known Mr. Didier for years, and I have always found him simple and truthful. It has been often said by sceptics that there can be little truth in clairvoyance, as no one has ever gained the reward offered for reading the number of a bank-note enclosed in an envelope. In reply to this statement, Mr. Didier asserts that on two occasions he read the numbers and gained the prizes. Lord Ingestre once gave Didier an envelope containing, as he said, a £5 note, and said if he would read the number he should have the note. Didier replied, "I see only half a note." This was correct, and he received the reward. On another occasion at Bath, a clergyman offered him a £5 note if he would read the number, the note being enclosed in an envelope. He succeeded in giving the number, and he received the reward. On another occasion, Lord Ingestre took a book at random from the shelves, and holding it closed behind his back, asked Didier to read the first four lines on page 27, and Didier succeeded in doing so. On several occasions Didier, when perfectly blindfolded, played *écarté* with gentlemen who brought their own cards, and on these occasions he sometimes named the cards in his adversaries' hands, which, indeed, might be by mind-reading; but he also sometimes played his own hand without any one having looked at it, the cards lying as they were dealt, with their faces on the table.

In accordance with these statements, Captain James tells me that he has seen Alexis Didier, brother to Adolphe Didier, likewise play *écarté* with his hand lying on the table, face downwards, he being perfectly blindfolded.

Mr. Redman, 5, Avenue-place, Brixton Hill, recently brought his sensitive, Frederick Smith, a youth of seventeen, to my house, and experimented before myself, Mrs. Boole, and three other ladies. He was blindfolded by means of soft paper folded double, and then gummed over his eyelids. This alone, as I and Mrs. Boole found, produced upon us, when tested, so complete a blindness that we could not distinguish the brightly-lighted gas globes. But in the case of Smith a silk handkerchief was tied over this paper. Under these circumstances, Smith took a pack of my own cards, and concealing their faces from all present—he being at one side of the table and we at the other—threw down on the table any card we asked for. After this, he read correctly on two occasions the first line on the pages indicated of a book we gave him—we being all ignorant of the words; and on another occasion he read a verse of poetry correctly, I merely pointing out the verse to be read, all present being ignorant of the words. All present agreed that Smith was perfectly blindfolded, and that he proved himself to be a true direct clairvoyant.

## Future Events.

My friend, Mr. Joseph Hands, is an old surgeon, and lives at 84, The Grove, Hammersmith. He was one of the great Dr. Jenner's assistants, and in his book on "Will Ability," pp. 136-7, he gives an interesting account of how one of his clairvoyants predicted that a certain patient who was dying of consumption would *not* die of that disease, but of stoppage in the bowels on the left side, and that he would die on a given day and at a fixed hour. This prediction was told to the sister of the invalid, but not to himself, and it all came to pass exactly as foretold.

Mr. Hands also narrates the following gipsy story, told him by Mrs. Francis, then residing at Blackheath:—"Before she was married she, from kindness, permitted a poor gipsy woman to pass through her confinement in a room over the laundry. After the event was over the gipsy, feeling grateful for the lady's kindness, one day said she felt impelled to tell her of the future. She said, 'You will be married clandestinely to a naval officer, and become the mother of three children; but your husband will treat you badly, and forsake you, and afterwards die from an accident, and after a time the three children will die within a few days of each other, and at last you will marry a second time.' All this happened exactly as predicted, and the lady, although protesting to the doctors that her first marriage was so unhappy that nothing would induce her to marry a second time, yet at last fell a victim to a barrister—the three children having all died of diphtheria."

## Clairvoyance Produced by Anæsthetics.

In the "Life of Sir Humphrey Davy," by his brother, we read how this brilliant chemist in 1798 made experiments in breathing nitrous oxide. His words are:—"On fully inhaling the

gas I lost all connection with external things. Trains of vivid visible images rapidly passed through my mind, and were connected with words in such a manner as to produce perceptions perfectly novel. I existed in a world of newly connected and newly modified ideas. I theorised—I imagined that I made great discoveries—I exclaimed that nothing exists but thought. The universe is composed of impressions, ideas, pleasures, and pains. The delight was intense and sublime, and for a moment so intense and pure as to absorb existence. I felt as if possessed of new organs. I seemed a new being—a sublime being newly created."

"Now, it would be difficult to give a more vivid conception of the ecstasies of some of those who, by mesmeric entrancement, become lucid, clairvoyant, and prophetic, and it is very surprising that psychologists have never, after the manner of this chemist, poet, and philosopher, experimented with anæsthetics.

