

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.)"

In speaking of Zollner's work as containing "matter of a controversial nature, and of very ephemeral interest," which Mr. C. C. Massey had omitted, I was very far from considering that all additional matter could be fairly so characterised. On the contrary, his "Scientific Treatises," the third volume of which is entitled "Transcendental Physics," cover an enormous area of profound thought on very diverse subjects. Amongst other things he treats on Action at a distance; on Emil du Bois Raymond's Limits of Natural Science; on Electricity in its various aspects, at great length; on Radiometrical Investigations; and on Thomson's Demons and Plato's Shades. His second volume treats at length of Weber's law, and on the objections made to it; on the metaphysical deduction of the laws of nature; and on Kepler and the invisible world. There are also various speculations of the author and others on the nature of comets; a treatise on the metaphysics of space; and other profundities with which I do not presume to meddle. It was a versatile and deeply acute intellect that was transferred to another sphere of activity when Zollner died. His mind could deal with mysteries of science which many of those whom the world recognises as foremost in the ranks of the leaders of thought confess their inability to treat. It is such a man whom Professor Donkin and the scalpers of the *Saturday Review* would dismiss with a fine contempt as "a proper-up of the Spiritualistic craze": as one who, testifying to such things as his eyes have seen, is by no means to be listened to—"no mere *ipse dixit* on such a matter could for one moment be admitted," but whose speculations on comets and on the metaphysics of space would be entitled to respectful attention, if, indeed, he had not blasted his scientific reputation by daring to attend in any way to Spiritualism.

The July number of the *Nineteenth Century* contains what is modestly described as a Note on Thought-Reading. This is intended to record Professor Donkin's absolute disbelief in any evidence that can be adduced to shew the possibility of "one person divining the thoughts of another in the absence of any known means of communication." Such alleged phenomena traverse the Professor's experience, and are therefore produced by collusion. "It would be illogical to substitute for this a perfectly gratuitous hypothesis and an unknown agency." Moreover, "reason would require us to entertain the great probability of mental bias in some at least of the observers." The Professor, of course, has nothing of the kind about him! Yet memory recalls an episode in his life which would lead an unprejudiced mind to the conclusion that he is saturated with prejudice, publicly committed to a position strongly antagonistic to any admission of the reality of supersensuous phenomena, and therefore strongly biassed in opinion. What he has to say is hardly of sufficient weight to interest Spiritualists.

The conclusion arrived at by "J.P.T." to go on sitting in the hope that time may throw light on the perplexing problem of his experiences seems to be wise. In order to arrive at true conclusions respecting the unseen and unknown beings with whom we place ourselves in communication, it is necessary that prolonged experiments be made with that "prudent caution and prayerful spirit" which he will bring to the investigation. It is

idle to deny the perplexities, or to ignore the dangers, that beset rash and ill-regulated attempts at communion with the unseen world, especially during times of general turmoil and disturbance, such as those which have long prevailed, and are increasingly prevailing around us. This is the world of *effect*; we must look for *causes* elsewhere; and we shall find them, unless I have misread the indications that a study of Spiritualism gives, in that Spirit-world of which we know so little, and with which we too often meddle so heedlessly. There has not been wanting plentiful evidence that the state of that world is one of disturbance, and it is our wisdom to find out, if we can, how far we are the victims of that discord and contention.

It needs but a passing glance around to see how widely spread are the elements of revolution and general disturbance. Everything seems shaken to the very base. Man's faith wavers, and fanatical enthusiasm or grim pessimistic doubt agitates or drives him to despair. The chief prelate of the National Church welcomes the aid of the Salvation Army in doing, after its wild erratic fashion, the work in which that Church has failed. The dry bones are shaken—and "lo! they are very dry." The reign of ritual has supplanted the power of spirit, and Pharisaism, such as distinguished the Jewish Church in the days of Christ, is no match for the insidious march of Agnosticism and Infidelity. The author of "John Inglesant" is eloquent over the orderly beauty of the ritual of the English Church, its chastened splendour, its venerable sanctuaries, fragrant with the perfume of flowers, and hallowed by the memories of many generations. And to the cultured mind that does not think too deeply, and has not caught the spirit of doubt which is a note of this age, to a refined taste and a restful spirit, there is no lack of beauty and peace. But alas! the intellect of the nation is increasingly busy with perplexing questions, and the Church with all its orderly solemnity offers no solution that Science will accept. Alas! too, this cultured grace makes no impression on the new-born thought of the great masses of the people, who if they be not caught by such a wave of enthusiasm as that which the Salvationists have produced, are sunk deep in the crudest Materialism and the most repulsive Infidelity. Their unlovely lives, spent too often amid surroundings that make health of body, mind, and soul well-nigh impossible, are uncheered by any spiritual light. The Church does not touch either of these great classes.

And this state of things has a tendency to perpetuate itself, and will increase and bear its baleful fruit—discontent, conflict with law and order, sullen envy on the part of the discontented classes of those who seem to them to have a disproportionate share of the good things of life, open rebellion, and secret conspiracy—until a true and complete education, four-square and not one-sided, has developed their perceptions and given them true views of life and its varied duties. It is to this rather than to any spasmodic outburst of fanaticism, which burns like a fire of straw and expires as rapidly, that we must look for comfort in the future. The education must be one of the whole man; and I see no way of obtaining it except by cultivating the spiritual instincts; by fighting resolutely against a crude Materialism; and by rescuing a despairing faith from the deep waters which threaten to overwhelm it, by bringing to its aid that evidence of the higher life and destiny of man which an enlightened study of the spiritual evidence of Spiritualism (so-called, and badly so-called) furnishes. The most elementary evidence of life and intelligence outside of a human body has always seemed to me most valuable in its place. To many minds it is the first thing needful. But it cannot suffice for the vast majority; nor replace those spiritual lessons which teach man what he owes to himself as a possible or actual heir of immortality. When these are learned, it will matter comparatively little in what scheme of theology they are embodied. There will be divergence of belief, difference of opinion, but men will

live the spiritual life, and the prospect for the nation will be far other than it is now.

If this education is to be aided by intelligent Spiritualists, under whatever name they range themselves, it must be by a more wise and discriminating practice than has hitherto obtained. No doubt large numbers have gained a belief in a hereafter by what has seemed to them assured communion with those whom they had thought dead: and this has been a great fact to them, though perhaps they have made no great use of it. But there have also been some, if not many, who have found only, or chiefly, perplexity and bewilderment, who have been led to throw over opinions and beliefs that they can no longer hold as satisfactory, and who have found nothing to replace them, because they have not pursued the quest beyond the point where destruction ends and construction begins. I say nothing of those who have not gone further than to satisfy curiosity, or of the large mass who know nothing of Spiritualism beyond what the public journals tell them. To such as these it is an imposture, or a buffoonery, or a devilry. But those who know what, under proper conditions, Spirit-communion is, and who have felt its tremendous influence as an educator in themselves, have reached a point where it behoves them to look below the surface, and face some problems that press for solution.

How is it that the popular conception of Spiritualism is so different from the true? It is simply because the world knows only the black side, and that imperfectly. Mr. Farmer has well pointed out, and I have repeatedly indicated, some plain causes for the prevalence of this dark side of a subject that is far from being all light. I entertain no doubt that public methods of circle-holding must be reformed as he suggests before our results will be much better. But even so, is the darkness all due to our folly? What of such experiences as those of "J.P.T."? Patient experiment can alone answer that question. But it is manifest that the world of Spirit must contain among its denizens the spiritually halt, maimed, lame, and blind, with whom our only excuse for intercourse would be a possibility of raising and doing them good. Is the allegation, freely made by orthodox critics, that the devil is at the root of the whole thing an exaggerated statement of a possible truth? I have frequently expressed my own opinion on this point; but I am far from saying that the views of any man should prevail against the undoubted need for a constant revision of opinion in the light of increasing experience. Year by year we gain more experience, even if we do not gain more knowledge. I have no doubt that some will believe in the diabolic theory, but they will not be those who have probed the question, but rather those who want an excuse for refusing to look into what they are actually afraid of.

Yet again, what are the effects of promiscuous exercise of mediumship? Does it sap the health of body or soul? Are its dangers to be avoided by proper precautions, or are they inherent in its very nature? I think the experienced Spiritualist will have little difficulty in arriving at the conclusion that it is the misuse rather than the use of mediumship that is disastrous; and so we are strengthened in the conclusion that one of the most urgent duties laid upon us is to abolish any conditions which can injure the medium, or invite undeveloped agencies to play their pranks, or which can produce that crop of fraud and buffoonery which has so discredited the name of Spiritualism. This done, the subject will assume a new phase, and bear a new importance, when, its moral beauties are recognised, and its dangers and difficulties fairly faced. When the axiomatic truth is known and acted on that spirituality in our own selves is a necessary pre-requisite for true spiritual communion, we shall have gone a long step towards securing that educational influence which Spiritualism, properly practised, ought to bring to bear. It should be an educational, a religious, an elevating influence; one that the Church should welcome as its truest helpmeet. That it has not been so is a lamentable fact. It rests largely with ourselves whether it shall become so in the future.

M. A. (OXON.)

The first general meeting of the Society for Psychical Research will be held on Monday, July 17th, at 4.30 p.m., at Willis's Rooms, King-street, St. James', the President of the Society, Henry Sidgwick, Esq., in the chair. The President will deliver an opening address, and communications in reference to experiments on Thought-reading will be made by Professor Barrett, Mr. E. Gurney, Mr. W. F. Myers, and also by Professors Balfour Stewart and Hopkinson. The members and associates may introduce friends.

UNCERTAINTY OF SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Your correspondent ("LIGHT," June 17th, 1882) finds the arguments of "Trident" nauseating. "If a Spirit," says "Trident" tells me that a certain person has died whom I afterwards discovered to be alive, I bear in mind that the word 'death' is employed by Spirits to express the commencement of a new course of thought and action,"—or in other words, spiritual life.

