

# Light:

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

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

No. 83.—VOL. II.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 1882.

PRICE THREEPENCE.

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## NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

I often wonder what substratum of fact there is in the many historic stories of the supernatural that are current. The accounts of hauntings and visitations of Spirits, perturbed and disquieted from various causes, will receive attention from a committee of the Society for Psychical Research. But there is the vast subject of dreams. There is a whole literature of the subject, some of which dates back far and has a kind of historic flavour about it. One wonders on what basis the story has been built up in such a case as that of "The Swaffham Tinker," which is perpetually cropping up. Was there ever such a tinker? Did he dream? Did he dream this particularly remarkable dream? Did he really build a new chancel to his parish church out of the proceeds of his dream? It would be too much to expect that the story has not grown in the course of three centuries. The question is, What were its original dimensions? Can any reader throw light on the facts of this case? which I select chiefly because it is well-known, frequently re-published, and rather precise in its details.

Somewhen in the 16th century there lived at Swaffham, in Norfolk, a tinker. This man dreamed one night that if he went to London, and placed himself on London Bridge, he would meet a person from whom he would "hear something to his advantage." The next night, and on the third night, the dream was repeated, and, in spite of the mocking laughter of his wife, he was determined to go to London and see what came of it. He trudged the ninety miles, and after three weary days took up his position on London Bridge at a part which corresponded with the description in his dream. On the first day nothing occurred, nor on the second. The third day had nearly passed over, and our tinker was rapidly arriving at the conclusion that he was befooled, when a stranger, who had noticed him standing doggedly in one position for three days, accosted him, and asked him what he was there for. The ingenuous tinker told his errand, and the stranger smiled at his simplicity, and advised him to go home. The rest of the story must be told in the words of the narrator, whose version I have before me.

" 'I myself,' said he, 'if I were disposed to put faith in such things, might now go a hundred miles into the country upon a similar errand. I dreamed three nights this week, that if I went to a place called Swaffham, in Norfolk, and dug under an apple-tree in a tinker's garden, on the north side of the town, I should find a box of money; but I have something else to do than to run after such idle fancies! No, no, my friend, go home and work well at your calling, and you will find there the riches you are seeking here.' The tinker was astonished. This, he doubted not, was the information he was seeking; but he said nothing further to the stranger than to thank him for his advice, and to declare his determination to follow it. Next day he set off for his home, which he reached safely. He said but little to his wife, but rose early the next morning, and commenced digging on the spot supposed to be pointed out by the stranger. After proceeding with his work a few feet downwards, the spade struck against a hard substance, which, upon clearing the mould from the top of it, proved to be an iron chest. He quickly removed it to his house, and having with some difficulty broken off the lid, to his great joy found it full of money. After securing his treasure, he discovered, upon

the outside of the chest, an inscription, which, being no scholar, he was unable to decipher. He therefore hit upon the following expedient to ascertain its meaning: There was in the town a grammar-school, several of the pupils of which were constantly in the habit of passing his smithy in the way to and from school. The tinker judged that by placing the chest at the door, it would excite the attention of the boys, and thus he should be able to attain the object in view, without exciting any suspicion among his neighbours. He had soon the opportunity he sought. A number of the boys being gathered round, as was their custom, to witness the operations of the forge, he took occasion to challenge their scholastic skill in the translation of the inscription. Some shook their heads: others, after conning it over awhile, said it was not legible. At length, one older than the rest, anxious to display his superior learning, after scraping and breaking off the rust, gave the following solution of it:—

" 'Where this stood,  
Is another twice as good.'"

Overjoyed at this information, the tinker next morning resumed his labour; and a little below the ground already cleared, he found a second chest, double the size of the first, and like it, filled with gold and silver coin. The account goes on to state that, becoming thus a wealthy man, the tinker shewed his gratitude to Providence by building a new chancel to the church, the old one being out of repair. Whatever fiction the taste for the marvellous in that century may have mixed up with the tale, certain it is that there is shewn in this day a monument in Swaffham Church, having an effigy in marble, said to be that of the tinker, with his dog at his side, and his tools and implements of trade lying about him."

Archdeacon Squire, F.R.S., records in "Philosophical Transactions" for 1748, what he calls, "The case of Henry Axford, who recovered the use of his tongue, after having been four years dumb, by means of a frightful dream." This is the dream. It is not, however, apparent how a "common cold" could cause dumbness; though it may be that more than ordinary exertion, under strong emotional influence, may have relieved him from the paralysis of speech.

