

Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

The *Journal of Science* shews a regrettable tendency to fasten on Spiritualists generally an aggressive disposition against biological science, chiefly in consequence of opinions expressed by Mr. Newton Crosland and Dr. Anna Kingsford. I ventured before (see No. 64) to protest against a whole body of persons, who have little or nothing in common beyond this one belief in man's survival after death, and the possibility of communicating between the world of matter and the world of Spirit, being implicated in the private opinions of any one of its members. Spiritualists have an unquestionable tendency to espouse what a scoffing world calls "crazes." There is in them a certain fondness for the new and illicit, as against the orthodox and established order of things: and there is too what an American critic called "a certain ungirtness of thought," a jumping to conclusions, a gathering in of surface impressions and explanations, which leads to bewildering results.

I am fully possessed with a belief in that which gives Spiritualism its name and place in modern thought. I am a Spiritualist *ex animo*. Am I therefore committed to all the views and opinions of my co-believers? Then am I a vegetarian, unless indeed the link between the animal and vegetable world made clear by science causes me to extend to the tender cabbage the sympathy that I feel for the sportive lamb, and refuse to kill either. I drink no wine, nor any strong drink, nor stimulating tea nor coffee, but cheer myself with the "largely diluted sewage" supplied to me by the London water-works. I eschew narcotics in all their seductive forms. I probably wear some strange form of raiment, being obviously "hygienic" in my proclivities; and, moreover being, as an anti-vivisectionist, averse to the slaughter of animals on any pretence whatever. I am sound on the great vaccination virus question, and refuse to poison or be poisoned. I am strong on the rights of women, and expansive on the rights of man, the chief of them being his inalienable and sacred right to do what he pleases without taking the consequences. When I am sick I am magnetically healed, or perchance am homoeopathically pilled, but under no circumstances am I allopathically dosed, it being a principle of mine never to use drugs whose action can be traced in the system. My views on the marriage question I had rather not reveal: an unenlightened and stiff-necked generation is not prepared for them. I draw a veil over other specialities, and only beg that, in the name of logic, and for pity's sake, our friendly critic will not again involve us all in one common condemnation.

The very case which is used to this end supplies an illustration of what I contend for. Mr. Crosland's attack on Darwinism is criticised at length as appearing in "the accredited organ of the Spiritualists;" but not one word of allusion is made to that almost savage repudiation of such views printed in the following number by Mr. Podmore, in the course of which he expressly protests against the Quixotism of "championing distressed causes" displayed by so many Spiritualists; and even regrets that such a paper as Mr. Crosland's was ever published in a journal devoted to Spiritualism. Fairness—a

conspicuous quality in the criticisms usually published in the *Journal of Science*—requires that both bauc and antidote should be noticed.

The *Theosophist* for March contains part the second of the Theosophical declaration of faith, called Fragments of Occult Truth, which I will endeavour to place before my readers in a condensed summary, without interpolating any criticisms of my own. Dealing with the contention so often made in controversies—I *know* so and so to be the fact—the ground is cleared for discussion by an investigation of what constitutes real knowledge. There are two kinds of knowledge, the real and the illusory, the former dealing with underlying causes, the latter with illusory effects: with essential verities, and with superficial appearances. The Physicist deals with what he claims to be real facts which appeal to his senses: and it is precisely these which the Occultist condemns as "illusory effects, transitory secondary consequences of the real underlying fact." The knowledge that appeals to the senses cannot get beyond these superficial phenomena. It is unreal. Now arises the question, Is it possible to get below the surface at the real? Can observation be extended beyond the range of the material senses? So only can that knowledge which is concerned with eternal verities and primal causes be attained. The Physicist pooch-poochs any such notion. He hugs his illusion, and refuses to see the reality, doubly deceived and deceiving.

But can the eternal truth be got at? There can be no difficulty in the way of a Spiritualist, who believes that the Spirit of man lives on, thinks, and communicates thought, after bodily death, admitting it to be conceivable that such a spirit may separate itself temporarily from the body during life, and may thus get into relations with the world of spirit. There he, as the adept does, will acquire a knowledge which is real respecting the world of causes, and returning to this illusory world with a clear recollection, will, even in this life, have drunk at the fountain of true knowledge. Not so, however, when the imprisoned Spirit does not rise into direct relation with the world of spirit, but receives its information from a Spirit who descends to communicate with it. It is in the realm of illusion, and its impressions and messages are of necessity potentially illusory.

The Occultist therefore contends as a logical sequence from these considerations, that the adepts alone can possess real knowledge, and that Spiritualists are "mistaken when they think themselves in contact with the Spirits of departed friends, or with such benevolent beings of another sphere" as descend to earth for purposes of instruction. Thus contending, it is incumbent on him, however, to explain every incident of Spiritualism, and to shew how its various phenomena are explicable on other than Spiritualistic hypotheses. This can be done (it is alleged), and accordingly a recital is given of a case of automatic writing through the hand of a Russian lady, in which facts were truly given, mixed with theological beliefs held by the medium; but the communicating Spirit, believed to be dead, was alive in the body all the time. The case reads like one of established Spirit-identity, and might pass as such to a superficial observer. The inference is drawn that one such case vitiates the Spiritualist argument, and shews that any number of such cases do not establish the Spiritualist contention.

What, then, is the Occultist's explanation? It is this. The fifth principle, the animal or physical soul of the medium, was the active agent, as the soul of the clairvoyant is during the sleep of the body. She revived early memories, reproduced in the Astral Light, and mixed them up with fanciful bits of religious teaching, giving an account of her relative in Heaven, in company with the Virgin Mary, whereas she was still a dweller on this earth. This is, it is alleged, the case ninety-nine times out of a hundred: though the Spiritualist is too strongly pre-possessed to see and own it, If he be a medium he is "fascinated by

the creations of his faith, and borne away on an induced current into a phantasmagorial world peopled with his own imaginings." "Surely the Spiritualists who have, at least, shot leagues ahead in intelligence of the mere materialistic moles of their purblind generation," will prefer the real knowledge of Occultism to the illusory glimpses of mediumship.

That is the argument and that the conclusion. It will be readily seen that the important part is the early attempt to differentiate true from false knowledge. Much of the rest is mere assumption; and even that part, excellently and instructively put as it is, is very hard to reconcile with what I must still claim as facts within personal knowledge. We are promised more Fragments dealing with, among other things, "the few exceptional cases of genuine Spirit communications." I wait for these fragments before attempting to reconcile the exclusive possession of real knowledge on the part of the teachers of Occult Truth with such unaccountable illusions or delusions as those with which I dealt at more than sufficient length in No. 57 of this journal. In the meantime I cannot admit that any one mind has a view of absolute truth, or a monopoly of truth, or indeed any right to arrogate to its own methods of experiment and investigation a "right of way" leading to the eternal verities. And to tell me that because I am a Spiritualist I am therefore necessarily the victim of prepossessions which will lead me into error is a Carpenterian method which by no means impresses or will dispose of me.

I have recently received from Captain James a curious piece of corroborative testimony as to the power of the invisible intelligences who surround us to see material objects, and to demonstrate that power by reading, for instance, from a printed paper. Some of my readers may remember that I have printed a detailed account of the reading of a prescribed passage in a closed book, and the writing of it automatically through my hand, with only a verbal variation. Mr. Crookes has also recorded an instance of the writing through Planchette of a word from a newspaper on which he had placed his finger at hap-hazard, and without knowing what word he had so indicated. Captain James's case is very similar to this last, and not so elaborately complicated as that recorded by me: and its value rests in the corroboration which it gives to a remarkable fact, lifting it out of the region of probable coincidence; and also in the blow that it gives to the common and superficial theory of thought-reading which is always ready at hand to explain the inexplicable. Here thought-reading is inadmissible as a possible explanation, as in the other similar case, and still more decidedly in mine.

The case is this. It was arranged that Captain James should leave the room with a friend, and agree to certain questions to be put *mentally*. On their return a lady and gentleman placed their hands on Planchette, and were in every case kept in ignorance of the nature of the questions proposed. The answers throughout were singularly pertinent, even when they were not accurate. For instance, a not very profound question as to the day's dinner elicited the answer, *Sirloin*. Now, the joint was not sirloin, as a matter of fact, but the answer was pertinent. The special question to which I draw attention was, Can you read the word under the tip of my finger? Captain James had placed the tip of his forefinger, *but without looking*, on the first page of a catalogue of books, just brought from London, and which had not been opened. Planchette wrote the word **MEDIUM**. On looking at the spot covered by the forefinger it was found that it was a blank space, and the experiment seemed a failure. Captain James, however, was an experienced mesmerist, and he remembered that he had frequently heard Alexis Didier read a passage on a page of a book through more than twenty other pages of printed matter. He, therefore, marked the exact spot, and turned over two or three leaves. The result was that he found the word "medium" in capitals exactly under the marked spot.

This was Captain James's first introduction to Planchette, and the séance was held on July 4th, 1874. Various other experiments were tried: *e.g.*, no question was put, and Planchette was left to discourse at pleasure. The result was a sentence in French, which was *apropos* to nothing that had occurred during the sitting, and a verse in two lines, correct in metre, but incoherent in sense. Captain James tried his own hand at Planchette with the aid of a lady who had been most successful

in influencing it to move, but the little plank was obstinate and would not stir. He then tried, mindful of his mesmeric experiences, how far mind-reading could be adduced as an explanation of what was written. To this end he placed his forefinger on the lower part of the forehead of one of the sitters whose hands were laid on Planchette. Having framed the question, he, of course, had it in his mind. In all cases when he knew what would be appropriate as an answer, he succeeded in getting a suitable, though not always accurate, reply. It was, however, in the one case when he did not know, and when no person present knew or could know the answer, that he got the exact answer which fitted his query.

Another of the answers given is worth recording. The question put was—Would Miss X. succeed on the stage? Planchette at once wrote the Christian name of the lady spoken of, a very uncommon one derived from the Greek, and not at all such as would be likely to be guessed. It then wrote the word *Rosalind*, that being, no doubt, intended as an indication of the sort of character suited to her talents. Finally it wrote—Ask M. . . Now M. was the initial letter of the surname of a friend, who of all others would be the best judge of the lady's dramatic capabilities.

M.A. (Oxon.)

A "BETTER WAY" IN DIET.