However "nauseating" this description of argument may be to your correspondent, he may take my word for it—if he can—that it is a medicine which he will have to swallow if he desires and expects to prepare his system for receiving a knowledge of the laws of the spiritual world. Some attempt at elucidating this particular law was made in two papers bearing the title "The Interpreter," published in "LIGHT," January 29th, 1881, February 19th, 1881. To these papers I take leave to refer.

Broadly, it may be sufficient now to state that it is one of the laws of the spiritual condition of existence into which it is apparently the object of Spiritualism to lead those who are willing to follow, that in that world, state, or condition we are instructed through the medium of *experience* and *imagination*, and not by *oral teaching*. This being so, it is necessary for the development of every Spiritualist that at some time or other he should cease to receive direct communications true to the sense of natural reason; and on the contrary, should receive those, viewed in that light alone, untrue, confusing, and misleading. The time is approaching to him for higher and better things than the former. He is now to understand words, in relation to things of this world, in the aspect which they will bear when viewed from the totally opposite standpoint of the life-spiritual. He is now to exercise his imagination and his instinctive discrimination, those qualities—too little cultivated here—which represent and replace reason, as we understand it here, by the higher and deeper reason of a higher and deeper condition of existence.

He is now to extract by the exercise of a reasonable imagination, after a careful study of the science of symbology—for which he will find great help in Swedenborg—the spirit essence, or interior signification, of the communications which he receives.

That this covers the whole ground of apparently untruthful and confusing communications I by no means desire to assert, but I venture to affirm after careful and long experience that it lies at the root of the whole question, and will clear it to many a thoughtful mind of much misunderstanding, perplexity, and sorrow.—I am, sir, yours sincerely, A. A. WATTS.

WHITTIER ON ANNOYANCES IN HEAVEN.

Mrs. Ellen E. Dickinson in "The Churchman."

I related something of a conversation between Mr. Longfellow and myself on Spiritualism a few months before his death, or rather, a conversation on the influence and nearness which many persons experience in regard to those who were dear to them and have gone into the mysteries of eternity. Mr. Whittier listened with interest, adding that he was aware that Mr. Longfellow had some remarkable ideas and sympathies of the kind, but had never talked with him on the subject, "and for myself," he added, "I have felt but very slightly that closeness and nearness of the unseen of which you speak." After a few moments, in the progress of our talk, he remarked: "Life is a mystery, death is a mystery. I am like the Chinese philosopher, Confucius, who, when he was asked, 'What is death?' answered 'Life is such a mystery that I do not seek to penetrate what is beyond it.'" "May I ask if you believe in the progress of the soul after death?" "Why not? Surely we are not to be placed in niches to remain for ever. We shall doubtless there have what we lack here, harmony, and that is my idea of heaven." "No troubles, no vexations?" "Well, I do not think so. It seems to me that we must there, as well as here, have some annoyances, to be quite content in contrast." This was a novel idea and I laughed in appreciation of it, and said, "Then you do not fancy a supreme satisfaction and content." "No, no, not I," laughing merrily. "But we meet people who are thoroughly delighted with themselves and their surroundings very frequently?" "True, and thee hast seen clams at high tide; they remind me of such people. Ah! we shall have some trials in the life beyond, (and here the poet's fine dark eyes lighted up with a rare intelligence) but our happiness will be all the sweeter, and everything will be harmonised,"—*Banner of Light*.

SPIRIT TEACHINGS.

SECOND SERIES.

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

M.A. (Oxon.)

No. XXVII.

I have printed the Easter message. A. was on a similar topic this morning. Do you know?

Yes, it was wisely said.

But crude?

Yes: as you would think. But it is not well to put forward too much of truth at once.

It was true enough?

All true, but capable of development and extension. Moreover, it is truth that it is necessary for man to learn. It is a gospel that your age needs. For it is an age little given to self-sacrifice and self-denial. Let it be preached abroad. It is needed.

Yes: I know. I think men lose sight very much of the absolute necessity of self-discipline.

One of the greatest sources of strength in the Catholic Church is that they have always recognised the value of discipline. One of the greatest weaknesses of the Church called Protestant is that it disregards this point.

Yes. I understand quite now. "Spirit is perfected through suffering" of one kind or other. But frequently suffering, or discipline only, makes men worse.

There is no good that God gives that man may not turn to ill.

Quite so. Then it fails.

Yes: as most of the plans for man's advancement do. Man wastes most of his opportunities. But what you call waste is not always wasted. It may be used in other ways, or the offer may in itself have been a discipline. It is not always safe for you to take what merely lies on the surface. It may be that God's successes are what man would call failures. Your view is not wide enough.

No. But that is hardly my fault. It seems to me that the scheme of creation involves great waste as well as great cruelty, together with frequent failure.

It must so seem so long as you are able to see only the minute portion that you do. You cannot judge, and it is wise for you to confine yourself at present to matters concerned more with your own personal progression. Be content to wait.

You have said a good deal lately about mediumship, and my own change in that respect. And you have intimated that the change was one made for purposes of progress. I have been requested to ask you whether the undoubted danger of physical mediumship could ever be avoided. I have not felt the harm personally.

The dangers attendant on the lower forms of mediumship are very real, and that for two reasons principally. First, because this phase of mediumship is so apt to fall into use as a mere gratification of wonder or curiosity, or to be sold for gain. Next, because the mixed circles and want of proper conditions invite the presence of the lower and more material Spirits, who are more fitted for the work needed than the more progressed Intelligences are. There are other reasons, but these predominate. Perhaps, however, we should say that the lack of proper guidance and protection for the medium leaves him open to deterioration. He is liable to become the sport of the Elementary Spirits who are attracted to him. You have been protected throughout, and you have not been allowed to expose yourself to mixed influences. Therefore, you have been preserved from dangers which have always encompassed you.

Then you consider that all physical mediumship is risky. Can those risks not be minimised?

They have been minimised in your own case. They can be greatly reduced by attention to precautions even in the case of a public medium, but they can never be altogether removed when the medium is brought into contact with a number of persons of varying magnetic influences, and of various degrees of spiritual health. The danger of magnetic rapport is serious when it is

promiscuous. Attention to conditions will partly remove, but cannot wholly dispel danger. Let the medium be kept pure, healthy, and secluded. Let the intellectual, spiritual, and bodily health be attended to. Let no intercourse with the world be had save under carefully guarded conditions. Let the circle be selected with equal care, and let harmonious conditions prevail. Let the spirit that pervades be one of aspiration and desire for communion with the Spirits who are charged to instruct, and they will come, if it be wise to do so. But they will not, cannot, come to mediums who are earthy and sensual, steeped in debauchery, or surrounded by falsehood. They cannot enter an atmosphere reeking with polluted influences thrown off from diseased bodies, or from those which are distended and gorged with gluttony or inflamed with intemperance. Neither can they always act under good conditions of the circle when the atmospheric earthly conditions are bad. All this you should know. The attempt to force communication in such conditions ends surely in invoking the presence of the class of Spirits which alone can live in such an atmosphere.

Nearest the plane of matter?

These most readily of all; for being material they have closer affinities with matter: and in many cases the atmosphere breathed in your séance-rooms is to us as is a wall to you, impenetrable and poisonous too. We cannot breathe it. The grosser Spirits can; and, moreover, the lowest material Spirits who have passed incarnation, and are earth-bound, can use it too.

These are without what I call moral consciousness?

Entirely. They either have not a conscience, or they have worn it out. These Spirits have no standard of right and wrong. The wretches who have abused their earth-life have so vitiated conscience that it is no longer useful or trustworthy.

Why cannot such be kept away?

That is what you do. You invoke them and then complain of us that we do not keep them away. They can only be kept away by your own hearts and lives and motives being purified, and also by such attention to conditions as we tell you of. You cannot keep the electricity from the conductor. If you do certain things certain results will follow. Learn that this axiom applies to Spirit too. Because you cannot see these Spirits you doubt their power; one day you will wonder at your folly; you do not know how far it extends; what results it produces; how far-reaching it is. Certainly such can be kept away, but it must be from yourself that the first effort must proceed. We help, but then you must work too. Do not question further now. It is well that you cease. May the blessing of the All-Wise rest on you, and may you possess your soul in peace and prayer.

No. XXVIII.

Am I right in supposing that the objective side of Spiritualism is dying: and will die out?

No. But the finer souls will pass through it, and reach a higher plane. It is to most the necessary portal of entrance into the kingdom of grace.

Holding, to the true Spiritualism—

The relation that Christ's miracles did to His teaching. We finish your sentence. It is true. We have told you before.

It is said now by some that Christ's miracles were not interferences with the laws of nature, but only the bringing into operation of forces and powers not known to men in that day?

That in itself is an interference with nature as known to man. The material evidences of the mission of Jesus were similar to those which attest ours. As many followed Him to see His miracles, so it will always be that many will wonder at our works, and have no part or lot in our teaching. The time will never come when we can dispense with miracles, as you call them. But he who wondered only, and ate of the bread, in Jesus' day, lost his chances of benefit from this teaching, and was so much worse for the neglected opportunity. So it is now. The wonder-hunter has his reward, and is so much the worse for neglecting the means of grace. He gets his satisfaction, and must accept the dangers attendant on its gratification. This is a universal law, operating now as it did in the days of Christ.

I have been meditating on that law. It seems to me true and beautiful.

The true in spirit is ever beautiful in action. It is not possible with us to have deformity in truth, any more than purity can be unattractive or repellent. All the graces, which, indeed, are the perfect development of the spiritual nature of man, are beautiful in themselves and are gloriously interwoven so as to

be mutually conducive to perfection, truth, purity, zeal, sincerity, charity, love: these and other graces are the spiritual fruits, which are beautiful each in its kind.

Yes; I know. It seems to me that a truth is specially beautiful. It is to me as a jewel, tangible and real; and once grasped, is never lost.