"Henry Axford, son of Henry Axford, an attorney, of Devizes in Wiltshire, when a child, was subject to convulsive fits, which troubled him very frequently until he was about twenty-five years of age. After this his health became extremely good. At about twenty-eight years old, going with some ladies to see Longleat, in Wiltshire, the seat of Lord Viscount Weymouth, he perceived a hoarseness come upon him, which was soon after attended with all the symptoms of a common cold, until, in about six days after his first seizure, he became quite speechless, not only losing the articulate use of his tongue, but being scarcely able to make the least noise with it. His cold quickly went off in the usual manner, and he grew perfectly well—as well in health as ever he had been in his life, but he still continued absolutely speechless. He had advice from all the neighbouring physicians, but to no purpose, for nothing they did for him could restore to him the former use of his tongue. He continued in this dumb way about four years, till one day in the month of July, in the year 1741, being at Stoke, in the above-mentioned county, he got very much in liquor, so much so, that upon his return home at night to Devizes, he fell from his horse three or four times, and was at last taken up by a neighbour, and put to bed in a house upon the road. He soon fell asleep, when, as he tells us the story himself, dreaming that he was fallen into a vat of boiling beer, it put him into so great an agony of fright that, struggling with all his might to call out for help, he did call aloud, and recovered speech from that moment."

I may add that the cure was stated to be permanent.

It is in Mrs. Crowe's "Night Side of Nature" that the very striking dream of his mother is recorded by Noel Paton. Of the accurate record of that dream there can be no doubt, and as a prophetic warning it is not a little remarkable. I may add, for purposes of reference, that *Blackwood* (1840) contain

a paper on omens, dreams, appearances, &c., which is worth noting. And if anyone desires to read a ghost story of the most thrilling nature (I wonder whether it is founded on fact), the *Dublin University Magazine*, November, 1847, or thereabouts, contains one called "The Watcher," which is very powerful.

The *Harbinger of Light*, just to hand, contains further record of results obtained at Mr. Sprigg's materialisation séances. Very good evidence of the separate existence of the form was obtained. In one case "Peter," standing in front of the curtain, grasped Mr. Terry's hand while his other hand was placed through the aperture of the curtain on the medium's hand. Mr. Terry thus grasped two hands, one in view and the other behind the curtain. This was verified by five other persons. We read of seven and eight different forms, male and female, appearing in a single evening. These the weighing experiments shew to vary greatly in weight; and they are as different in height and bulk, when judged by the eye. We are promised an exact *résumé* of results in a forthcoming number. This I await before commenting.

One amusing piece of evidence I may, however, quote, as it seems to shew the separate and distinct existence of the forms; and at the same time points to the conclusion that colouring matter placed on the materialised form is not always transferred to the body of the medium. Whether this is even *usually* the case is open to question; but this evidence shows that it is at any rate not *always* the result.

"One of the tests applied this month may be considered more valuable by outsiders, because applied by a sceptic without the knowledge of the circle and with the expectation of detecting fraud. One of the sitters, taking an unfair advantage of his position, contrived to smear his hand with printer's ink before grasping that of the materialised form. When the medium came into full light, the sceptic was grievously disappointed to find no trace whatever of the ink which he had impressed upon the hand of the form. The printer of this journal informs us that the stain of printer's ink could not be erased even with soap and water in a single washing. The fact, therefore, that the medium's hand was perfectly free from any trace of printer's ink is another important evidence of the distinct identity of the form."

From Atlanta, Ga., U.S.A. comes the first number of the second volume of the *Progressive Age*, a magazine which assumes the province of guide to the science, ethics, and facts of Spiritualism. Among the contributors the names of Henry Kiddle, who writes well on the higher Spiritualism; and of the venerable pilgrim, J. M. Peebles, who discourses on "Trying the Spirits," are familiar and welcome. One of Mr. Wedgwood's narratives of the materialisation of a Spirit, and a very good story it is, is transferred from the pages of the late *Spiritualist*. Mr. Hazard tells a touching story of the rescue of a poor sufferer from ruin and starvation by the direct intervention of a Spirit—his own daughter. There Mr. Hazard is at home, and brings out most pathetically some of the nobler aspects of Spiritualism, a finer work, if I may be permitted to say so, than some of his well-meant and generous, but I fear unwise attempts to defend what has done so much harm to the cause he loves. The general tone and get-up of the *Progressive Age* is good.