One day in the year 1874, I took chloroform to free myself from the intense agony I was suffering from the passage of a renal calculus, when suddenly I became conscious that I was out of my body. I distinctly saw myself in a long robe standing in my bedroom about two yards from my unconscious body in the bed. It was not a dream, but a consciousness of existence outside my body. I mentioned my experience to many, but I took little further notice of it till one evening about the 6th of January, 1880, when it suddenly struck me that in the use of anæsthetics we possessed an experimental method of demonstrating the existence of the soul freed from the body. I then wrote at length upon this subject, the idea being, that as atmospheric air is the natural stimulus of the lungs, and essential to life, so any form of asphyxia, whether produced by entrancement or by means of foreign gases, or by suffocation as in drowning, drives, as it were, the life out of the body, and thus expels the soul or mind. In all these forms of asphyxia the physical condition is almost identical and the psychological experiences are often identical also; we have a body perfectly impervious to pain, and we have often an ecstatic soul—that is, a soul operating independently of the body, and, as I maintain from my own experience and that of mesmeric ecstasies, a soul operating externally to the body; and if so, then the existence of the soul as distinct from the body can be experimentally demonstrated.

Numerous cases which have been brought to my knowledge shew that chloroform, and some other gases when inhaled, can produce clairvoyance; and I may add that my views on this point have been confirmed by information obtained at the Dental Hospital in Leicester-square; and it appears to me that if all medical men would record their psychological experiences in connection with anæsthetics, materialistic views would less frequently prevail among them.

## Conclusions.

I have thus by examples of each stage of clairvoyance attempted to shew step by step the advance from simple thought-reading to deeper brain-reading, and from that to the still deeper diagnoses of internal bodily diseases hidden from the eye of sense but revealed to the penetrating eye of the soul; and from that to the travelling of the soul to distances on this earth beyond optical vision; and thence to the highest powers of the soul as an independent mind knowing the past, the present, and the future, and leading to that ultimate climax of the soul whereby it ascends, as in holy entrancement, and enters the regions where the Immortals dwell.

Thus this intelligent power, called soul, operates not only independently of the senses but beyond the reach of the physical senses, and shews itself as an independent auto-noetic power triumphing over pain, and disease, and death, and penetrating matter and acting as if its connection with matter were but a passing accident.

And just as chemistry can shew that there is no such thing as the destruction of matter but only its ever varying transformations; and just as physics can prove that although power may disappear in one place it is only that it may reappear in another place, in obedience to the law of the conservation of energy; so the soul of man as a thinking and auto-noetic power—although its external clothing may pass through various transformations and regenerations—can be demonstrated, as a *unity* incapable of the subdivisions of decay; and thus as an immortal life it is destined to survive "the war of elements, the wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds."

We may sit in a darkened theatre before the act, and by some minute chink in the dark curtain which separates the audience from the stage, obtain a glimpse of the splendid spec-



tacular luminosity which awaits us ; and I would ask, Do not the rare glimpses which clairvoyants sometimes obtain perhaps suggest that there may be a world of light as Milton says, "Above the din and stir of this dim spot which men call earth," and shew that the highest form of saintly entranced clairvoyance may possibly reveal "that some there are who by due steps aspire to lay their just hands on that golden key which opens the palace of eternity"? Thus the highest entranced soul knows as an absolute fact that Materialism is false. It beholds its immortal life and in the innermost secret of its own essence it listens to the still small voice of the eternal God.

#### THE WILLING GAME.

The London correspondent of an influential provincial journal, writing on Tuesday, said :—"I took part last night in a novel Christmas entertainment which may have startling results. A lady or gentleman is brought blindfolded into the room where it has been decided that he or she shall be made to do a certain thing. It is understood that the subject treated yield himself or herself to the influence of the operators, who stand with their fingers and thumbs pressing very lightly on the neck of the blindfolded person. If the operation is successful the subject will find a particular article, walk in any direction, or sit down, as the will of the operator directs. Last night this form of mesmeric influence was successful in nine trials out of eleven. Even the sceptics acknowledged that they felt themselves impelled, and not by any pressure on the neck, to do what was required. A lady kissed a gentleman ; so the excitement can take a romantic turn. A little girl walked round the room till she was opposite to her mother, and then sat down in that lady's lap, because, as she said, 'she felt she must.' Mesmerised persons do much more singular things than these, but it is the simplicity of the operation, and the perfect consciousness of the subject which make the performance so interesting. In one case, the good faith of the operators and the susceptibility of the person operated on were illustrated a little too forcibly. It was arranged that a lady who was not in the least nervous, and very anxious to test the mysterious influence, should be made to touch the locket which hung from her neck. In a very few moments she began to breathe heavily, and suddenly fell into violent hysterics. When she recovered she told us that she felt as if she were being choked. Whether this sensation was due to the locality of the object which she was expected to touch, I cannot say ; but the effect of the experiment was remarkable."