A truth is a concrete fact to you, and it becomes your own by possession. You say well that it becomes a jewel to you; but unlike the jewel, it contains in it the elements of nutrition for the spirit. But this is a wide question and we cannot discuss it now. Remember what Paul said of the fruits of the spirit and those of the flesh. Read again, and we will teach you.

NO. XXIX.

I have often thought that you help me in work.

Far more than you think; but not as you fancy, by any other way than by quickening your perceptions and stimulating your faculties to a higher pitch of development. In this way we are able to do much for you.

Yes; I know I get through my work and acquire my information easier than do most.

Yes; we are able to help you much.

Can you so help all people?

No; it requires a very high degree of spiritual* development before we can so completely act. We have now been with you for long and we have power to approach you at all times; moreover, our secret power is much increased of late, because you are not drained by sitting in circle. We are able to act on you more surely; and we have less trouble in equalising your conditions.

I see. This is almost a double life.

It is entirely so; but of the second life you will know little till you have cast off the body. It is the highest form of life that is attainable in the flesh. To maintain it in progressive development must be your constant aim.

Yes; but how?

By holding all relations with the external world as loosely as you can; and by cultivating sedulously the spiritual gifts which you have in you. The external should gradually fade more and more away, and the spiritual be realised as the only enduring verity. So long as you are in the world, the spiritual must find its expression in material act: but it behoves you to remember that such acts with all their material adjuncts are but the veil which shrouds the spirit here. When you shall have passed behind the veil then only can you realise the true import of your acts. When you shall have done with matter and material ends, you shall know, as Paul hath it, that the things which now you see are temporal, fleeting, frail, and unreal: the things which now you see only as shadowy and uncertain presentments are the abiding verities. Your acts and habits in your present life are of importance only as they form and stamp the character which is eternal.

Quite so: and for that reason one's daily work is important. Besides, intercourse with others opens out opportunities for doing good to them and to oneself.

Assuredly we would not have you mistake. Work in your present life must be zealously carried out, for by it alone can you progress. We would have you discharge all the duties of life, and value all the helps which are to be had from your world as well as from ours in doing them. We do but wish you to remember that when they have faded and are dead, ours, and the true life of them which only Spirit gives, will live and flourish still. Hold loosely to the material, and cling fast to the spiritual.

It is very hard to do. The spiritual is so far away; the material so near and so engrossing. I get vexed and harried with it. I have so much that I want to do, and I do so little. I have things that I want to write now, and I cannot; and those Spirit-Teachings want revision.

That cannot be now. It must be reserved till you are at rest.

I have asked for work in August.

You are foolish; you will rest. There is much work for you before that, and you will need the rest. Cease to ask for such work. You must go and be at peace, and we will keep you at more profitable work. + IMPERATOR.

Knowledge is not mental power. The mind is not formed in schools, but by free social action with affairs, interests, and temptations, which call forth the exercise of judgment, prudence, reflection, foresight, moral restraint, and right principle.

* I.e. psychical. The word bears this meaning throughout this communication.

DR. DONKIN ON "THOUGHT-READING."

From the "Nineteenth Century" for July.

An article on this subject in this Review for June contains conclusions so inadequately supported by trustworthy facts that a few words of comment seem to be called for. The matter in question has obtained a somewhat undue prominence of late; but if it is as simple and intelligible as it appears to be to most who have investigated it with care, and with minds free from mystical bias, any aid towards the extinction of what must then be regarded as an *ignis fatuus* of pseudo-science carries with it its own justification.

The position of the writers of the article seems to be that it is possible for one person to divine the thoughts of another in the absence of any *known* means of communication. This inference is based mainly on a series of statements of cases where several children of a certain family, as well as a servant-girl in the same family, were professedly able to tell words and objects thought of in their absence without contact with or sign from those who knew what they were required to do.

It may be taken as proved that the explanation of *muscular indication* amply covers all cases where, as in the well-known drawing-room game of "willing," there is actual contact between the person who guides and the person guided. It is difficult, indeed, for the guider, who is intent on the success of the experiment, to avoid giving hints by pressure, alteration of speed, and otherwise, to the guided one, who is, as a rule, only too ready to quickly interpret them. The same explanation would apply to cases where the person who is "willed" to find something hidden during his or her absence is in no contact with any of the "willing" party, but who often succeeds in discovering the desired object by studying the unconscious indications given by the faces of the expectant circle. All this is, in fact, nearly admitted by the writers we quote, though their denial of Mr. Stuart Cumberland's own explanation of his performances in this line is perhaps as unwarrantable as the "further inquiry" that they suggest.

The remarks in this paper will, therefore, be confined to the alleged results obtained where there was no actual contact. It will be at once admitted with the writers of the article that common sense demands that every known mode of explanation of facts should be exhausted before the possibility of an unknown mode is considered. This is an all-important admission, obvious as it seems to be. It is required by the method of common sense, which is no less the method of science; all true explanation consisting in a procedure from the known to the unknown.

In the next place, it is equally obvious that in all scientific enquiries the good faith of individuals concerned should form no part of the data on which the conclusion is to rest. A person merits credence in proportion as the facts he alleges can be demonstrated or reproduced, and to the jealous care he shows in avoiding fallacy. But we can never, as our authors say, call on science to put deception out of court by a belief in any-one's integrity. Half of the evidence which has propped up the spiritualistic craze is based on the results obtained through mediums of "unblemished character" in private families, whose virtuous reputation has been largely sustained by the fact that they did not take money for their trouble; no regard being paid to innumerable other motives and tendencies to deception.

This being admitted, the cases before us in the paper alluded to can be easily dealt with. They differ in no way from the ordinary platform performances of the little "clairvoyantes" who from time to time have amused us both in the name of Second Sight and in that of the humbler and honest one of Conjuring. It is well-known that a very simple code of signals will suffice to produce results much more startling than those we are discussing. The first word or letter, for instance, of the question asked of the "sensitive" medium may denote the category to which the object fixed upon belongs. The second and third, and so on, serve to specialise it further, and by a series of questions and remarks it is easy to understand that any amount of information may be conveyed. When the clairvoyante is not blindfolded other means of communication of course are possible, and in any case auditory signs other than words could be agreed upon quite unsuspected by the audience to be amused or deceived.

We have, therefore, an intelligible and admitted explanation which fully serves to cover all the facts in question. Such things are constantly done by collusion—it is a *vera causa*. It would be

illogical to substitute for this a perfectly gratuitous hypothesis and an unknown agency. This is especially true in the case of such a set of phenomena as we are now considering. The possibility of thought-reading, as alleged by the writers of the paper, is so far beyond, or rather contrary to, universal experience that some use might fairly be made of the *a priori* argument, although the case need in no way rest on such a method. It may be said in passing that there is an enormous *prima facie* objection to the truth of the proposition that such divination is possible: the assumption and conviction of the contrary, based on immemorial experience, being, as it were, one of the suppressed major premisses of all social intercourse.

On this argument, however, we would not depend unduly. The case against the genuineness of the asserted phenomena seems strong enough without it.

The children in question were *not* blindfolded.

In most of the experiments *there is no mention made of silence being preserved*. On the contrary, we may infer that no such rule was made; as the children must have been corrected when their guesses were wrong, as they often were.

On the hypothesis of collusion, it must further be noted that in order to minimise the difficulty of the code of signals and simplify the performance as much as possible, the child was previously informed of the nature of the object selected, *e.g.*, whether it was a card or a name. The first guess then would give an opportunity for the conveyance of perhaps even the final hint, contained in the correction offered.

The mistake made by the *servant* in guessing the name "Enry" for "Emily" is obviously significant, and an excellent example of an "undesigned coincidence." Surely it must lead almost every plain mind to the irresistible conclusion that a mistaken whisper or facial gesture played some part in the phenomenon. This remark applies as well to the errors made by the children in the case of words alike in *sound*.

The theory of collusion is moreover strongly countenanced by the fact of the mediums being children, who are always ready to join in any game of deception; and by the association with them of the servant-girl—a valuable fact, putting out of court the assumption of any inherited special quality peculiar to the family, as an explanation, possibly plausible to some minds, of the alleged marvels.

It will probably, however, be readily allowed, with the authors of the article, that the experiments made in the presence of the members of the family are scientifically untrustworthy. They may, therefore, be practically ignored. Yet we infer from the paper that most of the experiments were made under these conditions; and we read that the presence of the father 'seemed decidedly to increase the percentage of successes.'

The authors, indeed, say, 'though generally the object selected was shown to the members of the family present in the room, we were sometimes entirely alone.' From the only rational point of view, that of scientific scepticism, and therefore with total disregard of the personal factor, this consideration seems in no way to invalidate the line of comment here taken. It is not clear to how many of the three observers the pronoun 'we' in the above passage refers; but, at any rate, we miss entirely in the paper any specific quotation of results obtained in this latter set of circumstances.

But even if this evidence had been forthcoming, no mere *ipse dixit* on such a matter could for one moment be admitted. Reason would require us to entertain the great probability of mental bias in some at least of the observers, or to discredit the accuracy of their memory, rather than to allow that anything has been adduced in this account of what, to say the least, must be called superficially conducted experiments, to warrant a recognition of any novelty, or, by consequence, to stand in need of explanation by a theory of 'Brain-waves.'

HORATIO DONKIN.

[To our mind the above "Note" reads very like an indication of extreme arrogance and self-conceit. If Dr. Donkin narrates his own experiments he naturally enough expects to be credited with shrewdness and honesty; if Professor Barrett, Mr. W. F. Myers, and Mr. Edmund Gurney report their investigations they have either been deceived or have themselves been parties to "collusion"—that is, they are either fools or knaves! When a man assumes such an attitude as this towards gentlemen who are in every way his equals—to say the very least—he surrenders every claim to respectful attention.—ED. "LIGHT."]

THE "PSYCHOLOGICAL REVIEW."