The *Daily Telegraph* is apparently perplexed to know what to make of Mr. Sinnett's book, "almost as remarkable a phenomenon as any recorded in its pages." That "an Anglo-Indian journalist of ability—a man of the world," and various other things besides, should write such a book, seems to his critic sufficiently wonderful. That he should write it in this age of decaying faith, when "scepticism is in the air," and all sublunary things are called on to shew cause why they should any longer be believed in, is more curious still. But that Mr. Sinnett should do all this in order to promulgate a gospel of which the appropriate motto is "In the name of the Prophet—Figs!" that Koot Hoomi should, being what he is, confine himself to acting the part of postman, or to the manufacture of blue china (if it was blue, and if he really made it), seems most unaccountable of all. Nor is the reviewer at all content with the outward and visible representative of these hidden mystery-mongers. He speaks quite rudely of "Isis Unveiled," and calls its learned authoress "an eccentric old lady," who has deserted Russia, her birth-place, and the United States, the land of her adoption, in order to disseminate Indian philosophy amongst benighted Europeans in the East, "in language, and

with a tone and temper" that the reviewer does not like. It must be confessed that he has made some points. What he says has occurred to others, and is pervaded by a certain rude sort of sense. M.A. (Oxon.)

## THE HULL PSYCHOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION SOCIETY.

### A REPORT OF TWO SEANCES.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I have great pleasure in laying before your readers the following brief outline of two séances held under test conditions in the rooms of the above Society.

On Wednesday, July 19th, we were unexpectedly visited by Mons. E. Bovine and at once availed ourselves of the opportunity of endeavouring to obtain some physical manifestations.

A cabinet of a very simple construction was hurriedly contrived. Two of our members tied the medium in a chair, securing his hands to his thighs, his legs to the chair legs, and his shoulders to the chair back. A seal having been placed upon every knot, the medium was then placed in the centre of the cabinet, to which no access could by any means be obtained. A metallic harmonicon was placed upon the top; the curtain was closed, and the gas somewhat subdued, but not put out. We could see each other plainly, and were engaged in conversation, when shortly the harmonicon was played upon. The hammer was afterwards broken, the instrument was then thrown upon the floor, the box cover of the sewing machine standing on one side of the cabinet, was taken off, and held up above the top of the curtain, then thrown upon the floor, and thrust outside the cabinet; a head and hand were seen over the top of the curtain by all present, ten in number, after which all was quiet. On gently-raising the curtain we found the medium in an exhausted state, tied, sealed, and in the same position in the cabinet as when placed there. He had no knowledge of what had taken place. He was liberated by the two gentlemen who had secured him, and after several questions had been asked and satisfactorily answered the company separated. Subsequently I took the medium seriously to task as to the genuineness of the phenomena, being myself somewhat sceptical. He offered to submit to a still further test, and to be put under the same conditions as before, and a string tied either to his leg or the leg of the chair brought out of the cabinet, and held in the hand of any one of the party we would select, so that the least sign of movement could be detected at once. On Wednesday, July 26th, another séance was arranged for and these additional conditions complied with by the medium. The curtain of the cabinet was also raised so that the legs of the medium could be seen by all in the room; he was then tied and sealed as before and the chair placed in position, the curtain lowered, and all present were satisfied that any movement must be perceived. The phenomena of the previous Wednesday having been repeated, one of those present asked if we could be favoured with direct Spirit writing.

The Spirit at once offered to try, if we would furnish paper and pencil; these were at once produced by Mr. W—t, who had a business card in his pocket. Mr. R—t tore a piece out of the corner of the card in order that there might be no question as to its identity, and placed the card and pencil on the box of the sewing machine outside of the cabinet curtain. The box was partially drawn inside, the card was written on in three distinct styles of penmanship. The pencil was thrown out of the cabinet, and the card placed on a sideboard on one side of the cabinet. This being done we raised the curtain and found the medium in a state of stupor, in which he remained for some minutes, being as securely tied and sealed as when placed there. In the room there were three scientific gentlemen, who carefully examined all points before and after the séance, and admitted that something beyond known natural laws was necessary to explain what had been produced. As we had been investigating the theory of transcendental physics by Professor Zöllner, these phenomena have been set down as subjects for future discussion. We expect to arrange with Mons. Bovine for another séance on next Wednesday evening.

I may add that our meetings are attended by several who are determined to sift the matter to its very root, in a scientific spirit, and am, yours truly, JOHN T. BLAND, Secretary.