It may interest your readers—followers of Pythagoras or otherwise—to hear the detail of a recent successful dietetic experiment. On Tuesday, the 4th inst., Dr. and Mrs. G. Wyld, of 12, Great Cumberland-place, entertained at dinner a party of eighteen vegetarians and Theosophists. The table was beautifully decorated with primroses, daffodils, and other wild flowers. The only beverages were Salutaris water (distilled water impregnated with carbonic acid gas), and sweetened lemon-juice (a slight deviation from the ideal of Shelley, who permitted distilled water *only*). The menu is subjoined:—

Artichoke.	Soups.	Tomato.
	Rissoles.	
	Curried Chestnuts.	
	Salad—Mayonnaise.	
	Spinach and Eggs.	
	Artichokes with Sauce.	
	New Potatoes.	
	Haricot Beans.	
	Savoury Omelettes.	
	Macaroni and Cheese.	
	Prince Albert Pudding with Cherry Sauce.	
	Apricots and Whipped Cream.	
Sponge Cakes.	French Plums Stewed.	
	Oranges, Sago, and Cream.	

If it be not ungracious to criticise the bounty of our genial host and hostess, I would venture to suggest that the banquet sinned in the very delicacy and variety of the dishes. A vegetarian dinner should satisfy, but not tempt, the appetite; and if, as one scoffer said, the unsavoury is the only wholesome, our meal, I fear, fell far short of the highest ideal. It was a noble poem (the memory of those curried chestnuts is still green), but the cantos were too many for the austere simplicity of perfect art. A vegetarian dinner should aim at being, not an epic, but a sonnet, or even—if served at the fashionable hour—an epigram.

But, at all events, the genial doctor's hospitality was conceived in a higher strain than the laboured prose of the Mansion House banquet, or the kreophagic dinner of ordinary society. The enjoyment—even sensuous enjoyment—and conviviality were assuredly not less than at a dinner of carnivores; and, the appetite satisfied, we all, rejecting the customs of a barbarous age, left the dining-room together, to partake of more intellectual pleasures. Surely all those present, who were not yet vegetarians, seeing "the better way," must have longed to become so.

May the precedent thus happily set be widely followed.

London, April 6th, 1882.

QUORUM PARS.

DR. J. M. PEEBLES is furnishing for publication in the *Great West* newspaper a series of chapters under the heading, "Peebles' Pilgrimages, or Travels in All Lands." Each issue of that paper for the year 1882 will present one chapter of these very interesting and instructive experiences.

Wise sayings often fall to the ground, but a kind word is never thrown away.

ON "THE PHILOSOPHY OF IMMORTALITY,"
THEOSOPHY, BÖHME,
INDIAN PHILOSOPHY, MATERIALISATION,
CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY.

It is seldom that a writer on philosophy, ora poet (unless, indeed, he happen to be "the fashion") gets so careful, and conscientious, and intelligent a review of his work, however sincere and careful that work may be, as your reviewer, "C. C. M.," has accorded to my "Philosophy of Immortality," and I am glad publicly to thank him. There are only one or two points in his kind notice on which I should like to offer, with your permission, a few observations. Your reviewer has represented my view on three salient topics—discussed with all the impartiality and intelligence one mind is capable of in the interpretation of another, when questions of this rather abstruse nature are under consideration. These topics are (1) the nature of the Ego or person; (2) that of perception; (3) that of memory. On the *moral* argument, as I have stated it, in favour of our personal immortality, he has not touched; but of the metaphysical arguments those converging on these three points are the most important. (1) The Ego, or person, is immortal, because it is substance. (2) External nature, including the body, consists of persons, and the thoughts of persons; the dissolution of the body, therefore, is a phenomenon, or modification of the perceptions and thoughts of persons, not a destruction of thinkers or perceivers. (3) Memory involves the persistence of the person or thing remembered, with the penetration of rememberer and remembered to a transcendental region of being, where past, present, and future, which are modes of our present imperfect conceiving faculty, become one in a higher and fuller idea; prerogative, however, this *in its completeness*, of a richer and more perfect personal life, which is the basis and fountain-spring of our actual truncated halting life—the latter as necessary to the consummation and actuality of the former, as the former in its stability and reality to such truth and sterling value as there may be in the illusoriness of the latter.

"C. C. M." is in error if he thinks I have not studied Böhme, whom I regard as one of the greatest of seers. But there are some points with respect to which I do not feel myself in harmony with him. It is from Böhme, however, that modern thought has derived its most fertile principle, that "in Yes and No consist all things, be they divine, terrestrial, or diabolic," that "in self-distinction is the essential character of spirit, and consequently of God, so far as God is to be conceived as spirit." "God is living spirit only if, and so far as, he comprehends within himself difference from himself, and through this other, this difference within himself is manifest, is an object, is a cognising consciousness." The No is a counterstroke of the Yes. Without distinction of persons no consciousness, no thought, no love. That expresses philosophically the doctrine of the Trinity. And that thought was worked out with marvellous power of dialectic by Hegel; though I cannot accept his "Logic" as substantial and satisfactory.

But when Böhme derives personal spirit from something supposed to be deeper and beyond, viz., from "Being," or what he calls the "Ungrund," and sometimes the "Nothing," I venture to think him utterly mistaken. That was the conception of Plotinus, and other Neoplatonists; as it is, I believe, the fundamental conception of Hindoo philosophy.

But *Being* is an abstract idea of some personal thinker or thinkers, since it can only be differenced from not-being, therefore can only be at all in a self-identifying (and so self-differencing) unity of consciousness. The same is true of "the Astral Light," and of the "Anima Mundi," if by that is meant "Astral Light," or "ether;" but the true "Anima Mundi" is different. If *Being* were before personal Spirit, there would be no power sufficient to bring personal Spirit into existence. This is to put Time into the Divine Nature, and anthropomorphise it impossibly, leaving indeed, neither God nor man, for God is the "Unmoved Mover," the *Supreme Personal Being*.

The Hindoo philosophy also I have studied; it appears infinitely varied in its developments, as passing through the ages from so remote a source, and through so many diverse minds of diverse races, we might expect it to be. It is very probable, however, that I have not near so minute and exact a knowledge of its details as my reviewer. The fact is that if once I attain (after long and anxious reflection) to a scheme of thought at all satisfying, however incomplete I may feel it to be, I rest in it, and that which is fundamentally alien makes little impression, running off my memory, to use a vulgarism, like water off a duck's back. Thus the "subtle psychological distinctions" of which

"C. C. M." speaks, do not commend themselves to me at all, as tending to division rather than unity, and I think the chief end of philosophy should be to unify. Admiring the subtlety and profundity of Indian speculation, it has always seemed to me to belong to a rather early period of the organised and progressive development of human thought, which is Hegel's view also, though it is true that the research of scholars has brought much more to light concerning it than was known to Hegel. And that which is distinctive in modern Theosophy, judging by Madame Blavatsky's "Isis Unveiled," which I have carefully read, as well as some other similar books emanating from the same school, appears to be derived chiefly from these Indian sources, or from writers like Plutarch, who, immortally magnificent as biographer and historian, is surely crude and unreliable as philosopher.

Psychological distinctions are valuable, whether in Scotch, Cabalistic, German, or Indian philosophy; but they become mischievous if understood too ontologically, absolutely. Thus the Pauline distinction of *body*, *soul*, and *spirit* is of much value logically, as representing our present relative manner of apprehending; but when Theosophists insist on this, or other threefold (or again, other myriad-fold) differences in man as constituting verily separable sections (as it were onion skins) in him, so that his identity may be split up between them, and one of them (or more) may be finally annihilated, then I demur, because this contradicts the very fundamentals of my belief.

Hence neither can I accept altogether the teaching of Mrs. Kingsford, though admirable and instructive in many respects, which seems to be on these and other points in accordance with Hindoo philosophy. Man doubtless is the *microcosm*, and therefore he belongs to diverse spheres; "half-worm, half-angel;" but these spheres are one, identical in difference, essential to the One, and the One to them. I am very glad, however, that Indian philosophy, and the writings called "occult," or "cabalistic," should be more studied, for they will give a wholesome fillip to the crass, superficial, jaunty self-complacency of the British Philistine.

Body, soul, and spirit, and other myriad-fold distinctions, whether made by scholastics, Hebrews, Scotch, or Indians, or Kant and the Germans, can be but *aspects* of our personal identity, *more or less ruling principles*, that is, pronounced, and to the fore at different times, and in different natures; but all derived from the Supreme Spirit, either directly, or indirectly by negation, defect; from that universal Ego, in whom, and by whom, all other Egos eternally are—therefore always were, and shall be—however their phenomenal experience in time may vary. Hence I cannot for a moment listen to teachers who teach that the spirit does not "overshadow" a person till the age of seven, often does not "overshadow" him at all, and frequently ceases to "overshadow" him before he dies; so that he "goes out" soon after that; which is, if I mistake not, the doctrine of Madame Blavatsky and other Theosophists; of course to me the existence not so "overshadowed" would be absolutely a non-existence, and would not have even a "conditional immortality," simply because it would never be at all, even for a moment. Identity is from the spirit, and without identity, as I have argued in any book, no existence is possible. But what *content* is possible for this identity except the manifold contents of the spirit's successive phenomenal lives, so far as these are real, and not illusory, positive, and not negative? And yet again the *minus* element is essential to the *plus*, the negative to the positive, as giving character, distinction, without which there can be no concrete, living spirit at all. I accept, indeed, your reviewer's "nett result," "essential extract," of the frivolous, gossipy existences as alone permanent; but still they are "moments" in it, verily contained there as integral factors of the result; indeed they are not any otherwise than so; in so far as they are not thus, they are merely unreal and illusory. Not the vaguest sensation, or the most rudimentary amœba *but in its own true self* is immortal: it is not to be dropped off or out into nothing, but transmuted and transformed; for all must be rooted in, and in process of development by, conscious spirit; i.e., the transcendental unity of self-identifying consciousness, involving difference and multiplicity.

With regard to the *Simulacra* theory, I have perhaps not fully fathomed it, as "C.C.M." intimates, yet have read attentively what Eliphas Levi, and other occultist writers have written about it: at present it does appear to me a mere curiosity of speculation, without adequate basis in fact or philosophy. As to the "Anima Mundi" I cannot harmonise what I have read in occultist writers, Cudworth and others, about it with true

philosophy; but I believe in the "Anima Mundi" as the living, conscious spirit of the Earth, in whom we subordinate spirits are, even as the cell-souls are in us; then the Planets appear to be in the Sun Spirit; and so on till you arrive at the Supreme. All is in all, and one conscious sphere within another: there is a hierarchy. On this I have written more fully elsewhere. Still I am conscious that I am only a poet with metaphysical bias, not a systematiser in metaphysical philosophy. I have indeed best expressed my philosophy in "De Profundis" and other poems of the "Little Child's Monument," and "the House of Ravensburg."