**SPIRITUALISM IN BOHEMIA.**—The Vienna correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* sends the following interesting item :—"A telegram from Trautenau, in Bohemia, announces that fifty adepts at Spiritualism have been summoned to appear before the investigating magistrate of that locality. It appears that an epidemic of Spiritualism has broken out in that part of the country, in consequence of the wholesale distribution of a Spiritualistic periodical published in Paris. The local press urges the authorities to prohibit its delivery by post, and invites the Minister of the Interior to institute an inquiry as to the number of cases of mental derangement in the above district resulting from the practice of Spiritualism." We should like to learn more about this "epidemic of Spiritualism," and especially about the result of the proposed inquiry in regard to the mental derangement in which, as is alleged, the "epidemic" has resulted. There have been many allegations of a similar kind from time to time, but they have always turned out to be nothing better than malicious falsehoods.

**FIRESIDE STORIES.**—By Edith Saville (London : E. W. Allen, 4, Ave Maria Lane).—This is a book of short and deeply interesting stories, very cleverly told. We notice it because some of the narratives are based on the recognition of phenomena well known to Spiritualists, and which are here boldly set forth as facts. We suspect, indeed, that the authoress is one of our "inner circle," that "Edith Saville" is but a *nom de plume*, and that if her real name were given it would be recognised at once by a large number of our readers. The book, we may add, is well printed and prettily bound. Its price will be found on reference to our advertising pages.

**MRS. HARDINGE-BRITTEN'S LECTURE APPOINTMENTS.**—LONDON : St. Andrew's Hall, Newman-street, Oxford-street, W., January 7th and 14th.—Address, The Limes, Humphrey-street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester.

#### "MARY JANE" AND THE LATE MR. GUPPY. To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—As information is solicited respecting "Mary Jane," permit me to say that I made the acquaintance of its author, Mr. S. Guppy, about the time of the publication of the said work. He, at that time, entertained the "monstrous conclusions" referred to by Mr. Haughton, but on becoming acquainted with the Davenports, in whom he took great interest, and whom he engaged to go to Paris at a cost of £500, with a view to introduce them to scientists, his views became somewhat modified, and he then entertained the idea that the human spirit had the power to act as a physical agent independent of the body by will power, alleging that nothing ever took place in the presence of the Brothers but what they were capable of doing themselves, instancing the fact that they could both play on the violin, a manifestation which took place at all their séances. The Spirits, however, I may remark from repeated observation, were by far the most skilful performers.

I believe Mr. Guppy ultimately gave up his crude notions on these matters and came round to the Spiritual theory, pure and simple, for he was accustomed in his later years to talk a good deal about "the Spirits."

I also notice a letter respecting the materialisations of Mrs. Fay, of Boston, U.S.A. It may be of interest to state that I made this lady's acquaintance about six years ago, she being then unknown to fame. At that time the phenomena were not so pronounced as they appear to be now, but what I witnessed satisfied me of their genuineness, and I published an account of my experiences in the *Banner of Light*, which was Mrs. Fay's first introduction to public notice. The most striking event that occurred on the occasion was the appearance of a female form dressed in white, who claimed to be an opera singer, and who gave us a taste of her quality in true operatic style. Mrs. Fay is a German by birth, and is a quiet, unpretending little woman.—I remain, &c.,

ROBERT COOPER.

Eastbourne, November 19th, 1882.

#### To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am much obliged to your two correspondents who have shewn some knowledge of "Mary Jane." I scarcely know whether they mean to defend the theory there advanced, or not—they both seem half inclined to do so. I do not wonder at their shrinking from a rather arduous task. The author asserts that the mingling of emanations or vapours or magnetic efflux from a circle of persons in séance actually creates a personal Spirit—an Ego, having intelligence, moral sense—all, in short, that constitutes a human Spirit. It is created in a moment by vapours that possess thought and intelligence. And such a new created being is the reflex of the minds and moral natures of the members of the circle—the average net result. The new Spirit arises as at the stroke of the enchanter's wand!