22, Prospect-street, Hull.

MR. E. W. WALLIS has removed to 83, Radford-road, Hyson Green, Nottingham, and has commenced business as a stationer, &c.

## THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

A meeting of the Council of the Society for Psychical Research was held on the 26th ult. In the absence of the President, Professor Barrett occupied the chair. Several new members were elected, and a number of applications for membership were presented.

Arrangements were stated to be in progress for the publication of a report of the General Meeting of the Society held last month, in the form of "Proceedings," as decided at the previous meeting.

After completion of the ordinary business, the meeting was made "Special," to consider a proposed alteration in Rule V., the important part of which will now read as follows:—

"Every candidate for admission shall be required to give such references as shall be approved by the Council, unless he shall have been proposed in writing by two or more Members or Associates, who, on his behalf, and by his authority, shall assent to the Constitution and Rules of the Society, and consent to abide and be governed by them, one of whom shall have certified in writing, from personal knowledge of him, that he is a fit person for admission."

The object of the alteration is to facilitate the introduction of those wishing to join the Society, either at home or abroad, who may not have any personal acquaintance with existing members.

## THE USE OF SORROW.

One of the views that impressed me most of those urged by Channing, was that sorrow, however considered by us, individually—as a shocking accident—in God's providence, was a large part of the appointed experience of existence: no blot, no jar, no sudden violent visitation of wrath; but part of the light, and harmony, and order of our spiritual education; an essential and invaluable portion of our experience, of infinite importance in our moral training. To all it is decreed to suffer; through our bodies, through our minds, through our affections, through the noblest as well as the lowest of our attributes of being. This then, he argues, which enters so largely into the existence of every living soul, should never be regarded with an eye of terror, as an appalling liability, or a fearful unaccountable disturbance in the course of our lives. I suppose the rarified air our spirits breathe on great heights of achievement is as vital to our moral nature as the pure mountain element which stimulates our lungs is to our physical being. In sorrow, faithfully borne, the glory and the blessing of holiness become hourly more apparent to us, and it must be good for us to suffer since our dear Father lays suffering upon us.—*Frances Anne Kemble.*

"Esteeming sorrow, whose employ  
Is to develop, not destroy,  
Far better than a barren joy."

—*Lord Houghton.*

## MR. W. J. COLVILLE'S RETURN TO ENGLAND.

A recent issue of the *Banner of Light* announces that Mr. W. J. Colville, the trance-speaker, is returning to England for a short time, and is expected to reach this country about the end of August. Our contemporary gives the following particulars of a farewell reception tendered to Mr. Colville:—

"The friends of this well-known speaker assembled at 30, Worcester-square, Boston, Friday evening, July 14th, to bid him farewell on the eve of his departure from Boston. The spacious parlours were crowded, nearly 150 ladies and gentlemen filling the rooms and entry. Mr. Colville then sang 'In the Cathedral,' after which his guides delivered through his organism an earnest address of farewell, complimenting their many friends for the warm interest and kind co-operation unceasingly manifested during nearly four years, and urging all to take hold practically of the spiritual work, independent of the ministrations of any particular band of guides who might reach them through an individual medium.

"The guides declared that they were under promise to the English people to return their medium thither for a time, and that, after speaking for a few weeks at camp-meetings, he would sail for England, to return to America at no distant time.

"The address closed with a beautiful and appropriate poem, when Miss Helen Mar in a short felicitous speech presented Mr. Colville with 80 dols. as a parting gift from a few of his friends; for which he returned thanks in a graceful tribute to the unceasing kindness he had received from them throughout their mutual acquaintance."

**BANK HOLIDAY.**—Monday next being Bank Holiday, our offices will be closed.

## AN EXTRAORDINARY STORY OF A CURE.

The following story comes to us through the *Granite State Journal*, and, like so many of a similar kind, contains just enough definite information to make us desire that the correspondent who sent it had made his report sufficiently complete to be of any real value. It is true the name of the patient is given, but what is wanted is the testimony of one or more of the "eight physicians" before and after the alleged cure. Possibly this deficiency can be supplied, if so we should be delighted to record it. The story is thus told:—