The number for July equals, if it does not excel, any of its predecessors. The articles are excellent both in variety and character, and the re-arrangement of the matter is a decided improvement.

"Imagination and Experience," by Alfred Alarie Watts, is full of allegorical beauty and spiritual truth. The closing paragraph will give some idea of its style and scope:—

"It only remains to note that of the marriage of Experience and Imagination was born a daughter partaking the divine and human natures of her parents. Her name is Sympathy, and she is the uniter, because as in her birth the divine and human natures were made one, so in her works were these two natures to be brought together and married in every human being. She is the messenger from the Heavens to Earth, and from each state or stage of human progress on earth to that which is beneath or dependent upon it. In her nature, Imagination operates upon Experience, and Experience on Imagination, and she is the fullest and most blessed eternal expression that can be given to the union of the two. She interpenetrates all being, and broods, as the Comforter, over all its conditions. She interchanges the gifts of life, and draws forth from it divine impressions and influences which it could not have generated of itself, and which in passing through it permeate its being with the radiance of the Godhead. She is the Ichor of the Gods and the life-blood of humanity, and she and it are the elements of a perpetual sacrament. She is indeed, in a more interior way, married to it in a divine union, and of the august offspring of the two the sands of the sea cannot be employed as a comparison for multitude, or the stars of the universe for majesty and divine irradiation. She and her children are immortals."

This is followed by an exceedingly interesting and thoughtful article on "Our Existence in Eternity," by Alexander Wilder, M.D., of New York, dealing with the subject from the intuitional side.

A further selection of "Ghostly Visitors" is given. This is succeeded by the first of a series of articles which will be read with almost universal interest: "Biographical Sketches of William Howitt," by his daughter, A. M. H. W. The first part, given in the present number, deals with his children.

Some other matter, and the usual "Summary of Opinion" and "Notes and Comments," fill up the remaining space. A considerable portion of the latter is devoted to the "Thought-reading" article which appeared in the *Nineteenth Century* for June, as the first fruits of the work of the new Society for Psychical Research, and which has already been given to the readers of "LIGHT."

THOUGHT-READING.

The following letter has been addressed to the editor of the *Spectator*:—

"SIR,—I have read with great interest the article on 'Brain-waves,' in your issue of June 3rd, and venture to think that the following incident, which occurred in my own family, may not be without value, as bearing on the subject. I had one day been spending the morning in shopping, and returned by train just in time to sit down with my children to our early family dinner. I am an advocate for having children very early at table with their parents, and my youngest child—a sensitive quick-witted little maiden of two years and six weeks old—was one of the circle. Dinner had just commenced when I suddenly recollected an incident in my morning's experience which I had intended to tell her, and I looked at the child with the full intention of saying, 'Mother saw a big, black dog in a shop, with curly hair,' catching her eyes in mine, as I paused an instant before speaking. Just then something called off my attention, and the sentence was not uttered. What was my amazement, about two minutes afterwards, to hear my little lady announce, 'Mother saw a big dog in a shop!' I gasped. 'Yes, I did!' I answered; 'but how did you know?'—'With funny hair?' she added, quite calmly, and ignoring my question.—'What colour was it, Evelyn?' said one of her elder brothers; 'was it black?' She said, 'Yes.'

"Now, it was simply impossible that she could have received any hint of the incident verbally. I had had no friend with me when I had seen the dog. All the children had been at home, in our house in the country, four miles from the town; I had returned, as I said, just in time for the children's dinner, and I had not even remembered the circumstance until the moment when I fixed my eyes upon my little daughter's. We have had in our family circle numerous examples of spiritual or mental insight or foresight; but this, I think, is decidedly the most remarkable that has ever come under my notice.—I am, Sir, &c.,

"CAROLINE BARBER.

"Fernedene, Abbeydale, near Sheffield,
"June 22nd."

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
4, NEW BRIDGE STREET,
LUDGATE CIRCUS, E.C.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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

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

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SPIRITUALISM AND PAST FAITHS.

Spiritualism, like all other things and systems that exist, is the result of the past. We may not all be able to subscribe to the scientific doctrine of evolution as at present propounded, but it is our belief that evolution when more fully understood by scientific men will prove to be the key-word to the method of God in creation and providence. But it is not as yet a proven fact; only a brilliant theory and far-reaching generalisation. In the history of mankind, however, there can be no doubt of evolution having been the principle of progress. That is as clear as the sunlight. Buckle in his "History of Civilisation" made a fine endeavour to generalise the laws of human advance. Mr. Tyler and Mr. Herbert Spencer have made more detailed and profound investigations on the same line, which, if ultimately proved to be incorrect in generalisation, will yet be a splendid storehouse of facts for future use. But however much their theories may have to be modified by the thinking and more exact knowledge of the future, the broad principle is indisputably certain that humanity has advanced by a law of evolution.

It may yet be seen that Bunsen in his "God in History" was a profounder thinker than Buckle, Tyler, or Spencer. It will yet be proved, we think, that there is a unity of mind and a guiding will in human history as there is in the material world. Evolution in a material world still requires an evolving mind. The Creator is no more disproved by modern theories and facts than by those in fashion a few decades ago. If it were possible to demonstrate spontaneous generation, the discovery might for ever denude the world of its most splendid sentiment—a Father-God. But few things are more amusing than to find a Tyndall and a Bastian endeavouring to prove the impossible. It is not possible for them or anyone else ever to prove the chief factor of such experiments—that they have destroyed the motive power of life. They may destroy, and prove that they destroy, all the life-power with which they are acquainted by their attained knowledge; but how can they prove, when can they prove, infallibly, demonstratively, that they have discovered the ultimate of life? For all such knowledge we must fall back upon cardinal principles of our thinking—that every effect must have an adequate cause.

In human history, we believe, however fortuitous its events at times seem to be, a true philosophy will discover not only a human cause, the secondary, but a guiding Divine cause, the primal. For one fact is clear in historical development, that old faiths have been demolished by ages of succeeding scepticism, which again has been demolished by a truer, nobler faith. So in our own age, evidently one of growing atheism, or, to say the least, disbelief in existing faiths, there are signs already of a reconstructive period that will be the usual sequence. We live in the age of desolation; we are on the dawn of a golden age of reconstruction.

We think, too, there is another, and to our mind, the most hopeful sign ever seen in human history, that the future progress of mankind will not be subject to the rough and ready method of vehement ages of faith gradually dying into the night of scepticism, to be again as vehemently eradicated by the light of another day of faith. We think that the human mind is now discovering something more than mere facts and their laws; it is learning the true spirit of human progress. It will not again seek to fossilise into creeds and iron systems the spirit of truth to which it had awakened, but will recognise the great principle that the form is transient, if the spirit be eternal, and that therefore in the future of the race there must be elasticity in every form, system and organisation, by the which they may adapt themselves to the growing spirit of the time. The dying

away of the new-gained light into almost sepulchral gloom in past times has been from failing to perceive the difference between spirit and form. Our modern bigots are still perpetrating the same blunder. Natural science for 250 years has recognised this law of progression in knowledge. Since the times of Copernicus, Kepler, Bacon, and Galileo, every student of science has been free to add to the stores of knowledge. So it should be. In religious truth, however, the victory is not yet gained, though it is not far distant. The large majority in the Christian, Mahomedan, and Buddhist worlds, still tremble for their respective Arks of the Covenant, if the dimensions or exact contents are in anywise curtailed or enlarged. Spiritualism with its indubitable, because demonstrative, truths, will finally slay this Dagon idol of the religions. It will set the human mind free in the matter of religious thought, as the inductive method liberated the devotees of natural science. It will be the reconstructive power in this age of falling creeds and mouldering ecclesiasticisms. While the angel of welcome death with hot blasting breath flies over the religious faiths that have lasted to our time and served our ancestors and us with good purpose, the angel of welcome life, with healing on his wings, is speeding his way with the Gospel of Spiritualism to our ruined Jerusalems.

Spiritualism must not forget that it is the new-born child of historical development. It must not be ungrateful to the faiths upon which our ancestors fed and from which they derived their vital power in times of sore need. The heir of the ages just entering into his estate must have no sneer for the forms of thinking that were so dear to those who toiled, bled, and died for his enrichment. Every blunder made in the past has saved us from shame; every agony endured has won for us a heaven of bliss. Just as at Seringapatam, our British soldiers mounted the walls on the corpses of their fellows-in-arms, so are we standing upon our present pinnacle of exultant victory by the bloody sweats, and martyr fires, and cruel gaols of our noble forefathers. With fond tenderness should the existing relics of past systems be treated. The new autocrat who at once reverses all his dead father's plans, is not only unwise to his own interests, he is a brutal boor, without a single feeling we can respect. And he who in his new-found Spiritualism can sneer and rudely laugh at the faith still dear to many hearts is not filled with the spirit of angelic intercourse with the unseen world.

We must use existing forms, not demolish them. Our business is to enlarge the frontiers of the kingdom, not to desolate the old territory. We may remove the old landmarks because we need more space, but we include in our widened borders all we possessed before. Spiritualism, after all, is only an enlargement of human life. It is not a new creation out of nothing, but a begotten child, and its parents are those very creeds and systems which some with flippant mouths affect to despise. We have no respect for those who can ridicule the grey-haired sire and dame who, dressed in their fustian and serge, live in their humble cottage, while they themselves ride in their carriage, bedizened in the garb of fashion, from the door of a many-windowed mansion. No, no! the spirit of those old creeds was true, if the form has become to us an irksome burden. The great end of Spiritualism should be how best to utilise, reform, and enlarge existing systems. Woe to him who in the name of Spiritualism treads over all, like Alaric the Goth blasting the ground whereon he moves! The Spiritualist is not an Iconoclast but a Builder. His mission is to destroy by Enlargement and Reconstruction.