On the whole, then, I incline to the theory of spiritist phenomena held by "M. A. Oxon," Mr. W. H. Harrison, and the majority of Spiritualists. Whether the Spirits chiefly concerned are good or evil, or neither, is a difficult question, and I have ventured to warn Spiritists not to take the phenomena for a new religion, only as a stepping-stone to one; for religion, "the Kingdom of God," must be within, not in external appearances, however curious, miraculous, and abnormal, nor even in revelations from the Spirit-world, *except so far as these may be verified by the inward light*, which is the Spirit of God in each, and all. "Other foundation can no man," angel, or devil, "lay than that is laid," and revealed by Jesus Christ, which is the essential Divine Humanity of self-suppressing Love—that "God may be All in All," the one All being for ever retained in the other All.

The only point touched upon in your notice in which perhaps my thought is not quite adequately represented, is *materialisation* phenomena. *What is said of my theory is so far true*, but the more essential part of it seems omitted, which is briefly this—the Spirits acting upon us, and in concert with us, so as to produce the material phenomenon, which we name our body, in our consciousness, by virtue of the constitution of our perceiving faculty, may themselves regard their face and aspect of the phenomenon as their own body; to us the phenomenon is *our* body, because *we* (as supraconscious, and as conscious in earth-life now) are concerned in giving it this particular appearance and function, according to our present terrene manner of perceiving; but without the assistance, conscious and unconscious, of other intelligences, we could neither perceive nor think; and so the "material," or external result of their *energising with us* may to us be *our* body (and the world through that), but to them at the same moment *their* body and their world, represented to them according to their constitution. Now, could we place ourselves at their point of view, we should behold *their* aspect of the phenomenal body, and "the body" to us would no longer be "terrestrial," but (possibly) "ethereal." Reverse the conditions, and assume that some of these intelligences are in close connection with us, of which fact (though usually they may be ignorant of it), under certain circumstances they may become aware; then (assisted *probably* by memory of their own terrestrial life) they may be able to borrow our terrene manner of apprehending, which is what "borrowing nervous or vital force from the medium, and circle" really amounts to, and so the bodily phenomenon alters from what it was to them, to what it is to us. Their body thus changes (in accordance with its change of spheres) to a solid body with various organs and members, which is the part of my theory "C. C. M." has so well expounded (and pertinently illustrated from Proclus), becoming palpable to our similar bodily senses. So also, I have suggested, may be explained the phenomena of obsession, &c. &c. In clairvoyance (as in dreams), on the contrary, the seer appears to take on other-world conditions of knowledge and perception. If the communicating intelligences were *simulacra*, as Theosophists contend, they would surely have no spontaneity, could not respond (however inaptly and lamely) to questions put; they would want that unity of apperception, which they assuredly shew; if they were mere memories, they would require to be animated by some living and thinking intelligence. Besides, according to me, if they were memories, this would imply the presence of the person remembered, besides the presence of the rememberer. Images in an other *out of consciousness*, as an idealist, I repudiate; but if they be memories in the "world-consciousness," or any other, they at least imply the living energy of that self-identifying unity, or some other; but this theory does not admit any such thing. That the sub-conscious souls in us should hang about out of us undominated by any other central unit of self-identifying consciousness, but simulating us, as suggested by "C. C. M.," to me appears a very unthinkable conception; is it not more probable that they share our destiny, since they must be integrally one with us?

I would add that of course any sincere student must rejoice to find the same grand fundamental truths presented in the Indian, as are presented in other true and deep philosophies. The only question that arises is concerning the detailed development of these. But the universal Spirit of Humanity, the Word, the Christ, enlightens and reveals Himself to all, whether in the East or West; even our sad temporary aberrations called agnostic and materialist, born of *too exclusive* a devotion to physical science (so valuable in its place!) have their own position and function in the grand organism of thought.

One word more. It is *not impossible*, as I have said in my book, that the intelligences manifesting at séances may, as some Theosophists suppose, be of the nature of goblins, elves, Pucks, "elementals," not human—though I do not think it probable, unless fairies *be*, as some contend, lapsed human souls. One thing I hold to be impossible, thank God! that they should be human persons who have lost their Trinity, to use the peculiar language of Theosophy, because the survival of any human qualities whatever, whether memory, perception, or understanding, were out of the question even for an instant without the substantial Spirit, not "overshadowing," but underlying and constituting them, if only as function of unity in difference. It is in and by them, as they are in and by it. But if the former alternative, that these intelligences are not human, be a possible one, then it is important to note that though there may be indirect, there is no *direct*, proof of our immortality, afforded by the phenomena of Spiritism.

The proof would come to this, that since intelligences may evidently exist and act without our normal brains and bodies, the presumption of sense that our present solid brains and bodies are necessary to our survival is not justified. Still, is it well for Spiritists to trust solely to what *may* thus prove a broken reed?

I only deprecate their throwing over all appeal to moral, spiritual, and philosophical proofs, and all appeal to revealed religion—to Christianity,—leaning *exclusively* on these external phenomena, and the inferences deducible from them, which appear so very different to different minds, even among those who believe the phenomena genuine and abnormal. All this *may* be the medium himself infinitely subdivided, some theosophical Spiritists will tell them—and if so, where are we? In my book I have argued against this and similar theories, as well as against the scientific one of "unconscious cerebration;" but still there is division in the camp, even concerning that very elementary article of the creed, which Spiritism was supposed to prove, if it proved nothing further. Indeed, Theosophists believe in the immortality of a very select few, though "simulacra" of the majority may have leave to play about, and confuse us for a little while after death. One would be tempted to call this system *Neo-Calvinism*, were we not assured that Hindoos, and all sorts of "occult," though distinguished people have believed in it: perhaps, therefore, it might be better to term it *Primitive Calvinism*—there is *Primitive Methodism*. *Who* is to be found worthy of so distinguished an honour as immortality, while the vast majority of men and women, and all young children, are only fit to die in the nearest ditch, and be snuffed out for ever? At what point of "adeptship" does "the Spirit" come in, or rather "over," and confer so tremendous a gift? Nay, by fine gradations the saint shades off into the sinner, and the one is very apt to become the other. There is no impassable gulf between the worm, the archangel, and the devil. Goethe told Eckermann that men of culture only, and not Philistines, were immortal; but then he was probably chaffing his Boswell, whereas Theosophists, and the "conditional immortality" Christians, appear to be in earnest.

Should not these phenomena, however, be used rather as valuable allies, as crutches of a halting hope, as glasses for a feeble faith, than as superseding faith and reason altogether?

I have, since commencing my remarks, read another very kind notice of my book by "M. A. (Oxon.)" RODEN NOEL.

Heaven and Hell are not localities, but states, which we carry within us; and as for the eternity of suffering, only unthinking theologians believe in such a paradoxical theory, forgetting what is said in Holy Writ, that "the wrath of God does not last for ever." The idea of infinite punishment is not consistent with the mercy, the wisdom, or the prescience of God. We, the children of a loving Father, can be but destined to inherit His eternal love. A Greek word in the Bible being translated in the sense of *everlasting*, instead of its true meaning *long lasting*, has been the cause of that serious misapprehension.—DAMIANI.

THE AFTER LIFE.

Abridged from the "Methodist Recorder."

Bishop Janes, when absent from his family, on his protracted episcopal tours, was in the habit of writing familiarly to each member of his family. One after another by turn received his affectionate and beautiful missives. After the death of his daughter Tillie, a beautiful Christian young lady, he seemed to feel deeply her absence from the list of his correspondents when he addressed himself to the pleasant task of writing to the members of the family circle. What can be more suggestive of the immortality of love than the following letter written by the Bishop after her death? We give this letter as it is found in Dr. Ridgaway's "Life of Bishop Janes":—

"When it was your turn for a letter from father before, for reasons I need not name, I did not address you. But as your turn has come again, I feel unwilling to pass you by. . . . You may know from the tear on the cheek that we are unhappy, or from the smile on our lips that we are rejoicing, but the cause and character of our experience probably you may not discern. I do not think you know how lonely and sad we felt after you left us. While we had your precious body with us our loss was but partial. But when in the most delicate, honoured, and religious manner possible we had laid that out of our sight and realised that its eyes would no longer beam on us, its lips no more address us, or face no more smile on us till the Resurrection morning, we felt very desolate. There was a great vacancy in our sweet home, an irrepressible desire for the loved presence, an anxious looking for her appearance, and then the painful recollection, she will never come. O! it was a wonderful experience! With me it still remains—I think will ever continue till you hail me partaker of your glory. Even if I knew you would read this statement I should not fear it would pain you. I believe all painful experience with you is past. But if you were susceptible of sorrowful emotions, I do not think this knowledge would make you unhappy. In the light that now shines upon you, you understand the reason for this providence, you see how it works for our good. God's ways are all plain and pleasing to you. 'Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth,' is the song of your heart. . . . You know how we have delighted to think of you as enjoying the beatitudes of the heavenly estate. I have allowed myself to imagine how things occurred with you and how they seemed to you as you entered the realm of glory. I have thought it not improbable that the Spirit of Him who enabled you by faith to 'Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world' had some agency in bringing you to the open vision of the glorious Saviour. I am certain that vision was not withheld from you. To see Christ as He is, O! who could turn away from that entertaining sight even to look after loved and loving friends upon earth? Still, I believe such are the powers of the glorified spirits that, somehow or other, while they enjoy heaven they are familiar with earth. I have never ceased to love Tillie—I do not believe she will ever cease to love me. Because I love you I rejoice in your happiness.

"Tillie, I know where you are; you are not lost. I know what you are. This knowledge of your welfare, how it comforts me! I am willing you should be there. I would not call you away. I had rather pass through what remains to me of life without the cheer of your presence than interrupt your enjoyment of your Saviour, or divert you from His praise. I suppose you have seen angels and seraphs—and the spirits of the just made perfect. How glad auntie was to welcome you! Have you not seen grandpapa and grandmamma? You did not know them in this world. I judge they have found you, and rejoiced with you ere this. Have you ever thought, 'I wish father and mother and brother and sisters knew how happy I am'? Well, we do know all we can comprehend—thank God for the Holy Bible! Let me assure you we are coming to see you; we shall let our Heavenly Father set the time, but we are all coming. The time may seem long to us, but it will not seem long to you. We are all coming—we are even going to bring little Guy with us."

MRS. HARDINGE BRITTEN has promised to lecture as follows:—Sundays of April, Manchester.—Apply; The Limes Humphrey-street, Cheetham Hill, Manchester.—[*Advt.*]

Mr. J. C. Wright, of Liverpool, the well known trance lecturer, will deliver two addresses at Goswell Hall, on Sunday, April 23rd, morning and evening. Those who know him say he is the best trance speaker we have. He is immensely popular in Liverpool where he lectures to large audiences every Sunday.

SPIRITUALISM IN RUSSIA.

By Prince Adeka.

(From the "Revue Spirituelle.")