"The residents of Hartland, in the State of Vermont, U.S.A., have been unusually excited in consequence of a remarkable cure effected in the family of one of its best known citizens. Miss Maud Tewksbury, between sixteen and seventeen years of age, had been sick and gradually failing for three years. Eight different physicians have been employed in her case with no apparent benefit to her. For the past three months she has been totally blind, and kept in a room from which every ray of light was excluded. Her spine had become curved, and a large swelling had developed itself on one side. She had no appetite, often not tasting a mouthful of food for a week, and was so weak that she could not raise her head or hand. She was given up by her physicians, and the parents watched with mournful anxiety the swift approaches death was apparently making. At this point they were advised to send for H. O. Wright, of Bartonville, Vt., and he reached them June 21st. His first act was to give the light free access to the room of the sick girl. Then he breathed upon her eyes, and suddenly the lids opened, and sight became perfectly restored. In twenty-five minutes, during which passes were made over the body, the curvature of the spine and the swelling on the side were gone. He then directed her to rise from her bed, and walk, which she instantly did, walking across the room to the windows, and looking out of them the first time for three months. The next day she visited the village, and on the Sunday following told the writer who furnishes the account that she felt as well as she ever did."

## HOPE.

[The following stanzas are from a poem entitled "Giant Despair," in Robert Buchanan's new volume—"Ballads of Life, Love, and Humour."]

Under God's starless cope,  
Vestured in white sits Hope  
A musing maiden;  
Under a yew sits she,  
Watching most silently  
The gates of Eden.

Afar away they shine!  
While up those depths divine  
Her eyes are turning;  
And one by one on high  
The strange lamps of the sky  
Are dimly burning.

Such sounds as fill'd with care  
The dark heart of Despair  
Disturb her never,—  
Though close to her white feet  
The mighty sea doth beat,  
Moaning for ever.

She sees the foam-flash gleam,  
She hears in a half dream  
The muffled thunder.  
The salt dew fills her hair;  
Her thoughts are otherwhere,  
Watching in wonder.

There let her sit alone,  
Ev'n as a shape of stone  
In twilight gleaming;  
Despair's pale monument,  
There let her sit content,  
Waiting and dreaming.

Ah! which were sweetest, best?  
With dead Despair to rest  
In sleep unbroken;  
Or with that marble maid,  
To watch, to sit in the shade,  
Waiting a token?

The ordinary monthly meeting of the Council of the Central Association of Spiritualists will be held on Tuesday evening next.

Miss C. E. Wood will attend a members' private subscription séance at the Central Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, W.C., this (Saturday) evening, at 6.45 for 7 o'clock. Similar séances are also announced for Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday evenings next week, at same hour. Members desirous of attending these séances are requested to be punctual.

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

## ADVERTISEMENT CHARGES.

Five lines and under, 3s. One inch, 4s. 6d. Half-column, £1. Whole Column, £2 2s. Page, £1. A reduction made for a series of insertions. Cheques and Post Office Orders may be made payable to EDWARD T. BENNETT, at the Chief Office, London. Halfpenny Postage Stamps received for amounts under 10s.

## NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may be obtained direct from our Office, and also of F. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and all Booksellers.

The Editor of "Light" is out of Town, and correspondents are therefore asked to exercise a little patience if their communications have not in every case immediate attention.

Just now news of special interest is not very abundant, and therefore for the next few weeks—that is, until the dull season is over—we shall print fewer pages than usual.

## FANNY KEMBLE AND "MAGNETISM."

The "Records of Later Life," by Frances Anne Kemble, contain some curious references to "magnetism," "mesmerism," and "electro-biology," as manifesting themselves forty years ago. They are more curious than instructive, on account of the extremely superficial aspect in which they were regarded by the writer, and her inability to perceive that there was any reality in what she saw deserving a second thought.

In a letter dated May, 1841, Mrs. Kemble writes:—"Chauncy Hare Townsend has just come in, followed by his mesmeric German patient who is going to perform his magnetic magic for us." She adds: "This young lad, Alexis, to whom I have referred in this letter, was, I think, one of the first of the long train of mesmerists, magnetisers, Spiritualists, charlatans, cheats and humbugs, who subsequently appealed to the notice, and practised on the credulity of London society. Mr. Chauncy Hare Townsend was an enthusiastic convert to the theory of animal magnetism, and took about with him to various houses this German boy, whose exhibition of mesmeric phenomena was the first I ever witnessed. Mr. Townsend had almost insisted upon our receiving this visit, and we accordingly assembled in the drawing-room to witness the powers of Alexis. We were all of us sceptical, one of our party so incurably so, that after each exhibition of clairvoyance given by Alexis, and each exclamation of Mr. Townsend's: 'There now, you see that?' he merely replied with the most imperturbable phlegm, 'Yes, I see it, but I don't believe it.' The clairvoyant power of the young man consisted principally in reading passages from books presented to him while under the influence of the mesmeric sleep, into which he had been thrown by Mr. Townsend, and with which he was previously unacquainted. The results were certainly sufficiently curious, though probably neither marvellous nor unaccountable.\* To make sure that his eyes were really and effectually closed, cotton wool was laid over them, and a broad, tight bandage placed upon them; during another trial the hands of our chief sceptic were placed upon his eyelids, so as effectually to keep them completely closed, in spite of which he undoubtedly read out of a book held up before him above his eyes, and rather on a level with his forehead; nor can I remember any instance in which he appeared to find any great difficulty in doing so except when a book suddenly fetched from another room was opened before him, when he hesitated and expressed incapacity, and then said, 'The book is French; which it was.'