Spiritualism must shew that, as Buddha caught the weary spirit of his time with a newly-adopted form, Mahomed that of his, Jesus that of his, and Luther that of his, so it is the balm of Gilead for this weary age. Its tone of proclamation must swell with the sweet volume of love, not that of denunciation. In this way we shall speedily reconcile our foes. We shall shew that we do not deny their truth but affirm a wider truth, which includes all that is vital in theirs. In this way the famishing tribes will pass over with us the dividing Jordan and enter with exultant shout the land flowing with milk and honey. IOTA.

The conversazione at the rooms of the C.A.S., 38, Great Russell-street, on Monday evening next, promises to be a very successful one. The proceedings will commence at seven o'clock. At 7.30 Mr. E. W. Wallis will give a brief account of his recent experiences in America. At eight o'clock music will begin, for which several talented artistes have kindly promised their assistance; and the songs, &c., will be interspersed with recitations. Suitable refreshments will also be provided. As this will be the last conversazione of the season we trust that there will be a large gathering of the members and friends.

"ISIS UNVEILED" AND THE "THEOSOPHIST" ON RE-INCARNATION.

"There never was, nor can there be, any radical discrepancy between the teachings in 'Isis' ('Isis Unveiled') and those of this later period, as both proceed from one and the same source—the ADEPT BROTHERS."

Thus writes the editor of the *Theosophist* in the June number of that paper (Art. "Seeming Discrepancies."—Editor's note). Turn over four pages to the review of "The Perfect Way." It contains an authoritative teaching "of this later period" on the great subject of Re-Incarnation. If any writer in the *Theosophist* speaks the mind of the "Adept Brothers," assuredly it is this Reviewer. Nor is there any editorial hint that we are to take his statements with any grain of salt. Hear him, therefore. The italics are mine.—"To begin with, Re-Incarnation—if other worlds besides this are taken into account—is the regular routine of nature. But Re-Incarnation in the next higher objective world is one thing; Re-Incarnation on this earth is another. *Even that takes place over and over again till the highest condition of humanity, as known on this earth, is attained, but not afterwards, and here is the clue to the mystery.* . . . But once let a man be as far perfected by successive re-incarnations as the present race will permit, and then his next re-incarnation will be among the early growths of the next higher world, where the earliest growths are far higher than the highest here. *The ghastly mistake that the modern Re-Incarnationists make is in supposing that there can be a return on this earth to lower bodily form;*"—not, therefore, that man is re-incarnated as man again and again upon this earth, for that is laid down as truth in the above cited passages in the most positive and explicit form.

And now for "Isis":—

"We will now present a few fragments of this mysterious doctrine of Re-Incarnation—as distinct from metempsychosis—which we have from an authority. Re-Incarnation, *i.e.*, the appearance of the same individual—or rather, of his astral monad—twice on the same planet is not a rule in nature; it is an exception, like the teratological phenomenon of a two-headed infant. It is preceded by a violation of the laws of harmony of nature and happens only when the latter, seeking to restore its disturbed equilibrium, violently throws back into earth-life the astral monad, which has been tossed out of the circle of necessity by crime or accident. Thus in cases of abortion, of infants dying before a certain age, and of congenital and incurable idiocy, nature's original design to produce a perfect human being has been interrupted. Therefore, while the gross matter of each of these several entities is suffered to disperse itself at death through the vast realm of being, the immortal Spirit and astral monad of the individual—the latter having been set apart to animate a frame, and the former to shed its divine light on the corporeal organisation—must try a second time to carry out the purpose of the creative intelligence. *If reason has been so far developed as to become active and discriminative, there is no re-incarnation on this earth, for the three parts of the triune man have been united together, and he is capable of running the race. But when the new being has not passed beyond the condition of monad, or when, as in the idiot, the trinity has not been completed, the immortal spark which illuminates it has to re-enter on the earthly planet, as it was frustrated in its first attempt.* . . . Further, the same occult doctrine recognises another possibility, albeit so rare and so vague that it is really useless to mention it. Even the modern Occidental Occultists deny it, though it is universally accepted in Eastern countries." This is the occasional return of the terribly depraved human Spirits which have fallen to the eighth sphere—it is unnecessary to quote the passage at length. Exclusive of that rare and doubtful possibility, then, "Isis"—I have quoted from volume I., pp. 351-2—allows only three cases—abortion, very early death, and idiocy—in which Re-Incarnation on this earth occurs.

I am a long-suffering student of the mysteries, more apt to accuse my own stupidity than to make "seeming discrepancies" an occasion for scoffing. But after all, two and three will not make just four; black is not white, nor, in reference to plain and definite statements, is "Yes" equivalent to "No." If there is one thing which I ardently desire to be taught, it is the truth about this same question of Re-Incarnation. I hope I am not, as a dutiful Theosophist, expected to reconcile the statement of "Isis" with that of this authoritative Reviewer. But there is one consolation. The accomplished authoress of "Isis"

cannot have totally forgotten the teaching on this subject therein contained. She, therefore, certainly did not dictate the statements of the Reviewer. If I may conjecture that Koot Hoomi stands close behind the latter, then assuredly Koot Hoomi is not, as has been maliciously suggested, an alias for Madame Blavatsky.

C. C. M.

SEANCE WITH MR. W. EGLINTON.

A circle comprising members of the family of Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, of Hendon; Mr. and Mrs. R. Pearce, of Hendon, and Mr. and Mrs. Dawson Rogers, of Finchley; have for some time had regular sittings, which have been held alternately at the residences of the respective families. Last week the séance was held at the residence of Mr. Dawson Rogers, when Mrs. Everitt was the medium and Mr. W. Eglinton was present as a visitor. The manifestations were of the kind usual through Mrs. Everitt's mediumship, and the *vis à voce* conversations carried on with the Spirit friends were so well sustained and of such an interesting character that Mr. Eglinton expressed his gratification with the sitting as the best of the kind he had ever had the pleasure of attending.

The same circle met again this week, Mr. Eglinton being on this occasion the medium. The sitting was in the dark, and all hands were held. The principal manifestation was the exhibition of the names of the Spirit friends in luminous letters, which floated about the room and presented themselves before the eyes of all the sitters in turn, however distant from the medium; and as the circle was a large one, numbering fourteen persons, the distance in some cases was considerable. During all this time, as I have said, the medium's hands were held, and his position in the circle was also plainly indicated during the whole of the sitting by his participation in the general conversation. In some instances the "name" of the Spirit communicating in the manner I have described, was accompanied by a message, also in letters of light, the full purport of which was understood only by the person for whom it was given. To myself the following message was presented in brilliant characters:—"I am your friend, Edouard Fournier. God bless you all." While I was reading this message aloud for the information of those who had not yet seen it, I was being gently tapped all the while upon the shoulders, head, and hands, by fingers whose motions were apparently expressive of gratification at the success of the experiment. The writing then passed from me to members of my family on the other side of the room. In this message there was a peculiar test of genuineness—quite apart from the fact that there was no room, even if there had been any desire, for deception on the part of those present. The friend manifesting had passed away more than eight years ago; Mr. Eglinton could have known nothing about him, and nobody present, except the members of my own family, could possibly have been aware that he always spelt his Christian name with a "u" instead of a "w." His surname being French it might possibly have been surmised that he spelt his Christian name in the French form "Edouard"; but it could not have been even guessed that though his surname was French he was really a German, and, therefore, spelt his Christian name in the German fashion "Eduard." Yet there it was—spelt as he used to spell it even after he had been settled for many years in England. His indications of satisfaction as he tapped me on the shoulders when I spoke of having recognised the test were very significant. I should add that during the sitting as many as seven communicating Spirits spoke in the direct voice, each with his or her own characteristic peculiarity. Our old friend, Benjamin Coleman, several times addressed himself to me, in the same tone, and the same preciseness of manner with which many of us who knew him in this life were so familiar. One point more is worth mentioning. Even experienced Spiritualists sometimes question whether two direct voices are ever heard at the same moment. I paid particular attention to this point, and the result was that on one occasion I observed three, and on several occasions, two direct voices at the same instant of time. Altogether, the séance was one, in many respects, of very special interest.

E. D. R.

The *Banner of Light* learns from a reliable Brooklyn correspondent that Dr. Monck ignores Spiritualism and Spiritualists.

A members' private séance will be held this (Saturday) evening with Miss Wood, of Newcastle, at the rooms of the Central Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, W.C.

A GLANCE AT THE CAREER OF MESMER AND HIS SUCCESSORS.

(Translated from the "*Chaine Magnetique*," Paris.)

On the occasion of the 148th anniversary of the birth of Mesmer, the Société Magnétothérapique, of Paris, held its usual celebration meeting, largely attended, followed by a banquet and concert. An oration was delivered by the president, M. Louis Thouard. Among those present were many of literary and scientific note. After a brief introduction on the present position of Magnetism, M. Thouard proceeded:—

Our illustrious Mesmer was born in May, 1733, in Suabia. He cannot be said to have discovered that with which his name is identified, for it had been known through all history down to his own time; but it was he who brought within the scope of ordinary intelligence that in man is a force which may be applied effectively in the treatment of the disorders and diseases of his fellow creatures.

Mesmer studied medicine in the University of Vienna. The subject of his thesis on receiving his doctor's degree, was "Planetary Influence." He held that celestial bodies exert an influence upon animate bodies, especially upon their nervous system, through the medium of a subtle fluid permeating all bodies and filling the universe.

His treatment of the sick was in accordance with this theory. At first he employed mineral magnets, but he progressively discovered that his hands were effective to the same end, and that man himself acted as a magnet. This advanced view he published in 1774, in his "*Memoire on the Discovery of Animal Magnetism*." His patients became numerous. He sent in a paper to the Academy of Vienna detailing his theory and practice; it being disregarded he sent one to the Faculty of Berlin; then to the Académie of Paris; finally to the English Royal Society; but in each case in vain.