Since my last communication upon the state and position of Spiritualism in Russia, it has evidently made favourable progress in the most influential quarters. The censorship has given its sanction to the publication of a weekly paper, the editor of which is Captain Perbikof, of the Imperial navy, who makes no secret of his being a Spiritualist. I may say that his wife is an excellent medium for physical manifestations. They belong to the school of Spiritualism which we here call the American, which does not concern itself about the doctrine of Re-Incarnation. The *Rebus*, for such is the title of the paper, and is for domestic interest and entertainment, has been out now for six months. Not wishing to jeopardise it, the editor hitherto has dealt with Spiritualism only in an incidental way, having regard to the nominal interest of the paper, which is understood to be in the discussion of rebuses, charades, &c. It announces that the profits, if any, are to go to the funds of a benevolent institution founded last year by Madame Perbikof. This may have smoothed away some of the difficulties encountered by Captain Perbikof in obtaining the sanction to publish. It may also account for the fact that one-half of the subscribers to the paper belong to the clerical ranks. Whatever the reason, the fact is, under all circumstances, significant.

Here is another item of significance. The *Novoe Vremya* (The New Time), a newspaper of large circulation, is admitting a series of articles based upon R. Dale Owen's "Debateable Land between this World and the Next." These articles are, under the pseudonym of Poliansky, written by Professor Wagner, who is an earnest Spiritualist and close friend of the Academician Boutlerof, one of our most eminent savants. M. Wagner's articles are headed "Between Two Worlds." The censorship has used its scissors more freely than we like, but it is a welcome surprise to Spiritualists that it permits so much to appear in the Russian language. The articles read remarkably well, and are making quite a sensation among our rising young men. It has been observed that hitherto the articles have not been criticised in a hostile sense. The introduction of such a book as R. Dale Owen's "Debateable Land," if it does not promise the beginning of a new era in Russian literature and journalism, shews, at all events, that the editor of one of our leading papers recognises some good reason for no longer holding Spiritualism in disregard.

But I have yet another welcome piece of news for you; the interdict against translations of Allan Kardec's books into Russian has been removed so far as to allow the publication of his "What is Spiritualism?" The MS. of the translation has passed the censorship and is now passing through the printer's office. This gives great cause for congratulation, for nothing has hitherto been published in the Russian language having the least reference to the rational foundation of Spiritualism. The censorship cut out the second part—let us hope only for a time—and insisted that Kardec's name should not appear, for that, it seems, would be too much for our "Holy Synod" and clergy to bear! We know not how much to thank the friend who has undertaken the publication. He had much to do in overcoming obstacles raised by the censors, laical as well as clerical. The same friend is now translating another Spiritualist book; it will task his utmost patience, for without spoiling he will have to dress and trim his work to meet the exigencies of the censors, who tremble and start at the approach of anything which they fancy may work against Russian Orthodoxy.

THEY ALONE THE TRUE.

Think the good, and not the clever;
Thoughts are seeds that grow for ever,
Bearing richest fruit in life.
Such alone can make the thinker
Strong to conquer in the strife.

Love the good, and not the clever;
Noble men! the world can never
Cease to praise the good they've done.
They alone the true who gather
Harvests which their deeds have won.

Do the good, and not the clever;
Fill thy life with true endeavour;
Strive to be the noblest man.
Not what others do; but rather
Do the best you can.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
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TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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

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

AN HISTORICAL GLANCE AT MAGNETISM IN FRANCE.

By Dr. Charpignon, of Orleans.

Translated from "*Le Journal du Magnetisme*," by DR. DIXON.

Were it possible for one generation to live as long as two, how surprised the survivors would be in finding theories and principles hailed with honour which in their earlier time had been regarded as false or visionary. This thought suggested itself in reflecting upon the history of animal magnetism. When Mesmer taught it towards the end of last century, he only reproduced, under a modified form, principles and facts which had been taught and produced in the previous century. Paracelsus, Van Helmont, Maxwell, and Wirdig, each held that all bodies and beings in the universe were interpenetrated by an elementary principle, a universal fluid, by which life was sustained, sympathies excited, &c. Students of this subject were called cabalists, magicians, and, by the Church, sorcerers and diabolists. The Rationalists of the eighteenth century regarded the doctrines, and the alleged facts of all such, Mesmer's magnetism included, as false and illusory, and proscribed them accordingly.

This proscription, in as far as it applied to facts not attributable to a demonstrable cause, was of force against the tendency to assign to spiritual causes phenomena of a physiological order. There was this tendency, for while Mesmer was busy with his magnetic battery, which, according to him, acted as a conductor of the universal fluid, others were engaged in inducing by the spirito-magical processes of Cagliostro and other *illuminati*, nervous effects, somnambulism, visions, and ecstasies.

The breaking out of the Revolution put a check upon pursuits in this direction. But as soon as revolutionary troubles subsided, similar phenomena again attracted attention, for the reason that they are immanent in nature and in human beings. But they appeared now under a less repelling modification. First, Puiségur, by the discovery of magnetic lucid somnambulism, dispensed with the spiritual explanation of phenomena of a purely physiological order. Then Deleuze found that man had within himself the spring of an imponderable fluid which he could project at will; and this disposed of the universal fluid theory, and rendered all Mesmer's apparatus unnecessary. Theory and processes being thus simplified, magnetism assumed a more scientific character.

But notwithstanding the almost general acceptance by magnetisers of the new theory and processes between 1815 and 1850, there were still those who did not accept them, who did not believe in the fluid; some attributing the phenomena to imagination, others to spiritual intervention. The correspondence between Deleuze and Billot upon this intervention is curious and interesting. So also are the lucubrations of Baron Cuvillier, in the "*Archives du Magnetisme*," from 1820 to 1823, whose aim was to assimilate modern magnetic phenomena with those produced in the temples of ancient Egypt; attributing them all alike to imagination.

In 1826 Dr. Bertrand advanced a theory entirely physiological, anticipating in all particulars what at the present time is called hypnotism.

These several divergencies of opinion, even amongst adepts, as to the real underlying cause of magnetic effects did not

prevent them from still being produced, whatever the process employed.

It was at the time, 1826, when belief in the magnetic fluid and somnambulism was again general, that Du Potet and Foissac made those experiments which elicited the favourable report of a committee appointed by the Académie de Médecine. The committee's reporter was Dr. Hasson. At the meetings of the Académie this report aroused hostility; where the committee and Dr. Hasson had seen facts, the majority of the Académie saw nothing but trick and collusion; the turbulent scenes of Mesmer's time were repeated; as these were again, later on, when another committee was appointed to examine into certain facts presented by Dr. Berna. The report of this committee was to the effect that the Académie would only be wasting time to inquire further into the subject.

It happened to be at this period—1840-50—that I, with others, inquired into and produced the whole series of magnetic phenomena. I was at the time under the positivizing influence of studies for obtaining my medical degree. I discovered for myself that the magnetic fluid was a reality; and in various publications I wrote papers about it, and its analogies and relations with the physical agents—light, electricity, and electro-magnetism.

It happened also, about the same period, that the position of magnetism was assailed by an English surgeon, Mr. Braid. M. Lafontaine, a Frenchman, was in 1841 lecturing on animal magnetism and giving experiments in England, when Mr. Braid demonstrated that he could reproduce Lafontaine's phenomena by bringing his subjects into a certain abnormal condition. For this he caused them to gaze at a cork fixed upon their foreheads. Therefore, according to Braid, there was no need to assume the existence of a projected fluid; the phenomena were attributed by him to some disturbance of the functions of the brain, induced by this fixity of attention and gaze. This was to replace magnetism and be called hypnotism, *sleepism*, from *hypnos*—sleep.

This hypnotism was accepted in France by some hospital physicians and also by some magnetisers, and books were published about it.

The word Magnetism, with the theory of its fluid, now being further discredited, orthodox science would take no notice of any of its phenomena beyond that of induced nervous sleep. The Salpêtrière Hospital which, in 1821, had seen Georget experimenting in magnetism and somnambulism, became again, after sixty years, the theatre of experiments by Professor Charcot upon divers nervous states induced by the action of metals, of light, and of sound. This new experimenter cautiously avoided inducing the phenomena of somnambulism. He formulated no theory, but kept to experiments for inducing certain nervous effects. Charcot's experiments have been recently followed by those of Dr. Baréty, of Nice, which rest upon the theory of the projection, under the title of Neuric Radiating Force, of simply the magnetic fluid. Such experiments are common to the knowledge of magnetisers. Baréty makes a parade of scientific precision in describing how he touches this or that spot of a limb to produce muscular contractions and relaxations, or of the head to alter expressions of the face, &c. Magnetisers, however, know that there is no need of such touching at all. To become well informed in this science long practice is necessary in experimenting upon a variety of subjects. The lucidity of somnambulists and the sensitiveness of the "hypnotised" or "neurised," present scales of gradation, like the musical gamut.

The recognition of the magnetic fluid, under whatever name, is being quickened by experiments on public platforms, and we may expect soon to see old contentions revive. It may not be impossible, indeed, for magnetism, "hypnotism," and "neurism," to be put back again into scientific oblivion, only to appear, however, at a not remote day more vivacious and more imposing.

If, however, the investigations now proceeding bring our great Académie to endorse the reality of magnetism, no matter under what name, as causative of certain phenomena, a progress will be made which may suffice for one generation. Our successors will have to take up the work with the further investigation into the therapeutic action of this modifier of nervous function—that is, in Medical Magnetism. Afterwards will come up for investigation magnetic effects of the PSYCHOLOGICAL ORDER. Finally the task will present itself, worthy in truth of Académie study, that of—under the full light of magnetism—putting together all the materials for a complete biological Science of HUMANITY.

PROVIDENCES, IMPRESSIONS & PREMONITIONS.

Twenty years ago, in the first year of the Civil War in America, we found it convenient to take refuge, and do our remaining work, in England.

Looking for a sailing ship, as passports were demanded of all steamer passengers, Dr. Nichols wished to engage our passage on a large, fine ship, the "Daniel Webster," but was prevented from doing so, and we came on a little old leaky ship, since abandoned in mid-ocean, in thirty days of fair breezes and sunshine, with the Atlantic like a mill-pond, and without reefing a topsail until we were in the Thames. On going into London Dock we saw the "Daniel Webster" with three jury masts, all her own masts having been taken out of her by a cyclone while we were lying in harbour at New York.