About twenty pages of the second volume of the "Records" are occupied, more or less, with matter of this kind, recognising the reality of remarkable phenomena and displaying a singular want of appreciation of their value. One of the most curious anecdotes illustrates the power of the writer's own will strongly exercised in repelling the mesmeric influence of "Dr. Lewis," a negro who attained considerable notoriety at that time, over a Dr. Becker, whom he had frequently previously mesmerised. It is interesting to notice that in the account of this experiment, Mrs. Kemble says that she sat by Dr. Becker, and Dr. Lewis opposite, with the width of the table between them. Granting the reality of the influences, Mrs. Kemble would thus have a position of considerable advantage.

The comments on "Planchette" and on Foster, Hume, and others are most amusing. This, for instance, is a remark made:—"An intimate acquaintance of mine, who knew Hume well, assured me that she knew him to be an impostor, adding at the same time, 'But I also know him to be clairvoyant,' which seemed to me to be mere tautology."

\* What the writer means by this sentence she does not condescend to explain.—Ed.

## SPIRITUAL METHODS AND STATES.

By Frederick F. Cook, of Chicago.

[We give the following communication without committing ourselves to an approval of the opinions expressed by the writer. We shall be glad to receive our readers' views on the subject.]

It was said by one even so wise as Plato: "Wisdom herself we cannot see, so terrible had been the love she had inspired." To perceive wisdom implies a corresponding quality in the percipient. What we do see, and call wisdom, is folly—a bedizened jade, who flatters our vanity, conforms to our whims, shades the light of truth to our purblind eyes, and when in very disgust at human imbecility she gives way, it is only to make room for another member of the same beguiling sisterhood.

Is human existence a tragedy or a farce? From the standpoint of worldly philosophy it is both. To the Spiritual philosopher, however, it is neither—rather is it a sublime unfolding. All so-called evil is but a stepping-stone towards good. When evil shall be vanquished chaos will come again. *Nirvana* is the coward's refuge. It is in *Sansara*, the state of doing, the battle-ground of the soul, that true content and happiness abide.

Our individual stature is ever the measure of the universe. Our personal woes we magnify into world-pain. A mote in the eye shuts out the light of blazing suns.

Can we affirm that any act of ours will ultimate in good? Selfish or unselfish, we are bunglers. The philanthropist and slave-driver occupy common ground. The one through kindness enervates; the other through cruelty spurs to resistance, to freedom, to supreme self-hood. When the scourge should be applied, and when the balm, is knowledge beyond our ken. And yet the world steadily moves towards higher truths and nobler aspirations. What hand is it that guides the helm?

If the noblest study of mankind is man, it is also the most futile. We are never so much in the dark as when we turn the light upon ourselves. What of a science of history? What of a science of mind? What are the laws that make for progress? All this is *terra incognita*,—but constitutes the very foundations of any knowledge worth the having.

It is only from the vantage-ground afforded by an advanced Spiritualism that man can study either himself or the scheme of the universe with an open mind. Everywhere he discovers design—everywhere the wisest dispensation and adaptation of means to ends. And in proportion as the horizon of observation expands there is corresponding introspection—contemplation of self,—and the question, what are my relations to this stupendous whole? each hour receives enlarged answer, until the questioner stands face to face with the problems of eternity.

The bitter of so-called evil is still copiously mixed with the sweet of so-called good. Truth and error are but relative terms. Certain it is that without the presence of error no truth can be perceived. This is a fundamental law of human perception. Error forces to action, produces conflict; through conflict we reach the light. All progress is reaction.