In the meantime he made cures of patients suffering from so-called incurable diseases, among whom was the daughter of the Empress' private secretary. She had been under the treatment of the Court physician, Stork, for years for disorder of liver and spleen, fits, and amaurosis. The Court oculist had pronounced the sight quite gone. Under Mesmer's magnetic treatment, continued for four months, the patient regained her health and sight. The patient's father published a detailed narrative of the case, and the cure was vouched for by medical certificates.

But this did not advance Mesmer with the Academy. He went on curing and renewing his application for an investigation into his theory and practice for five years; then he gave up and transferred his work to Paris. Hither his reputation preceded him; he was well received by the sick and was successful in everything but conciliating the orthodox. He contended long with them; but wearied at length with perpetual contention with the Faculty, he left Paris for his native place, Meersburg, Suabia, and there died at eighty years of age, in 1815.

After he left, the Faculty of Paris, finding that his system lived and that its adherents increased in number, appointed a committee of investigation. That report which was drawn up by Bailly, so much talked of, and which was to finish magnetism, failed. It was a tissue of misrepresentation.

A few years after, on the motion of Jussieu, the naturalist, who defended Mesmer's system, the Académie appointed another committee, and its report by Hussion was favourable. This result was due to the zealous action of the Marquis de Puységur.

Puységur was in high official as well as social position. In the flower of his age he had become an adept in magnetism under Mesmer's own tuition. He turned his mansion at Buzancy into a hospital and took care of all who came for treatment. So many came that he could not personally treat all. He attached cords to a tree and patients sat in a circle about the tree holding the cords; he magnetising the tree and the cords, which acted as conductors of the magnetic fluid to the patients.*

In 1784, Puységur wrote—"I continue to use the power which I learned how to exercise from Mesmer, and I bless him daily for my usefulness to my sick neighbours, of whom there is a constant procession to me and my tree." Six thousand cures thus made are recorded. It was Puységur who discovered that one of the effects of magnetism was somnambulism. Puységur died in 1825.

* Note by Translator.—A modification of Mesmer's battery; he would have patients sit in a circle about a vessel containing ingredients supposed to evolve magnetic fluid. Each patient held a cord communicating with the battery. Mesmer, it is understood, passing from one to another, magnetising with his hands. Both methods, according to our present light, seem akin to the modern Spirit-circle, and would be equally favourable to the co-operation of healing spiritual influence.

We have now to speak of Deleuze. Deleuze was born at the close of the last century. At the age of forty he was holding the office of assistant naturalist in the Museum of Natural History. This office he resigned in order that he might study and practise magnetism. The works he wrote are most valuable.

Then came Baron du Potet, who bore the standard for half a century. He was acknowledged as a man of talent and genius; he conducted experiments at some of the Paris hospitals, before scientific bodies, and at the Académie. To him we are indebted for simplifying the processes of magnetising.

Since his time the experiments of Charcot, Barety, and Dumontpallier, shew that magnetism has entered upon its final triumphal march.

Honour to these our well-known champions of progress! and let us gratefully remember that there are thousands whose names have passed away with themselves; but they are written in the great book of immortality, and doubtless they continue good work begun here. Let us follow in their steps without troubling ourselves whether our names shall be recorded on earthly granite or marble!

PUBLIC DARK SEANCES.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I hope I shall not be intruding if I send you a few lines of comment on the interesting communication of Mr. Farmer as regards "Dark Sitzings."

I agree with him in the main: certainly as to what he terms "public" sittings. Where neophytes, or persons unaccustomed to spiritual manifestations, prevail as to weight and number, dark sittings should rarely or never be permitted. They do far more harm than good.

But where persons are experienced, and in no way dreading fraud and delusion, where, indeed, both are next to impossible, I can see no evil but much benefit from a total exclusion of light.

It is certain that darkness does give increased power to the Spirits who are about us and are eager to communicate with us. It was once told to me by a Spirit that light causes motion and disturbs the "atmosphere" necessary for them to work.

Unquestionably, the most astounding physical manifestations I have witnessed were when light was excluded, and that observation applies to those of Daniel Home, as well as to other mediums. He generally objected to dark sittings, and seldom sat unless there was ample light. But occasionally he ignored that practice, and he was assuredly most in power and produced most amazing results when the room was darkened, or at least the light greatly reduced.—Most truly yours, S. C. HALL.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In your issue of the 1st inst. appears a paper by Mr. J. S. Farmer, read recently before the members of the C.A.S. Anything from the pen of the author of "*A New Basis of Belief in Immortality*" must command attention. The subject he now treats is an interesting and important one, and the object in view most laudable, for Mr. Farmer wishes to have the proof of a future life made more palpable to the world, and where fraud exists to get rid of it, and with such an effort all true Spiritualists will sympathise. At the same time, we may not all agree or see eye to eye as to the means for the accomplishment of our common object, so that a little friction of ideas may probably have good results.

In referring to the dangers that attend present methods of investigation Mr. Farmer makes use of the expression, "Were mediums to set themselves to obtain phenomena under the higher conditions," &c., and a little further on (and still referring to mediums) he states, "Few, however, have continued to cultivate the higher and more rational methods." But I should like to ask—are mediums to blame for this state of things? I think not; what blame there is must rest with the sitters. I know for a fact that there are genuine mediums in this country, through whom at one time or other almost every phase of physical manifestation has been observed, and in the light too, whose only fault has been the lending themselves too readily to the suggestions of sitters. They have freely submitted themselves to any and every conceivable test, but the sitters have not "*set themselves*" to cultivate manifestations under really good conditions. The attitude of the sitters appears to have been—"Let us have phenomena; if we can have them quickly, without much trouble to ourselves, and of a thoroughly convincing nature, so much the better; if not, still let us have phenomena." Sitters have

not given either the necessary time or patience to cultivate the higher conditions, and the sensitive medium has been almost helpless in their hands. Therefore the idea of blame to mediums naturally conveyed by Mr. Farmer's words above quoted, is scarcely the correct one. Neither is there any reason to fear but that all genuine mediums will heartily aid in any improved methods of investigation, so that the facts may be made as undeniable as possible. I have ever found such mediums "ready, aye ready."

Further, I scarcely think that Mr. Farmer's suggestion of having a paper drawn up for signature by Spiritualists and societies for the abolition of dark and cabinet sittings covers the ground as perfectly as might at first sight appear. It is too crude, rough and ready a method, and if carried at once into effect, as Mr. Farmer appears to suggest, might defeat the very object we all have in view. There are, as I have already stated, genuine mediums, through whom without doubt we should by steady cultivation obtain the good results *regularly* which at present we only have fitfully—excellent physical mediums, who have spent perhaps the best years of their lives in gratifying Spiritualists and others by obtaining manifestations under conditions of the sitters' own proposing; and my contention is that any scheme, to be successful and improve the present condition of affairs, must take note of, and make provision in some way for, the needs of such mediums during the process of development of the new phase. We cannot expect the outside public to contribute towards expenses during the transition period. Have we a sufficient number in our own ranks so imbued with a love of their cause and of humanity, so grateful for the consolations of the "New Faith," obtained through the instrumentality of those we term mediums, as to be ready to stand forward and say:—"Mediums cannot, any more than other people, live upon air; they have devoted their lives to the cause in answer to our demand for their services, and have become therefore more or less unfitted for other occupations. I am ready with so much, and for so long, to be used to develop the improved phase of the cause I have so much at heart." Unless something of this kind be carried out in connection with the proposed scheme for the abolition of present methods, I very much fear me that we should only be "dropping out of the frying pan into the fire," for mediums, as a rule, are in very indifferent circumstances, and we cannot expect them to devote their time and strength for us without adequate remuneration; and during the development of the new phase, many of the sitters probably would not contribute much, if anything, towards expenses, so that some scheme of the kind here indicated becomes imperatively necessary. Otherwise we run the risk of some of our best physical mediums being compelled either to leave the country or desert entirely the cause, out of the ranks of which so little consideration is shewn them; and we must not forget that really well developed genuine mediums are scarcely "as plentiful as blackberries." If the services of true mediums are worth having at all, surely they are deserving of so much care, attention, and evidences of appreciation on our part. We might to our advantage imitate the Churches on some points. Mediums as a rule are a very generous class of people; the number of free sittings they give where they see the need would probably astonish many who have not had the privilege of intimate association with them; and I say—Let us who outnumber them so greatly and outweigh them in means, not be behindhand when the need arises. If we are, the loss will be ours, not theirs. As to the example Mr. Farmer refers to from *Spiritual Notes*, December, 1878, and which he cites as an illustration of phenomena under higher conditions, I cannot see that the record in question as given by Mr. Farmer is of the slightest value as evidence of the genuineness of the phenomena, simply because not a whisper have we as to the whereabouts of the medium, nor as to whether the presumed Spirit friends were recognised, and if so whether by features or what other peculiarity. And in making this statement I am not for one moment doubting the genuineness of the manifestations referred to; I am simply stating that from the impartial outsider's point of view there is no evidence either for or against. It is a case for suspension of judgment, so that Mr. Farmer, while pleading all through his paper (and justly so) for better methods of investigation and more conclusive evidences, relates as an instance of such, an account which, as I have shewn, is worth nothing whatever. I have only to add in conclusion that if any scheme of the nature I have indicated can be perfected, I for one shall be glad to contribute my mite every week for, say, three months or as long as may be found necessary.—Yours, &c.

A SPIRITUALIST.

July 3rd, 1882.

SPIRITUALISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

With your permission I would like to make a few observations respecting some statements of Dr. Wyld and Mrs. A. J. Penny in "LIGHT," of the 17th ult.

Dr. Wyld says that he means by Christianity not the teachings of sects but the life and death teachings and works of Jesus Christ. In other words, his inferences as to the truest form of religion are drawn from what he believes to be the real teachings of the Gospels. He evidently accepts the Epistles also, since they are frequently quoted from in his "Spiritual Dynamics."

Each of the Protestant sects, except the Mormon, professes to have derived its views of the truth from the teachings of the Gospels and Epistles. I, therefore, fail to see that the fact of esoteric Christianity having obtained its doctrines by internal experience, shews that it also is not a sect, and liable to hold wrong views like other sects.