We landed in London with fourteen pounds—and two *pens*, and before the latter were well at work, I passed through some rather severe privations. I was at one time in London, alone with our child, with only three farthings and without a loaf of bread. My husband was then in Ireland, but Providence did not fail us. On this special occasion a gentleman from New York calling on a London editor to whom I had sent some papers, was given the address of an American lady, a stranger in London, who might be glad to see her countryman. The American came to see us, and became our Providence for the time being. Afterwards, in a time of great need, my hand wrote automatically that I should soon have fifty pounds. So impossible did this seem that I forgot the writing. A short time afterwards a gentleman whom I had once seen called upon us. He said he had that day seen a man who was making a great deal of money by running the blockade and carrying gunpowder to, and bringing cotton from, the Southern States of America, a portion of which he wished to bestow upon any needy Americans. The gentleman told him our story, and he sent me the promised fifty pounds, which, with our earnings, carried us through the sickness and death of our daughter, in 1864.

After her decease, she appeared to me in a time of great trial, holding an American bank-note for fifty dollars in her hand. So great was the need that I had put together a few things to take to a pawnbroker, but finally decided to wait till the next morning before pawning them. The morning's post brought the promised fifty dollars from an American friend.

On one occasion when we were going to France, the day was fixed, but I was warned not to go, as great danger to life would be the result of our going on that day. We deferred our departure for a week. On the day we had first fixed there was a frightful storm and the beach was strewn with wrecks. On another occasion when we proposed to come from France by Dieppe, we were again warned not to come at the peril of our lives; we decided to come by Boulogne and left Paris on a fine sunny day. When we reached Boulogne there was a great storm. We stayed on the French side till the storm ceased, and the newspapers had a record of thirty wrecks.

At one time, when we were receiving invalids in our home, a lady called and wished to remain some weeks. I had scarcely seen her, when there appeared before me a scroll, written upon—I forget now whether in luminous or black characters, as I had both at that time—with some fearful charges against this woman. We were forbidden to allow her to remain under our roof. She went to some friends of ours, who were indignant at what they considered a foolish fancy of mine. Nevertheless, the lady was arrested soon after and tried for murder; she escaped by some legal informality, but was verily guilty.

Once an eloquent preacher called on me to get a clairvoyant examination. He had made a great *furor* by his sermons, and was a man of rare ability. I said to him, "I can't talk with you. There is poison between your soul and mine." He persisted in trying to engage me to speak with him. I as persistently refused, repeating, "There is poison between your soul and mine." He then took from his pocket a box of opium, and told me that his eloquence had that basis. He resolved to reform and for a time disused the drug, but he fell back and finally died an opium eater. After this, several persons addicted to the use of opium came to me, and I cured them, when they gave themselves up in good faith to be cured. Opium patients are difficult, but by no means impossible to cure. The impression given to a sensitive of the honesty or dishonesty of the patient who professes to wish to be cured, is a great help in diagnosis.

Impressions made upon a sensitive vary much in their clearness, whether made by persons or things. A sealed letter may convey through the touch the exact words written within, or only a sense of the subject. I have had the envelope of a letter convey a joyful impression when the letter itself was very sad. A postscript said that the trouble was all gone and everything was as happy as possible. But I will leave this portion of the mysteries of the life of a sensitive till another occasion.

The late Charles Dickens was a sensitive of a high order. He told me that he was never mistaken in his impression of a person. "I trusted you fully from the first moment I saw you," he said. My experience of his magnetic gift—the gift of healing—would make a long paper, which sometime and somewhere I may write. Unlike Mr. Dickens, I have twice been entirely deceived in persons,—not from impressions, but from the total want of any impression about them. Some years since, when we were settling in the house where we now live, a thoughtless young lady left a quantity of costly wraps in the hall. A sneaking thief entered, and meeting a servant, asked for Dr. Nichols, as if he were a patient. Dr. Nichols was out, but he was told that I would see him, and he was brought to my consulting room. He was a formidable-looking man, being over six feet in height, and very powerful. His manner was very gentle, and he said to me when we were alone, "Your husband has been very kind to me. He has got me a situation and I am to go by rail at once to —. I came to tell him that I lack four-and-sixpence of the passage money."

I replied that I would make it up, if I had so much change. I said, "Have you a family?"

"No, madam; when I put on my hat I cover all my troubles."

I had some difficulty in finding the required money. I went into another room, and finally made it up with coppers. The thief touched nothing in my study, and only touched me by his gentle gratitude for the four-and-sixpence. Finding no one in the hall on his way out, he made a clean sweep of the garments there. Ordinarily, my impressions are sufficiently ready, but in this case they were non-existent.

Another instance of a more important nature once occurred to me. I took a person for a position of trust, on the recommendation of a friend, who was absent, and had, unknown to me, found cause to withdraw the good character. I put all into the hands of this person, whom I had confidently engaged, with a trust that was perfect, and restful in the highest degree.

One day a medium came to see me and, being entranced, an Indian Spirit told me that I had a dangerous person with me, formerly in the service of my absent friend. I said "No" most emphatically. Some days later this Spirit came again and told me instances of peculation, and gave me full warning. I did not believe him; but the person suddenly left, and I found afterwards that all was true that I had been told by the Spirit. When I again saw my absent friend I learned more still, but I also learned that it was important to the interests of several persons, my friend included, that this felon should be retained in my service, to hinder more mischief being wrought before the evil was exposed. Hence my eyes were held and I could take no warning. I could not have kept the criminal if I had been impressed with the crimes.

In prevision I have noticed a peculiarity as to time. What is important seems near, when no time is fixed. Time has been more often fixed in my previsions than the contrary. We were once occupying a house taken for three years, when one day I was told that we should leave it in three weeks from the next Tuesday,—the word came on a Friday. I had a friend in the house who was a sensitive. I went to him and said, "How long shall we live in this house?" He held up his hand and counted his fingers—"Three weeks and"—placing his forefinger on the fourth half way from the hand—"a half." This came to pass exactly as foretold. We left three weeks from the next Tuesday, moving our goods to a house at that time unthought of.

Such have been a few of my many experiences.

32, Popstone-road, S.W.

MARY S. G. NICHOLS.

April 7th, 1882.

At the discussion meeting, at 38, Great Russell-street, on Monday evening next, at half past seven, a paper will be read, entitled "Notes on the Relation of the Christian Churches to Spiritualism."

MR. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—FALMOUTH: Town Hall, Sunday and Monday next, April 16th and 17th; LONDON: April 23rd and 30th; NOTTINGHAM: May 14th; KEIGHLEY: May 21st. For terms and dates, direct Mr. Morse, at 53, Sigdon-road, Dalston, London, E.—[Advt.]

MRS. BRITTEN IN REPLY TO STUART CUMBERLAND.

On Tuesday evening Mrs. Britten delivered a lecture in the Drill Hall, Ulverston, in reply to Mr. Cumberland. Mr. R. Casson presided, and was supported on the platform by the Rev. W. Troughton, Mr. W. Britten, and Mr. Taylor, of Millom. There was a good audience.

Mrs. Britten, after declaring that her utterances would be under spiritual inspiration, proceeded to say that she was not there by any desire of her own, but because she had been invited by a few persons in the town whom she respected to appear there, not only as their representative, but also as the representative of a very large and respectable portion of the community all over the civilised world, known as Spiritualists. She had been asked to come that night in that capacity and answer she could scarcely say what—the attacks or the charges or the performances of an itinerant conjurer, one who, by sleight of hand and tricks of a physical character, professed to represent that which had been acknowledged by many millions of persons to be the work of disembodied Spirits. Some twenty years ago an attempt was made to what was called expose Spiritualism through the aid of those tools called conjurers, for she would not admit that, standing alone, such persons had any power either to reach an audience or to obtain the public ear. They were simply the tools of others, of those who, having found they could not quench Spiritualism, or arrest its wonderful progress, manifested their imbecility and weakness by bringing such poor tools before the public. Twenty years ago this was the fashion in which Spiritualism was assailed in America. That was now ended. The American people, very quick to observe, very shrewd to take notice of results, soon found that the attempt to displace, quench, or overthrow a world-wide movement that had taken its hold upon the hearts of the people through manifestations in their homes, not in public exhibitions, was useless, and that such a power as this could not be touched by the conjurers. Their occupation in America had gone, and although herself born in England, many long years of absence from that land had not familiarised her sufficiently with its customs to know correctly the state of public opinion here. She was somewhat surprised, therefore, to be obliged to go back to first principles, and to be called before an intelligent audience to attempt to answer the affirmations of a conjurer. She asserted that most of those who had accepted Spiritualism had been compelled to do so against their desire, and that she who went forth Saul-like to persecute had been converted into a thankful and reverent apostle of the movement; and consequently when people were told by exhibitors with loud, blatant tongue, or glib patter, what Spiritualism was, and Spiritualists were invited by them to meet them on the public platform and do what they did, these exhibitors proved that they either knew nothing of spiritual power, or, knowing it, were perfectly aware that the Spiritualists were unable of themselves to produce any phenomena. Out of the thousands and millions of Spiritualists, she only knew about half-a-dozen who were enabled, under certain psychological conditions, to exhibit spiritual powers on the platform. There was another thing she would impress upon her audience, that was that these conjurers' challenges were invariably made when none of the professional mediums were at hand. She challenged those present to adduce from the records of the movement one instance to the contrary. Mrs. Britten, referring to Mr. Cumberland's remarks on Mr. Fowler, of Liverpool, said that gentleman was a man of high social and mercantile position, who conceived that his wealth and influence justified him in standing before the world prominently to represent his faith by, in her opinion, very injudiciously attempting to tamper with a person who could only bring discredit by any connection whatever with the movement. She had again and again advised Mr. Fowler to this effect, and had frequently solicited him to let the man turn his penny, represent himself for what he was; and to be sure that a mighty movement like Spiritualism, if it could be touched and tarnished by such tools was not worth preserving. (Applause.) Mr. Fowler was now well convinced of this, and, she believed, regretted, as she did, that he had attempted to connect this person with the movement at all. She claimed that every religious system that existed on the face of the earth was founded on Spiritualism, and that from the earliest ages up to the records of witchcraft, to the advent of mesmerism, and to the present day, spiritual manifestations formed one continuous line of history—a silver cord of spiritual light and life and manifestation interpenetrating history in every direction. The present age, she