In the past all attempts to formulate a rationale of religion have proved dismal failures. This for two reasons: Either the student denies inspiration altogether, or his sole object is to defend some particular expression of it. That all religious manifestations are parts of one scheme is a truth for which the world is indebted to Spiritualism. But Spiritualists, it is much to be regretted, do not always follow this postulate to its logical conclusion.

All religions are spiritual impulsions, and depend for their development, not on evolution but involution. Evolutionary forces struggle within to adapt themselves to their environment; the forces of involution press from without, and ever meet with resistance from the evolutionary. The conflict between spirit and its material vesture is unequal. Unless there comes assistance to the spirit within from spirit without, it succumbs to the paralyzing influences of its organised fetters. I am firmly persuaded that man's part in the progress of religious ideas counts for nothing. The totality of his influence is altogether in the opposite direction.

The adaptation of religious ideas to man's perception involves the most recondite of sciences—knowledge of what makes for progress as well as an understanding of the very constitution of progress itself. We call that superstition which we no longer believe. By this rule so much of the belief of Spiritualists as must eventually fall by the way, is superstition. That which is doomed is the belief in absolute evil—in its existence as a self-

propagative force under purely spiritual conditions. This belief is the badge of our mental and moral servitude.

Perhaps you will answer, "The existence of active evil in Spirit-life is quite generally taught by Spiritual teachers, disembodied as well as embodied, and it is besides made evident to our senses." To be sure, and the fact that it is taught and made evident is the best of proof that you have not outgrown the state that requires its presentation. When man has outgrown his fetish a cart-load of the most hideous variety has no effect upon him. It is to him merely so much stone or wood. However, to have told him in his savage state that a fetish is only a superstition would have flatly contradicted his whole experience.

Each man must kill the devil for himself. The death-blow is dealt with knowledge. On no account undertake to kill your neighbour's devil. It is more than a mistaken kindness—it is a crime. Devil-killing is exciting, but exceedingly dangerous sport. Better a thousand devils than no restraining influences whatsoever. To do good for its own sake is the exaltation of spirit over all material environments. This condition cannot be made to order. It cannot be taught as you teach mathematics. To be a ruling principle it must be a natural development. To teach it as an intellectual panacea for evil conduct is the frothiest of sentimentalism.

Man in his religious infancy is a prey to superstitions wisely adapted to his mental status. In the next stage he is fed upon carefully formulated creeds, spiced with damnation to meet a variety of undeveloped wants. Creeds constitute a sort of mental pabulum that does not require any spiritual perception to aid the digestion. Creeds are the war elements in religion. They strengthen self-sufficiency, breed intolerance, develop bigotry, beget tyranny, and persistently teach that the chief end of man is to persecute somebody. It is not until the iconoclastic spirit of doubt has shaken this fabric of doctrine to its very foundations, that its sister-spirit, charity, has any voice in the regulation of man's conduct; and the metamorphosis to better things is exceedingly painful.

Spiritualism, in its present development, is an interesting epitome of the inception and mode of progress of religious ideas. For the most part it is still in the thralldom of material conceptions of form, and morbid superstition of evil. By degrees, however, the light flashes deeper and deeper into this darkness, and, at no distant day, the entire field will be luminous with the scintillations of higher spiritual expressions.

The distinctive quality that distinguishes the philosophic from the vulgar mind is perception of the abstract. Ordinarily, human conceptions do not transcend the concrete; time and space are its limitations; and form signifies a given quantity, having length, breadth and thickness. It is this concrete materialism that at the present time hangs like a pall over the movement, and under its stifling influences no essential spiritual progress is possible.

I readily grant that existence cannot be conceived except as formal expression. But the difference between the extremes of form is as great as between things tangible and intangible. There is, for example, the form of matter and the form of thought—one we call objective, the other subjective. But subjective forms are not cognizable by anything related to the senses, and have no vulgar existence. Hence spirit, as it is, has no existence for minds not alive to refined and subtle realities.

It is generally assumed by Spiritualists that spirit expressions are more or less exact counterparts of material prototypes, having definite and fixed form, and presenting the same general appearance to all sojourners in the realm of spirit. The latest presentations of scenes from spirit-life, by representative Spiritualists, indicate no advancement. The spheres seen by them, or for them, with the eye of clairvoyance, are as fixed and material as the solid earth, and are governed much in the same manner. In truth, if there be any preference, it is in favour of earthly arrangements.