We must then suppose that the Spirit so suddenly raised into life, when the circle breaks up and the emanations separate and their cohesion is lost, returns again to nothingness, and ceases to exist as suddenly as it arose. Any number then of ordinary persons can create life, albeit only momentary life.

This appears to me a theory only fit for Bedlam. "C.C.M." assures us that it has some respectable sponsors. It may be so, but I believe it will be among the believers of Occultism or Oriental Theosophy. I have no doubt that the disciples of that school can produce long mares of sickly and incoherent dreams, having no foundation in nature or reality, which may tend to the defence of such a theory. But I would ask "C.C.M.," leaving aside altogether the argument from Oriental authority, to produce a chain of reasoning which can recommend itself to the highest intelligence of European or Western science and philosophy in defence of the portentous theory of the author of "Mary Jane." Extremes meet ; long vigils, severe fastings, absence from all mundane affairs and a monotonous concentration of the powers of thought on the mysteries of spirit, generate in the Oriental mystic a state of mind hardly differing from lunacy.

The unhappy devotee mistakes phrases for facts, grotesque delusions for realities, so that the outcome of all is a Spiritualism hardly to be distinguished from the lowest Materialism or the rankest Atheism.—Yours truly,

G. D. HAUGHTON.

**MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.**—CARDIFF : December 31st and January 1st. LONDON : St. Andrew's Hall, Newman-street, Oxford-street, W., January 7th.—For terms and dates, direct Mr. Morse, at 53, Sigdon-road, Dalston, London, E.



## THE FAIRY-LAND OF MATHEMATICS.

## No. IV. The Reign of Law.

By the Authoress of "The Home Side of a Scientific Mind."

EXTRACTS FROM BABBAGE'S "IX. BRIDGEWATER TREATISE."

"Miracles are not deviations from the laws assigned by the Almighty for the government of matter and of mind; but . . . the exact fulfilment of much more extensive laws than those we suppose to exist. In fact, if we were endowed with acuter senses and higher reasoning faculties, they are the very points we should seek to observe, as the test of any hypothesis we had been led to frame concerning the nature of those laws. Even with our present imperfect faculties, we frequently arrive at the highest confirmation of our views of the laws of nature, by tracing their actions under *singular* circumstances."

"The mode by which I propose to arrive at these conclusions is, by appealing to the judgment which each individual will himself form, when examining that piece of mere human mechanism," the series engine.

Mr. Babbage then describes how he could set the engine so as to register the series of square numbers, for, say, a million terms; to make at the 1,000,001st term an apparent exception, giving the cube instead of the square; and then to go on registering squares for a further indefinite period. The engine "may be set so as to obey by any given law; and, at any periods however remote, to make one or more *seeming* exceptions to that law." The visitor, watching the machine, seeing that the person in charge did not interfere with its action when once it was set, and observing a certain sequence to continue unbroken for a hundred, or a thousand, or a million terms, imagines of course that he knows the law to which the machine has been "set," and when the "exceptional" case occurs of its own accord he is mightily puzzled.

"It is, however, to be observed, that the *apparent* law which the spectator arrived at by an almost unlimited induction, is not the full expression of the law by which the machine acts; and that the excepted case is as absolutely and irresistibly the necessary consequence of its primitive adjustment, as is any individual calculation amongst the countless multitude."

"Now, as all laws which appear to us regular and uniform in their course, and to be subject to no exception, can be calculated by the engine; and as each of these laws may also be calculated by the same machine, subject to any assigned interruption, at distinct and definite periods; each simple law may be interrupted at any point by a portion of any one of all the other simple laws; it follows that *the class of laws subject to interruption is far more extensive than that of laws which are uninterrupted*. It is, in fact, infinitely more numerous. Therefore, the probability of any law with which we have become acquainted by observation being part of a much more extensive law, and having, to use mathematical language, singular points or discontinuous functions contained within it, is very large."

"It is a condition of our race that we must ever wade through error in our advance towards truth; and it may even be said that in many cases we exhaust almost every variety of error before we attain the desired goal. But truths once reached by such a course, are always most highly valued; and when, in addition to this, they have been exposed to every variety of attack which splendid talents quickened into energy by the keen perception of personal interests can suggest;—when they have revived undying from unmerited neglect; when the anathema of spiritual, and the arm of secular, power have been found as impotent in suppressing as their arguments were in refuting them, then they are indeed irresistible. Thus tried and thus triumphant in the fiercest warfare of intellectual strife, even the temporary interests and furious passions which urged on the contest have contributed in no small measure to establish their value, and thus to render these truths the permanent heritage of our race."