said, was one of eclipse of faith, of Agnosticism, Atheism, Secularism, Materialism, which prevailed everywhere throughout the known world, and was growing more and more rampant. In the midst of this there was a demand for religious light and revelation, and, with the expectant prayer of the human heart going up in every direction of the world, "Lord let Thy kingdom come," she never could believe but that the Infinite Father, the great Almighty God, the Giver of all good things, had heard and felt the cry of His children, and responded to it in the mighty outpouring predicted by seers and prophets in olden times, and delivered to the nineteenth century. The lecturer then proceeded to detail the history of the origin of Spiritualism in rappings heard in the presence of certain little girls in America, and of mesmerism, its precedent. After describing the severe and exhaustive tests to which the children were subjected, and the reports by committee after committee, in the face of threats of being lynched, that they were due to Spiritual beings, she called upon anti-Spiritualists to explain these facts before they attempted to tell us that the whole of modern Spiritualism was exploded because a glib conjurer could contort his body into making sounds. Mrs. Britten then dealt in a sarcastic manner with the conflicting theories invented by scientific men to account for the Spiritualistic phenomena. She next reminded the clergy of the passages, "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant," and "He that believeth in Me the works that I do he shall do likewise," by way of Scriptural argument for Spiritualism, and asked how, in the face of detailed evidences of Spiritualism, dared people who could not explain the manifestations themselves come before the public and parody and travesty it after the fashion of the conjurers. The lecturer, after alluding to her travels in promotion of the cause of Spiritualism in America, China, Russia, India, and other countries, and to its existence in every part of the world, repelling all attempts to explode or quench it, went on to allude to the prevalence of impostors in the movement. Spiritualism, she said, was not the unpopular thing it was supposed to be, but one of the most popular things in the world, and necessarily attracted all the scum that floated upon its surface. (Applause.) Those present knew something of the parable of the marriage supper, and just such a parable as that Spiritualism had had to act out. If time served to tell the history of what Spiritualism had had to suffer from those that pressed into its ranks the audience might well be convinced that it was the work of something more than human, since the puny arm of man raised against it had never been able to touch it. Mrs. Britten then claimed permission very briefly to number some of the manifestations of Spiritualism, and some especially of those which some of her audience had beheld exposed last night. (Laughter, applause, and hisses.) She prefaced this account by attacking the Press as generally excluding the record of Spiritualistic facts, and remarked that it closed the shutters and then told us there was no light, the result being that the records of the Spiritualists had been mostly confined to their own literature. The lecturer then remarked that there was one phase of Spiritualism which had not been exposed last night, and that was the production of Spirit drawings, and declared that she had in her possession 2,100 affidavits from different persons that they had received the Spirit portraits of deceased individuals. (Applause and hissing.) She asserted also that she had in her possession proofs of another phase of Spiritualism not exposed last night—Spirit photography. She possessed, she said, photographs of Spirits taken by Mr. Wm. Mumler, of New York; and the proprietors of the *New York World* had prosecuted him for obtaining money under false pretences, and at his trial, which lasted six weeks, 700 persons from different parts of the United States testified that they had received correct portraits of their Spirit friends through Mr. Mumler. He was acquitted honourably. (Applause.) She would give one more phase that had not been exposed. Dr. J. R. Newton, Spirit healer, was arrested about thirteen years ago in Philadelphia charged by certain doctors with malpractices. His trial lasted for seven weeks, and during that time the blind and lame, and those that had been almost raised from the dead came forward by hundreds to bear witness to the marvellous cures that he, good, honest man, had performed upon them. This testimony was so enormous, so overwhelming that Dr. Newton was also honourably acquitted. Mrs. Britten then adduced other phases of Spiritualism not dealt with the previous night, such as Spirit music, and the speaking by mediums in languages with which they were not acquainted. She next alluded to Chas. Forster, the medium whom Mr. Cumberland had ridiculed, and asserted

that he had accomplished in a very different manner from Mr. Cumberland the feat of reading names of deceased persons, written on pellets of paper, the names being given by him without his ever touching the pellets as Mr. Cumberland did, and communications given from the deceased persons. She also declared that at her request in his presence a table rose up in the air without contact. She simply asked her audience to compare these manifestations with the caricature that was displayed to them last night, and remarked that we did not find the impostors crowding around Mr. Forster when he was in this country; they waited until his back was turned, and then they came forward to expose him. Mrs. Britten then cited the mediumship of Miss Ada Foye, recently returned from Australia, asserting that she had seen this lady collect in a public hall from her audiences masses of pellets in which the names of deceased friends had been written by people at their homes, not on the platform, as in the case of Mr. Cumberland, and take them in her hand and obtain raps from Spirits in recognition of their names written on the papers. She never read the name; the pellet was never opened by her, but the name was indicated by raps, and the paper was then handed to an assistant who opened it and found the name. The writer of it then, by her request, put questions to the Spirit and it proved its identity by raps in reply. For twenty-five years the lady had been before the public and had never made a mistake, and never been exposed yet. Her tests had been given in the presence of thousands, and never yet questioned even by itinerant conjurers. (Hisses and applause.) Mrs. Britten denied that there was any analogy between the cabinet manifestations of Mr. Cumberland and those of the Davenport Brothers, their hands being filled with flour and their mouths with water before entering the cabinet, and they having been tested in every country in Europe and never yet exposed. She then recounted her experiences with Mr. Home, averring that she had seen him hold burning coals in his hand, float through the air in apartments, and thirty or more hands of various sizes busy weaving gauze, tying ribbons, bringing flowers, writing messages, and playing on instruments, fragments of Beethoven's grand symphonies being splendidly and scientifically played. And she had never seen Mr. Home sit in the dark once. Through Mr. Home a Spirit message had come to the late Czar which threatened evil consequences if he did not release the serfs, and this wonderful work was performed, the chains were knocked from several millions of serfs, at the bidding of a Spirit. (Applause and a hiss.) Mrs. Britten also declared that she was prepared to prove that the emancipation of the slaves in America was due to the rapping out, through Mr. J. B. Conklin, of a Spirit message. (Applause.) Mrs. Britten continued her observations amidst occasional hissing and laughter, and in a peroration of passionate and most marvellous eloquence combated the assertion of Mr. Cumberland that Spiritualism was morally and religiously corrupting. Having closed her address, she recited, in accordance with a previous request, a beautiful poem, entitled "Over There," which, however, excited a large amount of derision among the audience.—*Ulverston Mirror*.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Will you permit me, through the pages of "LIGHT," to ask our mediums who are controlled by Spirits having a knowledge of medicine and physiology, to explain their views in relation to vaccination? Is vaccination injurious or beneficial to humanity (assuming the lymph to be taken pure from the animal), and if not, why not?

I ask this for the reason that a medical gentleman (a Spiritualist), with whom I am acquainted, deprecates the frequent attacks on vaccinators which appear in some Spiritualistic literature, and he is of opinion that no case has been yet made out against the practice. The reply of an enfranchised medico would greatly oblige.

I would further ask, what view do our Spirit friends hold on the subject of post-mortem examinations? The current opinion of the medical world is, I think, that at the decease of the physical body, all sensations cease. But the teachings of Spiritualism incline me to believe that a person who has lived a gross, sensual life, and dies a sudden death, is unable, at his decease (so-called) to sever himself from his physical environment. If this view be correct, would it not be well to discourage post-mortem examinations until the body has been cold at least three or four days, for if the Spirit should be capable of feeling the terrors of the surgical operation, it must be a trial of unequalled horror?—I am, sir, yours truly,

T. C. E.

MIRACLES—AND FREE WILL.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I am conscious of great unfitness for making any comment on Mr. Podmore's paper on Miracle and Prophecy, and yet wish to venture a remark upon one part of it. If, as he says, "there are probably but few Christian thinkers who would not welcome any interpretation of miracles which should prove them to be the results of obscure laws of nature," is it not due to the same tendency of modern thought which disputes the possibility of free will in man? Constraint, from any laws of nature—temporal or eternal nature, and there are both—with their unbroken sequence of cause and effect, we can understand, necessity being on all sides a familiar force and determinant; hence I imagine the welcome given to those obscure laws of nature which are supposed to explain miracle.

By virtue of these the Infinite God becomes to our thought an agent on whose procedures we shall be able to reckon with something like certainty, when once reason and science have pushed a little farther behind the veil to grasp these irreversible laws.

So I have noticed that, when the ruling motives and temperamental habits of a noble character have been discerned by people of meaner nature, they believe they can fully interpret, and anticipate, their superior's future line of conduct. A supposition continually disproved in the long run, as to a degree every human being *originates* its own impelling motive. Though hemmed in by restrictive circumstance and heavily shackled by fate, free will remains man's indestructible privilege, and by it he *can* and he *does* make new points of departure, not to be explained either by circumstance or temperament. If man can thus originate—and I challenge any honest observer of inner life to deny it,—is it reasonable to doubt that the Father of Spirits may do so also? "*Behold I will do a new thing*," was His message to man through the prophet Isaiah. Man in the present day questions the possibility of such performance: yet to many Christian thinkers—to myself among them—a miracle is not miraculous because it is a phenomenal departure from antecedents which may indeed result from laws of nature hitherto unknown, but because it is a new manifestation of will in the Being whose thoughts created the universe.—Very truly yours,

A. J. PENNY.

TESTIMONIAL TO MR. HUDSON, THE "SPIRIT" PHOTOGRAPHER.

A meeting will be held at Neumeyer Hall, Bloomsbury, on Thursday evening next, the 20th inst., for the joint purpose of presenting a testimonial to Mr. Hudson, the well-known "Spirit" photographer, and of celebrating the thirty-fourth anniversary of modern Spiritualism. A portion of the proceedings will consist of the exhibition of "Spirit" photographs, by the agency of the oxy-hydrogen lime-light, and, during the evening brief addresses will be delivered from London and country workers. The meeting will commence at 7.30, and Mrs. Hallock will occupy the chair. No doubt there will be a numerous attendance.

HARRY KELLAR, THE ROYAL ILLUSIONIST.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—By the last mail I received a copy of the *Indian Daily News*, published in Calcutta, of 26th January, in which is a public avowal by Mr. Kellar that he is utterly unable to account for the "slate-writing" phenomena he witnessed at Mr. Eglington's séances.

Messrs. Kellar and Cunard, the "Royal Illusionists" and anti-Spiritualists, played to crowded audiences in this city about four years ago, giving "light" and "dark" séances, and professed to expose the whole thing. Nearly every night Kellar offered to bet £100 that he could produce exactly the same manifestations that any Spiritualist medium would, if he saw it done once or twice. Knowing me to be a staunch votary of Spiritualism he did all he could to annoy me, but failed to do so. He was a bitter enemy of this great truth, and did much to neutralise the little good we tried to do.

I think Mr. Eglington has a good claim upon him for the £100 as I can get many to swear that his offer was a *bona fide* one. Of course I don't expect Mr. Eglington would bother about it, but as a matter of history I deem it my duty to state the facts. I hope to get Kellar's letter in the *Cape Times*, which I think will do the cause much good.

"Convince a few conjurers and you will convert the whole world," is the remark of superficial sceptics. We do this every year, and still the mass cry out for proof when they have abundance of it.

I see "LIGHT," of 25th February, contains the whole of Kellar's statements, &c. This is a most interesting number and gives "light" to all.—Yours in truth,

Cape Town.

BERKS T. HUTCHINSON, L.D.S., D.D.S.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

"The Medium and Daybreak."