I am well aware that I cannot understand many of St. Paul's statements; but if even Peter, his contemporary, could not understand them, and if they have been misunderstood by the various Christian sects during so many hundreds of years, then evidently the language in which they are written must be so obscure that it is extremely doubtful if their real meaning will be discovered in the present day.

Of course, everyone admits that there cannot be a higher rule in religion than love to God and man, but Jesus, great as he was, was by no means the only one or the first who taught such a rule. Similar doctrines can be found in pagan writings and in the sacred scriptures of other religions than Christianity.

An old Sanscrit poet said—

"He that to all living creatures nought but loving kindness shews
Hath the truest, best religion; good men pity e'en their foes."

In another Sanscrit poem the question is asked—

"Art thou in sweet loving concord with the God in thine own breast?"

The God in a man's breast is his highest ideal of holiness, and for a man to be in concord with that he must necessarily love God with all his heart.

The light of God has illumined men's hearts and shewn them the highest truths amongst many races besides the Jewish, but all, including the Jews, have mixed errors with truth; for a perfect revelation can no more be transmitted through imperfect man than pure light can pass through stained glass.

Just as a man's spirit is influenced for good or evil by the spirits of other men with whom he is in frequent sympathetic intercourse, so is it also influenced by frequent communion with the Father of all spirits. And that Father has had other children than those of Palestine. In many ages and in many nations men have arisen who have lived in communion with Him, so that it would be difficult to find one holy and spiritual thought expressed in Jewish writings which cannot be paralleled in the writings of the so-called heathens. Neither did inspiration come to an end in the age of the Apostles. Here and in this present time truths are being revealed to us as much as they were in ancient days, for the Spirit of God has never ceased striving with man.

It would be very difficult to compute the percentage of men of genius who have arisen out of Christendom during the last 1,800 years, but if we consider that in a very short time Mahomedanism spread by conquest from Arabia to India in the East, and Spain in the West; that stable governments were organised in almost every conquered country; that celebrated writers in prose and poetry were numerous, especially in Persia and Spain; that in the latter country and in Northern Africa, agriculture and commerce, arts and sciences, were for a long time in a most flourishing condition; that Moorish Spain contained numbers of important universities and libraries, frequented by Christians from other parts of Europe, and that architecture attained such a pitch of excellence that the Mussulman world from Spain to India shews, in the present day, buildings which have never been surpassed in beauty by those of Christendom,—if we consider all this, it is incredible that so much able work can have been produced by, as Dr. Wyld believes, one per cent. of the men of genius. The religion from which the remaining and larger proportion of these men have arisen was not esoteric Christianity, but that which, in its Roman Catholic and Greek forms, was and is now, practically idolatry and a system of degrading priestly tyranny. In the form in which it is accepted by the great bulk of Protestants it teaches that salvation

depends upon belief in dogmas more than upon the conduct of life. By its doctrine of an eternal hell it has darkened the lives of myriads, and caused multitudes of good and pure women and innocent children to view the approach of death with terror, because they could not feel sure of having acted up to the dogmas. It has taught the existence of a God far more awfully savage in character than any god worshipped by heathen idolaters, and at the same time has so failed in influence for good that our cities contain tens of thousands of human beings in a far more degraded state than the heathen, to whom, nevertheless, it has the assurance to send missionaries. This is the religion which is now and always has been the actual Christianity, which Dr. Wyld speaks of as "the highest religion," and adopted by the highest races.

Mrs. A. J. Penny states that the meaning assigned by me to certain sentences in the New Testament "proves how blinding long unauthorised misinterpretation of Scripture can be."

All I can say is, that it is the interpretation adopted by Christians from the earliest ages to the present time, excepting among a few very modern sects. If that interpretation is wrong, if Böhme and William Law and the new sects are right, then it is evident either that the New Testament writings are not Divinely inspired and infallible, or else that a Heavenly Father, all powerful and all good, sent a revelation to His children written in such extremely ambiguous language that it has been misunderstood for eighteen centuries.

Again, Mrs. Penny says that only the most ignorant among Christians can hold a belief in a vindictive God. If so, the most ignorant must comprehend the great mass of the most earnest Christians, amongst all sects except a few Universalists, for they certainly believe in a God who will send to everlasting torment all who do not accept and act up to the dogmas taught them as those of Christianity. If they do not believe so, how can we account for the sermons and prayers heard every week in churches and chapels, and for the multitudes who form the Salvation Army or who flock to the meetings held by such men as Moody and Sankey?

With respect to vicarious suffering, the fact that the innocent do suffer for the guilty does not disprove the statement that the idea of appeasing the wrath of God first arose through men, who had not courage enough to face the consequences of their own sins, trying to appease their gods by sacrificing innocent victims to them; nor does such a fact shew that vicarious suffering is right, unless many kinds of abominable cruelties are also right, such, for instance, as vivisection. Martyrs, truly, suffer gladly for the benefit of others, and in doing so act sublimely, but that does not lessen the guilt of those who inflict the suffering upon them.

The conduct of Alcestis in dying instead of her husband was a splendid instance of the love and generosity of woman, but it in no way diminished the baseness of Admetus in allowing her to die for him. Yet so blinded are we by early education and habit that we fail to perceive that the same rules of right and wrong must apply to similar cases, and, therefore, to the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice as generally promulgated by professors of Christianity.

The mystery of the suffering endured by mothers will probably never be explained until the mystery of sin and misery can be explained, but if right and wrong in the eyes of the Supreme are the same as what we mean by the words right and wrong, then it is clearly wrong that new human beings cannot come into existence without the torture and frequently the death of the gentlest, the most loving, and the most helpless of our race.

J. J. MEYRICK.

[We have given insertion to the above letter because it seemed to us that the occasion justified it. We wish our correspondents, however, in dealing with theological creeds and doctrines, to consider them as far as possible in their relation to *Spiritualism*. We must draw the line somewhere, as we have not room for the discussion of every opinion which our contributors may deem erroneous.—[Ed. of "LIGHT."]

CELEBRATION AT KEIGHLEY.—The celebration in honour of the pioneers of Spiritualism in England will take place in Keighley to-day and to-morrow, Saturday and Sunday, the 8th and 9th inst. A very large gathering is expected, and among the more prominent names are mentioned Mr. David Richmond and Mr. John Scott, of Belfast; and Mr. J. J. Morse, of London; these gentlemen being selected to make the presentation of the various portraits of the pioneer workers. The proceedings will consist of a tea and public meeting on Saturday, at which the presentations will be made, and two lectures through Mr. Morse on the Sunday. Keighley is virtually the birth-place of Spiritualism in this country.

DEITY ANTERIOR TO CREATION.

If I should take notice of the opening observation of Mrs. Penny that an "affront" has been offered to "both faith and common-sense" by my letter of June 17th, I would reply that with regard to the first, faith differs widely in different individuals, and I consider I have no more reason to be tender of one faith than another; with respect to the second charge I can only return the compliment.

With reference to the expression that God is the Absolute Totality of things, I can put the idea in other words—namely, that all things are a manifestation of Deity, and the only form through which we have any knowledge of the Divine Power. Mrs. Penny can be hardly aware of the many theories put forth on this subject if she considers that "no 'ism' yet formulated corresponds to this creed."

I fail to see the necessity that she advances, that any partial manifestation of Totality must be Totality in the concrete. It is an old axiom that the whole is greater than the part, and if she means to infer that, because I consider Mahomed, Buddha, and Christ as part manifestations of Deity, I therefore limit Deity to its expression in those individuals, she has entirely misconceived and mistaken my position. As to there being "One infinite being in whom the totality of all things may indeed be latent," to what being does she refer? Are not all beings infinite? Her creed would condemn all *creatures or created things* to annihilation; as that which possesses no latent infinitude of being must necessarily pass away with finite conditions.

Mrs. Penny considers that "St. Paul would not have said anything so 'flat' as that we live and move and have our being in the life of the universe." But I would ask her what is the "life of the universe" apart from Deity? As to the use of the pronoun *Him* this may or may not be misplaced. Mrs. Penny cannot be ignorant of the androgynous character given to Deity in many systems of philosophy. The book of Genesis confirms this view, and it is difficult to conceive how sex can be ascribed to Spirit.

Mrs. Penny asks me how I can explain the terrible contradictions in this Totality, as representing the only God. I would ask *her* to explain the same contradictions as a creation *by* the only God. We all possess our own ideas on this subject, but to enter on that now would render this letter far too long.

In conclusion, with all due deference to such a student of Bohme as Mrs. Penny, I would venture to point out that in the opening chapters of the "Mysterium Magnum" it is clearly shewn that the creating power, or hunger, as Bohme expresses it, is the manifesting of the Eternal Good as a sensible perception, and that God, seeing He is a Spirit, cannot be called Father or Son except in manifestation. Nor can I see anything contrary to this position in the passages quoted from this same writer. True, before this world there was God; after this world there will be God; but I conceive that neither Böhme nor Mrs. Penny would venture on the assertion that this world must be the *only* manifestation of Deity. This would indeed be a limitation of the Divine power of Eternal Nature and contrary to our experience as Spiritualists and Theosophists, which has led us to the conclusion that there are higher conditions of being through which Deity is made manifest.

F. ARUNDALE.

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES.

GOSWELL HALL.

On Sunday morning last, July 2nd, Mr. Savage gave a trance address, which was duly appreciated by the members and friends present. In the evening Mr. J. Veitch delivered an address upon "Christianity, Atheism, and Spiritualism," his remarks being delivered in his usual able and at times eloquent manner. No doubt the counter attractions of a particularly fine evening and an exceptional meeting at Quebec Hall largely contributed to the smallness of the attendance. On Sunday next, Mr. E. W. Wallis, of Nottingham, will deliver two addresses here (see advertisement elsewhere), and as this will be his first appearance in the Metropolis since his return from America it is hoped that our friends will give him a hearty welcome.—RES-FACTA.