MORE FORGET-ME-NOTS FROM GOD'S GARDEN. By F. J. Theobald.—Our readers will have pleasant memories of Miss Theobald's "Bob and I," a sweet story of simple incidents in child-life, charmingly interwoven with religious and Spiritualistic thought. "More Forget-me-Nots" carries the narrative into riper years, and is, if possible, even more fascinating than its predecessor. It presents Spiritualism in its highest form as appreciated and practised in the home circles of a religious family; and sets forth, in telling words, some of the most important points of doctrine, in regard to which most Spiritualists differ from their more orthodox neighbours. The book is published by the Psychological Press Association.

## PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

A leading article having appeared in the columns of the *Yorkshire Post*, on the work of the Society for Psychical Research, the following reply was published in the same journal, from the pen of Professor Barrett:—

To the Editor of the *Yorkshire Post*.

SIR,—Through the kindness of a friend, your able and extremely fair leading article of Friday last on the Society for Psychical Research has just reached me.

"May I be permitted to correct a slight error into which you have fallen, owing, doubtless, to the very scanty and inaccurate report of the last meeting of our members which appeared in the London newspapers?"

"After very kindly references to the work of the committee on thought-reading, of which I am the honorary secretary, you remark:—'Legitimate as is the inquiry which the society has undertaken, we suspect that the inquirers have been too hasty in assuring themselves of results which, if they are realities, are far outside the order of universal experience.'

"I have requested the secretary of the society to send you all that we have published, together with the second report of the committee on thought-reading as soon as it appears. From these papers—the authorised Proceedings of our society—I think you will find that, if we have erred, we have erred on the side of excessive caution. On p. 33 we expressly state that 'we cannot pretend that this inquiry is as yet more than in its infancy, and we would deprecate the premature formation of theories on the subject. The phenomena here described are so unlike any which have been brought within the sphere of recognised science as to subject the mind to two opposite dangers,' and so on.

"I may, however, add that Mr. F. W. H. Myers, Mr. Edmund Gurney, and myself have been engaged for many years prior to the formation of the Society for Psychical Research in the investigation of the evidence that exists on behalf of thought-reading, or, as we now propose to call it, ideoscopy. Our later investigations—first, with a family at Buxton, with whom we have made over 1,000 experiments, under the most stringent conditions, and now with a gentleman at Brighton, whose ideoscopic powers are the most remarkable we have yet met with—have shewn that very much which passes as thought-reading is simply muscle-reading; but that, nevertheless (and in spite of general experience to the contrary), it is in the highest degree probable that ideas can be transferred from mind to mind without the intervention of the recognised organs of sensation. We are very anxious to widen the area of experiment, and thus strengthen our position, and we gladly welcome any criticism, whether friendly or hostile, which will enable us to make our conclusions more worthy of general acceptance. I need hardly point out that any conclusions drawn from public performances are utterly valueless, and that private experiments should be conducted with care and if possible in the presence of a medical man, who should testify to the conditions under which they are made.—I am, Sir, yours truly,

W. F. BARRETT.

18, Belgrave-square, Monkstown, Dublin.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E.S.W.—Your wishes will, we doubt not, be fully met early in the coming year.

J.R.—Do not be impatient. Matter of the kind you would like to see, will come in abundance in its proper turn.

O.T.—You can best help us by getting your friends to subscribe to "LIGHT." The paper should not, as a rule, be lent to those who can afford to buy it.

*Punch* makes an attempt this week to create some amusement at the expense of "LIGHT" and Spiritualism; but fails lamentably. The writer would have his readers believe that Spiritualists dare not bet so much as five shillings on their "facts"; whereas, in truth, many have staked as many hundreds of pounds on their power to prove them. Surely *Punch* has been napping, while the world has been moving.

COMMON WANTS.—The Ross Publishing Company, 4, Wine Office-court, have just issued a very useful little book entitled, "A Dictionary of Common Wants." Most of the articles in daily use, "from a needle to an anchor," as the publishers say with literal truth, are arranged alphabetically for easy reference, accompanied by the requisite information as to where, and at what cost, they can be purchased. The idea is a good one, and its conception and execution are alike creditable to the taste and ingenuity of the editor, Mr. W. Eglinton.