In the course of an excellent letter from Melbourne, written by Mr. A. J. Smart, a pleasant *résumé* is given of the progress of Spiritualism in Melbourne, with especial reference to the mediumship of Mr. Spriggs, well-known in Cardiff as a most excellent medium for materialisations. Evidently our Australian co-workers do not entertain a dislike to innocent recreation, nor are they inclined to look upon such matters with the austerity of a recent critic here, for Mr. Smart says:—"I am glad to notice, *en passant*, the equally laudable feature that here, as elsewhere, Spiritualists sensibly indicate to the world, by periodical entertainment, music and dancing, that relaxation and enjoyment are, in their proper place, consistent with the loftiest view of man's nature and destiny." And the editor makes no comment!

The contributions to the Hudson Testimonial amount to £29 odd, so far; and, no doubt, the meeting at which it is to be presented will be largely attended by that gentleman's numerous friends. It is purposed to use the occasion also as an opportunity for celebrating the advent of "Modern Spiritualism," in view of which metropolitan Spiritualists will find an additional inducement to attend. The treasurer to the Hudson Fund is Mr. J. Wooton, 33, Little Earl-street, Soho, W., who will be, no doubt, glad to receive contributions for Mr. Hudson's benefit. The hon. sec. to the committee is Mrs. Amy Ivy Burns. The chair will be occupied by Mrs. Hallock, who will fill it most ably.

"The Herald of Progress."

As a result of the recent meeting of the friends in Newcastle, there has been formed a "National Spirit Evidence Institute for Great Britain," of which Mr. J. Enmore Jones has been elected president. This will be news to many. Possibly the greatest thing about the "Institute" is its name.

In a letter from "A Jersey Christian Spiritualist," is the following paragraph:—

"I think that all Christian Spiritualists would rejoice to see a free organ as it is called, in which all those who deprecate Religious Spiritualism could publish their productions and their views. This would have the effect of doing much good, perhaps to both parties, for a certainty to the *Herald of Progress*, because superficial readers often confound the opinions of correspondents with the views of the Editors, which tends much to restrict the circulation of journals amongst unbelievers. Though I know not what you may lose by the avowal of your Christian principles, yet it behoves all Spiritualists sharing your views to come forward to help to counteract the effects of the avalanche which threatens you."

"The Banner of Light."

The venerable editor of the *Banner* thus narrates some of his experiences in connection with his journal:—

"Having labored for a continuous quarter of a century in this work, we may speak with something like confidence on a subject that has served to impart to us so valuable an experience. It is not, by any means, across velvety fields and by smooth and pleasant paths that the course of the *BANNER* has been directed during this time. The best service in this world, we find, is not done among the pleasantest surroundings or under the least troublesome conditions. Labor would not be so precious in its results if it were not so largely pure sacrifice. Patience of spirit, endurance, fortitude, charity—these are essential elements in any labor that brings a rich and lasting fruition, and in spiritual efforts above all others. Over obstacles that, we thought at the time, need not have been thrust in the way; in spite of disappointments that seemed only to hinder instead of advance; through even repeated combinations of hostile elements—hostile because of thoroughly human, rather than of spiritual origin; and past self-styled rivalries that ought to have proffered the friendliest co-operation, rather; the *BANNER* has held evenly and tranquilly on its way, assured that all these things were but tests and temporary, and that there could be no such complete and lasting vindication as devoted service always furnishes through its works."

The following was recently narrated before the Brooklyn Spiritual Fraternity, and the well-known integrity of Mr. Newton gives it full weight.

"Mr. A. E. Newton said that W. W. Decker, of Hopedale, Mass., who was an inventor of machinery, had a partner who was also an inventor. The latter passed to the Spirit-world. Mr. Decker was an out-and-out materialist. He was at work over an intricate piece of machinery that he had been trying to complete for months without success. One day a man who was known as a Spirit-medium stopped at the door of his shop and said he saw a man standing by the machine which Mr. Decker had failed to complete. He gave a description of his former partner and friend, and whose Spirit-voice the medium heard giving directions how the invention could be completed. These directions were followed, and success, which had so long baffled him, was attained. This was a revelation to him, and made him a Spiritualist. Mr. Decker became developed as a medium, and said to the speaker that when he desired to invent any machinery he went to his sleeping-room, closed the blinds and curtains, lay down on his bed, became receptive to Spirit-influence, and the revelation came."

"The Psychological Review."

The *Review* now appears in a permanently enlarged form of eighty pages in each number. The April issue contains a large amount of most readable matter. The "Notes and Comments" are varied, the "Monthly Summary" is comprehensive, and the "Ghostly Visitors," consist of a most remarkable series of Spiritualistic stories, the interest of which is immensely enhanced by the testimony of their editor, "M. A. (Oxon.)," who states that they are "authentic records of actual fact," the key of which he has in his possession, "with the full names of the persons who figure here under initials, or with some disguise."

Mrs. De Morgan contributes a thoughtful article on the "Psychology of Gall," which will be continued in a subsequent number.

"The Realistic Assumptions of Modern Science" is the title of an article by Mr. F. Podmore, the first part only of which appears in the present month.

We shall look with interest for the completion of both these articles, which require careful reading and study to appreciate them. The editor is to be congratulated on the style and varied interest of the contents, of, as it seems to us, one of the best numbers which have yet appeared.

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES

BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

The ordinary monthly Council meeting of this Association was held on Tuesday evening, at 38, Great Russell-street, when Mr. Morell Theobald brought forward a motion, of which he had given notice, in favour of a change in the name and constitution of the Association. Mr. Theobald said that there were two or three good reasons why they should reorganise themselves. The Association had done quite enough to demonstrate the importance of its existence, and yet, rightly or wrongly, its existence had always brought about a certain amount of attack. They had sought, without cravenly bowing before such attacks, to meet them by endeavouring to detect where their assailants were right, and to some extent they had already made certain alterations where improvement appeared to be possible. The chief point, however, which remained for consideration, was the fact that, glad as their provincial friends were to avail themselves of their help in time of need, and to look upon their rooms as a rallying point for any good Spiritualist movement, their means were not sufficient for a truly national association, nor did they wish to provoke the jealousy of their provincial friends by asserting for themselves more than they ever intended to claim. The title which he was about to suggest would better express what they really aimed at, and would be less arrogant and presumptuous than the rather unfortunate one which had first been chosen, while at the same time London would always remain the centre of national movements and the Society would still continue to be the centre of provincial Spiritualist societies which might or might not become affiliated to this Association. Of course, they were aware that a new association had been started, but this, instead of injuring, would in all probability be of great assistance in the promotion of their own Association. He had at one time thought that the two Societies might with advantage be amalgamated, but he now quite agreed with the opinion expressed to him by Professor Barrett, that "their society would occupy a distinctly different sphere from the new one, the latter being essentially for research, linking the unknown to the known, breaking down popular prejudices and enlisting the co-operation of eminent investigators, while the B.N.A.S. was a society mostly of believers who met for the reading of papers and discussion of theories and experiences which rested upon the assumption of belief in the phenomena amongst its members." Mr. Theobald concluded by moving the following resolution:—

"That this Council in order to meet the wishes of many friends, recommend to the members assembled in General Meeting in May, that the B.N.A.S. be re-constructed upon a revised constitution, under the name of the Central Association of Spiritualists, and that the new Association shall, in consideration of receiving the present members of the B.N.A.S. for the current year without further subscription, and of accepting its liabilities, become possessed of the library and other property of the B.N.A.S."

The motion was seconded by Mr. Desmond G. FitzGerald, and after some discussion was carried unanimously, and a committee was appointed to bring up a draft of a revised constitution.

The annual meeting was fixed for Tuesday, May 23rd.

GOSWELL HALL.

On Sunday morning last Mr. F. H. Wilson delivered a lecture explanatory of "Comprehensionism," relating to the primal conditions of the soul, at the close of which various members took part in the discussion. In the evening, according to announcement, an experience meeting was held, and proved very interesting and instructive. Messrs. R. Wortley, W. Bowman, and — Jamieson detailed their various experiences in the movement in an earnest and impressive manner. Several other friends were desirous of speaking, but unfortunately the time had sped too fast to admit of more on this occasion. Perhaps it will be considered expedient to have these meetings more

frequently in the future than has hitherto been the case. It is with pleasure I make known the fact that on Sunday last the committee decided to invite Mr. J. C. Wright, of Liverpool, to occupy their platform on the 23rd inst., which invitation that gentleman has accepted. In the interest of all parties it is to be hoped that Mr. Wright will respond favourably, as there is a great desire to know more of this popular lecturer in the Metropolis.—RES-FACTA.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

NEWCASTLE.—It has been well said that "Facts are strange, stranger than fiction." The last thing I should have dreamed of in connection with Tyneside Spiritualism was the diverting it into the channels of Christian Orthodoxy. Yet wonderful to relate, such has been the case. It is said by some of our leaders here, that we do not want to make enemies, that our prior action has isolated us from the body of Spiritual workers as represented in the churches, and that we cannot afford to so stand alone. We would answer that a movement which is so weak as to be unable to stand alone is better dead, and those advocates who would cater for support to hollow and lifeless forms, merely because of their "respectability," had better leave our ranks, to make way for firmer souls and truer men. We cannot afford that our movement should be split and disintegrated by weaklings. The other Sunday evening we had a discourse from a Mr. Snooks, a Methodist preacher, I believe, and we had the old landmarks properly laid down, and the effete ideas which the advanced Spiritualist has left, enforced upon us with an earnestness creditable to the rostrum of the creeds, but derogatory to the platform, and contradictory of the teachings of our movement. I also observe that two more of these orthodox gentlemen are announced to lecture during this month. There seems to be a set resolve on the part of a small, but ruling, section, to narrow down the work of our noble cause, but I have no doubt of their ultimate and ignominious failure. Already murmurs of discontent are to be heard in our midst. On Sunday, April 9th, the three guides of a lady medium, Mrs. Pollard, gave their experiences of "Death and the After Life," in a pleasing manner; and Mr. J. Gibson also spoke under control. Mr. Mould occupied the chair.