QUEBEC HALL.

On Sunday last, the 2nd inst., the members held an anniversary tea meeting, to celebrate the completion of another year's work, and the removal of all pecuniary liabilities. Shortly after five o'clock tea was served, consisting of the usual fare, in addition to which some excellent fruit was also provided. The tables were tastefully decorated with flowering plants. The company exceeded all expectations in point of numbers, entirely filling every available space, which necessitated a second sitting down for numerous late arrivals. Shortly after seven

o'clock, Mr. J. M. Dale requested that Mr. J. J. Morse should occupy the chair, which request the company cordially endorsed, and the gentleman named at once proceeded to the work for which he had been selected. In opening the meeting, the chairman paid a well-deserved tribute to the energy with which Mr. Dale carried on the work at Quebec Hall, as evidenced in the fact that he had relieved the financial burdens which previously existed; and working as he did, Mr. Dale gave to the meetings a firmness and life that would carry them forward successfully, no doubt, for many more months to come. The meeting was further addressed during the evening by Mr. Samuel Defries, from Sydney, N. S. W.; Mr. Orville Pitcher, New York; Mr. W. Ashman, Mr. J. Whitely, Mr. Powell, Mr. F. Wilson, and Mr. J. M. Dale, who addressed the friends both under influence and in his normal state. Mr. Savage also delivered a brief trance address; Miss E. Dale sang "The Chorister" in a very pleasing manner, and Miss Allan recited "The Maiden's Three Wishes" very effectively. In spite of the hall being filled to its full capacity, and the heat being very oppressive, the meeting passed over in a thoroughly enjoyable manner, and the friends separated with reluctance when the proceedings were closed.

LIVERPOOL.

Owing to the sudden and severe indisposition of Mr. J. C. Wright, the gravity of which all who know him deeply lament, Dr. William Hitchman, M.R.C.S., &c., occupied the platform at the Concert Hall, both morning and evening, on Sunday last, a public debate being also held in the afternoon, as for some time past, on various topics of religious and social interest. The Doctor on the first occasion took for his subject, "Last Words of a Spiritual Philosopher," in the course of which he quoted the sublimely beautiful writings of Johann Gottlieb Fichte, the celebrated German philosopher and metaphysician, of the University of Erlangen, unfolding the doctrines of Transcendental Idealism, representing the life of the mind as the only real life in man, and all the reality of the universe expressed in the absolute I; with especial reference to his sickness and death, and *remarkable sayings connected therewith*. Having continued Professor of Philosophy at Erlangen for some time, as is well known to every reader or hearer of the "Doctrine of Science," he visited Berlin, where, in the military hospital of that city, his angelic wife, prototype of our Florence Nightingale, Sister Dora, Frances Havergal, and other good spirits, had caught malignant fever, and communicated it to him. She recovered, but he died. In the evening Dr. Hitchman spoke of the "Varieties of Spiritualism," or state of being spiritual, as *the philosophic doctrine proper*, in opposition to exclusive materialists,—that all which exists is spirit or soul, in the estimation, at least, of learned and speculative thought in Germany, as in the silent and subtle elements of Church and Theology, elaborated, however, the lecturer said, not in the laboratory of the chemist or the natural evolutions of the universe, the sciences of geology, anthropology, biology, astronomy, or the moral atmosphere of mankind, but in the closet, study, or library, from books, in fact, in which there is now as ever one language for the learned and another for the vulgar. He also cautioned the large audience to believe circumspectly, wisely, righteously, and judiciously, whether the communication of intelligence purported to come from the world of Spirits, through a medium, or like himself, from an ordinary mortal. It it be true, said the Doctor, that conception and existence are not two facts, but one, the existing world issues from our conception, not our conception from the existing world. To his German friends he observed, "Das Sein fällt mir also aus der Vorstellung heraus, nicht die Vorstellung aus dem Sein." He felt deep disgust at the hollow sentimentality of that nondescript thing, yclept "Society," and scarcely less abhorrence of the most arid dogmatism of Churches and creeds in the year 1882, in the entire absence of that vital knowledge which Spiritualism alone gives. Ecclesiasticism sought to usurp the sacred names of Science and Religion, whilst affording no evidence whatever to satisfy the craving or aspiration of the intellect, linked as it was in deathless union with the longings of the heart for a living God, and a personal immortality, or even a moral law that could stand the touchstone of scientific analysis in all kinds or varieties of our race. Church and theology are all mere feeling of the bowels, a mere emotion subjective, fostered by forms outward, music, singing, architecture, dress, custom, and *interest the most worldly*, and not the outcome of reason, logic, demonstration, purity of thought and life, or what ought to be brain-worship, a spiritual connection between idea and fact, leaving, as modern Spiritualism does, fairly represented something distinct and positive, which body and soul can grasp as an objective loving and loved reality. Religion, with him, consisted not alone in a feeling of absolute dependence on some power which, *nolens volens*, gives and destroys our present life, which pervades the seen and unseen universe, and includes body, mind, and spirit within the circle of its everlasting presence and operation—in a word, agency; yielding relief, perhaps, in our different phases of weakness and deficiency, or orthodoxy, a sense of sin committed by others, admitting of no redemption for those whose acquaintance with goodness has not extended to doctrines of alleged infallible truth, or embraced, *in full solution of all the problems of life and*

thought, the unhistoric evidences of Christianity. We must do all the good we can, in despite of Church and theology, to those amongst whom we live, and practise every theory that profits all wisely and religiously. Thus, thus alone, said the lecturer, shall each individuality truly aspire to become, either here or elsewhere, a sinless and perfect spiritual being, "Varieties of Spiritualism" notwithstanding, since participation in this religion of humanity stills every conflict of our inward nature, and brings each soul, *when sweetly attuned*, into harmony, absolute, with the governing laws of the eternal universe.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

NEWCASTLE.—On Sunday morning and evening, July 2nd, Mr. E. W. Wallis, of Nottingham, who has lately returned from America, lectured to the friends at Weir's Court, and we were glad to see a fairly good collection of Spiritualists present to welcome him back to our midst. His morning address was fairly appreciated by a goodly audience, and in the evening to an excellent assembly he lectured most admirably. His guides, to whom, I suppose, we are indebted for the able discourse which he delivered, took hold, with a strong hand, on the subject of creedalism, which at the present time is being mixed up with our Spiritual movement. We hope our worthy platform-worker, Mr. Wallis, may shew to the movement no unmistakable front in regard to the retrograde tendencies that are here and there manifest among a few probably earnest but mistaken persons who seem to fear the bold exposition of our Spiritual philosophy, and would taint its pure waters with the mud of creedalism. On the Monday evening Mr. Wallis gave his experiences of America and American Spiritualism. This he succeeded in accomplishing in good form, and was highly appreciated.

GATESHEAD.—On Sunday morning last, the friends and visitors at the hall of the Gateshead society, had the pleasure of listening to the guides of Mr. Walter Howell, of Manchester, trance speaker, who is about leaving England for America. Considering the fineness of the weather there was a good attendance of friends, who chose as a subject for the lecture "Spiritualism, Ancient and Modern." The subject was handled in a thoughtful and able manner, to the intense gratification of all present. In the evening Mr. Howell again lectured to a good audience. The subject, which was chosen by the audience, was "The Mission of Spiritualism," and was handled in a masterly fashion, the guides covering in their treatment of the subject a wide field of thought and fact, wherein they expressed the mission of Spiritualism as having to deal, not only with the theological errors of the creeds, but with the social, physical, and political condition of the people. Step by step the lecturer clinched his proposition with facts and philosophical deductions which carried the audience into enthusiastic appreciation. At the conclusion of the discourse, the guides of Mr. Howell, at the request of the audience, gave their experiences in Spirit life, and their descriptions were really beautiful. At the conclusion, Mr. Burton, the President of the Society, in a few energetic words commended the address as one of the most able he had heard from the Spiritualistic platform, and expressed his sorrow that the country was so unwisely allowing such able services to be lost to the movement. Mr. Grey proposed a vote of thanks to the lecturer, expressing the sympathy and good wishes of the Gateshead Spiritualists to him in his proposed journey to the New World. Mr. Shield seconded the proposal, which was carried unanimously and with enthusiasm.—NORTHUMBERIA.

WORK OF THE COMING WEEK.

LONDON.

Sunday, July 9.—Goswell Hall. 11.30 a.m., Lecture by Mr. E. W. Wallis. 7 p.m., Lecture by Mr. E. W. Wallis.
 „ July 9.—Quebec Hall. Lecture, Mr. Iver MacDonnell.
 Monday, July 10.—Central Association, 38, Great Russell-street. Soirée at 7 p.m., members and friends. Admission 1s.
 Tuesday, July 11.—Central Association, 38, Great Russell-street. Finance Committee, 6 p.m.; Council Meeting, 6.30 p.m.
 Friday, July 14.—Central Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell-street. 8 p.m., Members' Weekly Free Séance.

PROVINCES.

Public meetings are held every Sunday in Liverpool, Manchester, Oldham, Leeds, Bradford, Gateshead, Newcastle, Glasgow, Leicester, Nottingham, Belper, &c., &c. See our list of Societies on p. 2.

Societies advertising in "LIGHT" will have attention called to their advertisements, as above, without extra charge.

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—KEIGHLEY: July 8th and 9th; LONDON: July 16th; STAMFORD: July 23rd; GOSWELL HALL: July 30th; CARDIFF: August 6th and 7th; WALSHALL: August 13th; PLYMOUTH: August 20th; FALMOUTH and CORNWALL district: end of August; GATESHEAD: September 3rd and 4th.—For terms and dates, direct Mr. Morse, at 53, Sigdon-road, Dalston, London, E.—[Advt.]

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; *Dr. J. Elliottson, 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 Friese, 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 medianimic 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 a *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.