GATESHEAD.—On Sunday afternoon last, Mr. Mahony, of Birmingham, lectured to the Gateshead friends in his usual able and intelligent fashion. Mr. Jos. Stephenson occupied the chair, and in the evening to a good audience he discoursed upon "Spiritualism the Future Religion of the World." The lecturer dealt with his subject very cleverly, and his address was characterised by the chairman, Mr. Burton, as "a healthy and well-considered discourse." On Easter Monday evening, the friends at Gateshead held their tea and concert, which for some time has been advertised, for the purpose of accumulating funds towards clearing the debt incurred by the furnishing of their new hall. The tables were provided free by Mrs. Martin, Miss Martin, Mrs. Kell, Mrs. John Kell, Mrs. Ellison, and Mr. Dawson. A large company, far beyond the anticipation of the executive, assembled to do duty at the well-provided tables, and after the tea had been disposed of, a well-arranged and excellent programme was put before the audience, which, at that time, filled the hall. The president, Mr. W. Burton, opened the concert with a few pleasant and well-received remarks, wherein he congratulated the members upon the successful issue of their endeavours, and expressed the thanks of his fellow-workers to the owners of the kindly faces that were present from all quarters. Mr. R. Thompson rendered two pianoforte solos with good effect; Mr. Compton and party gave two acceptable glees, which were highly appreciated; Mr. Bristol rendered a violin solo with great sweetness; a selection from the "Lady of Lyons" and "The Falls of Lodore," was admirably given by Mr. Mahony, of Birmingham; a humorous recitation from Mr. Howell of Manchester, was much enjoyed; Mr. J. G. Grey read a Yankee sermon which produced roars of laughter; Mr. N. Martin gave a local song and "The Twins," in a humorous and enjoyable fashion; another local song was given in character by Mr. Fenton; "The Wishing Cap" was sung by Miss Martin, with considerable effect; Miss Wood, who we were pleased to see with us after her journey to London, sang us a pretty little ditty with much sweetness, and her sister, Miss E. Wood, also favoured us with a well rendered sentimental song. After the votes of thanks had been proposed and warmly carried, the older friends slowly dispersed with smiling faces, and kindly wishes for the success of the Gateshead Society. A good number of the younger friends remained behind, and up to about eleven o'clock enjoyed themselves in the pleasures of the dance.

WEST PELTON.—On Saturday evening last, a tea and entertainment was held by the Spiritualists of this locality, in the Co-operative Hall. After tea a lively and enjoyable concert was held, at which Mr. Grey, of Newcastle, Mr. Howell, of Manchester, and several others officiated. On the Sunday afternoon Mr. Grey discoursed upon, "Can a man get to Heaven without belonging to any creed?" and in the evening Mr. Walter Howell gave an able lecture on a subject chosen by the audience, "Was Jesus the Christ, or do we look for another?" The subject was handled in a highly impressive manner.—NORTHUMBRIA.

NORTH SHIELDS.

SPIRITUAL INVESTIGATION SOCIETY, BOLTON'S YARD, TYNE STREET.—It is with pleasure that I send an account of the

formation and opening services of this Society. On Sunday, April 2nd, the platform was occupied by Messrs. Rowe and Lambelle and the claims of Spiritualism were ably put before a large and appreciative audience. At the close of the addresses several persons joined the Society. The election of officers took place as follows—President: H. Appleby, jun; vice-presidents: S. Scott, J. Eskdale, sen., J. A. Rowe, and H. Kersey; corresponding secretary: T. N. Miller; finance secretary: J. Eskdale, jun.; treasurer, Mrs. G. Tosh. A committee was appointed, consisting of Messrs. Murton, Patterson, Marsden, Crawford, and Welch, to assist the officers in drawing up the rules, and to report to the next meeting. On Sunday, April 9th, the platform was occupied by Mr. W. H. Lambelle, of South Shields. After praise and prayer and the reading of passages of Scripture by the chairman, the audience selected the subject—"If a man die, will he live again?" which was treated in the most masterly style. At the termination of the discourse questions were invited, but none were forthcoming. After praise and prayer, the devotional part of the meeting was brought to a close, and was thoroughly appreciated by all present. We take this opportunity of thanking Messrs. Rowe and Lambelle for the service they have rendered to the Society, and to our friend and co-worker, Mr. Robertson, of South Shields, for his presence and sympathy at our opening services. The rules for the regulation of the Society were submitted to the members and adopted, and business of a formal character was transacted. Donations have been received for the cleaning and furnishing of the rooms from J. Eskdale, junr., J. A. Rowe, and Dr. Bates, for which we tender our sincere thanks. Services will be held as usual every Sunday evening, at 6.30; and we ask the help of all who can assist. We shall feel exceedingly obliged if friends who have books on Spiritualism to spare will kindly forward them for the use of this Society to the secretary. They will be gratefully accepted and acknowledged in the columns of this paper. Mahony's hymns will be used.—HENRY APPLEBY, JUNR., President, 31, Church-street; T. N. Miller, Secretary, 22, Saville-street, North Shields.

THE "EVERITT" TESTIMONIAL.—We have the pleasure of acknowledging the receipt of the following contributions:—

	£	s.	d.
F. H.	2	2	0
F. W. H. Myers	1	1	0
Earl Bird	1	1	0
W. P. Adshead	1	1	0
E. Dawson Rogers	1	1	0
Morell Theobald	1	1	0
John Lamont	1	1	0
Frederick Griffin	1	1	0
G. R. Tapp	1	1	0
Mr. H.	1	1	0
Mrs. H.	1	1	0
G. Damiani	1	1	0
S. C. Hall	1	0	0
W. Vernon	0	10	6
J. P. Turner	0	10	0
Mrs. A.	0	10	0
J. J. Morse	0	5	0
D. G. Fitzgerald	0	5	0
	£16	13	6

Mrs. JENCKEN.—We have received the following sums towards the fund proposed to be raised for the benefit of the widow and children of the late H. D. Jencken:—

	£	s.	d.
S. C. Hall	5	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. Stack	5	0	0
H. Wedgwood	5	0	0
R. Glendinning (Birkdale)	5	0	0
A Friend	5	0	0
R. B. (Edinburgh)	1	1	0
	£26	1	0

MR. HAXBY.—Mr. Freeman begs to acknowledge the receipt of the following subscriptions for Mr. Haxby, viz:—

	£	s.	d.
Sir W. Topham	2	2	0
Mr. E. Bird	1	0	0
Mr. Butterworth	0	5	0
Previously acknowledged	15	17	6
	£19	4	6

It is satisfactory to learn that Mr. Haxby is gradually improving, and contemplating a few weeks' residence in the country, as advised by his medical attendant. Any further contributions for that purpose will be thankfully received by Mr. Freeman, 74, Acre-lane, Brixton, S.W.

April 11th, 1882.

It is the prerogative of genius to elevate obscure men to the higher class of society.

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

The following is a list of eminent persons who, after personal investigation, have satisfied themselves of the reality of some of the phenomena generally known as Psychical or Spiritualistic.

N.B.—An asterisk is prefixed to those who have exchanged belief for knowledge.

SCIENCE.—The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President R.A.S.; W. Crookes, Fellow and Gold Medallist of the Royal Society; C. Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; A. R. Wallace, the eminent Naturalist; W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E., Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin; Dr. Lockhart Robertson, F.R.S.; *Dr. J. Elliotson, F.R.S., sometime President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; *Professor de Morgan, sometime President of the Mathematical Society of London; *Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., sometime Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; *Dr. Ashburner, *Mr. Rutter, *Dr. Herbert Mayo, F.R.S., &c., &c.

Professor F. Zöllner, of Leipzig, author of "Transcendental Physics," &c.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig; Professor W. E. Weber, of Göttingen; Professor Hoffman, of Würzburg; Professor Perty, of Berne; Professors Wagner and Butleroff, of Petersburg; Professors Hare and Mapes, of U.S.A.; Dr. Robert Fries, of Breslau; Mons. Camille Flammarion, Astronomer, &c., &c.

LITERATURE.—The Earl of Dunraven; T. A. Trollope; S. C. Hall; Gerald Massey; Captain R. Burton; Professor Cassal, LL.D.; *Lord Brougham; *Lord Lytton; *Lord Lyndhurst; *Archbishop Whately; *Dr. Robert Chambers, F.R.S.E.; *W. M. Thackeray; *Nassau Senior; *George Thompson; *W. Howitt; *Serjeant Cox; *Mrs. Browning, &c., &c.

Bishop Clarke, Rhode Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, U.S.A.; Professor W. Denton; Professor Alex. Wilder; Professor Hiram Corson; Professor George Bush; and twenty-four Judges and ex-Judges of the U.S. Courts; Victor Hugo; Baron and Baroness von Vay; *W. Lloyd Garrison, U.S.A.; *Hon. R. Dale Owen, U.S.A.; *Hon. J. W. Edmonds, U.S.A.; *Epes Sargent; *Baron du Potet; *Count A. de Gasparin; *Baron L. de Guldenstübbe, &c., &c.

SOCIAL POSITION.—H. I. H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H. S. H. the Prince of Solms; H. S. H. Prince Albrecht of Solms; *H. S. H. Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; M. Favre-Clavairoz, late Consul-General of France at Trieste; the late Emperors of *Russia and *France; Presidents *Thiers and *Lincoln, &c., &c.

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, writing to the editor of *Licht. Mehr Licht*, April 10th, 1881, in reference to phenomena which occurred in Paris through the Brothers Davenport, said:—"As a Prestidigitator of repute, and a sincere Spiritualist, I affirm that the *mediumistic facts demonstrated by the two brothers were absolutely true*, and belonged to the *Spiritualistic* order of things in every respect. Messrs. Robin and Robert Houdin, when attempting to imitate these said facts, never presented to the public anything beyond an infantine and almost grotesque parody of the said phenomena, and it would be only ignorant and obstinate persons who could regard the questions seriously as set forth by these gentlemen. . . . Following the data of the learned chemist and natural philosopher, Mr. W. Crookes, of London, I am now in a position to prove plainly, and by purely scientific methods, the existence of a 'psychic force' in mesmerism and also 'the individuality of the spirit' in Spiritual manifestation."

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 bedroom, 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. December 6th, 1877.

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

The Conduct of Circles.—By M.A. (Oxon.)

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment.

If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist, on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and, if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one, to see how to conduct séances, and what to expect.

There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles, and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded. The bulk of Spiritualists have gained conviction thus.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament, and preferably of the female sex; the rest of a more positive type.

Sit, positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, and in comfortable and unconstrained positions, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestations. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential; and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times, at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. Guess at the reason of your failure, eliminate the inharmonious elements, and introduce others. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful séance.

The first indications of success usually are a cool breeze passing over the hands, with involuntary twitching of the hands and arms of some of the sitters, and a sensation of throbbing in the table. These indications, at first so slight as to cause doubt as to their reality, will usually develop with more or less rapidity.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held *over* but not in contact with it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let some one take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this, ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this, if there be a real desire on the part of the Intelligence to speak with you. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restrictions on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means: if the attempt to communicate deserves your attention, it probably has something to say to you, and will resent being hampered by useless interference. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous, and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, or by means of form-manifestations, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer. Increased light will check noisy manifestations.

Lastly—Try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning Spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your Reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.