There is a spirit-law of reciprocity, expressed by the formula that like attracts like, the significance of which, as a rule, is utterly perverted. Instead of being received in its spiritual, it is accepted in a literal or chemical sense. It is assumed that a criminal is attracted to a criminal, a miser to a miser, a drunkard to his kind, and so on through the various categories of human expression. This is not only a perversion but a complete reversion of a most profound and subtle order of manifestation. There is a spiritual law of harmony, but to reduce this to likeness in crime, in selfishness, or lust, is the quintessence of degradation.

In Spirit-life evil is a negation—activity the triumph of conscience. There is no doing—and consequently no harmony—below the line of good. A bad conscience is synonymous with isolation—it is sovereign in the sphere of self. Spirit-light is not of suns, but of qualities like sympathy and charity and love. What was done for self on earth must be undone by self in Heaven. The undoing is the way towards light. In spirit our life is an open book. All may read it, but none to condemn. In such circumstances an evil act is impossible. Memories of evil there are to surfeit, all gnawing at the very vitals of thought, but the one desire in such case is not only to escape from all others, but even from yourself.

Most persons unfamiliar with the phenomena of Spiritualism, if they granted Spirit existence at all, would probably accept these conclusions on account of their *a priori* reasonableness. Yet Spiritualists, in the mass, oppose them energetically, and for the very sufficient reason that they are not supported by the observed facts. I candidly admit that a *prima facie* case is readily established against them. A surface view of the phenomena reveals, indeed, a most mortifying spectacle. Judged by even ordinary human standards phases are presented that suggest an utter moral obliquity. Lying is, apparently, a favourite and almost universal pastime with immortals, and most degrading practices are not only countenanced, but even suggested and fostered by them. In the face of such appearances it is seemingly the height of rashness to set up any defence—yea more, to claim not only purity of motive, but wise and beneficent purpose in all the dealings of Spirits with men. Yet this is precisely the task I have set myself, and nothing less than success in my undertaking can acquit me of the charge of heartless trifling with the most generally accepted dogma in the unwritten belief of Spiritualists.

Equality is the basis of every true judgment. All judgments, not formed upon a complete understanding of the relations subsisting between the elements involved, are obviously erroneous. That the literal method of interpretation of the phenomena of Spiritualism meets with such general favour among investigators is but a sorry compliment to their powers of penetration. All is blind induction and abnormal realism.

The difference between the laws governing mind and those governing matter is best illustrated by their unequal modes of adaptation. In the material universe the process of adaptation begins immediately there is change of environment. The physical eye, accustomed to one kind of light, is sensitive to a change the instant it occurs, and, without loss of time, sets about to adapt itself to the new order. The mental eye is far less sensitive. What is light for one is not for another. And when a change is forced upon its attention, it is slow to adapt itself. The rather, it stoutly resists every demand made upon it in that direction, and sometimes even succeeds in putting out the light. When, however, it is compelled to submit to a superior power, it vigorously sets about to import into the new order as many of the traditions and formulas of the old as circumstances will permit, and behind these it firmly entrenches itself. The result is a half-butterfly, half-grub, development—a thing that can neither fly in the new light as it should, nor yet crawl as was its wont under the old order. Complete metamorphosis of thought is a new birth.

A perfect adaptation of the mental vision to the demands of any new truth, without the compelling persuasiveness of experience, is the highest expression of the intellect—the essential characteristic that marks the true thinker. This result can be achieved only through a process of abstraction. Before the new order can be discerned in its integrity, all forms and elements in the mind belonging to other orders must be eliminated. The new order should be judged by itself, by its own conditions, and not through the foggy atmosphere pertaining to another, and, perchance, lower development.

The light of truth is a pure unit. In this form it is beyond mortal perception. When broken or differentiated, to match the mental vision of a complex humanity, it assumes a variety of colours. All that we perceive of anything is in ourselves. Nothing that we perceive can transcend us. Truth, in her vestal robes, never descends into the valley. Her home is on the heights, where the rarity of the atmosphere lends scope to the vision. To dwell within her presence you must climb the mountain. Each step brings you larger perception. Looking up, you behold the streams of light growing whiter and whiter, and converging towards a single point, the unit of truth. Looking down, you observe them diverging more and more, differentiating into millions of lines, each different from its

fellows both in size and colour. Of course, what each receives is to him the full measure and quality of the central truth.

The terms spirit and man represent antithetical relations. The difference is best expressed by adjustment of wisdom to folly. Man advances most laboriously. The gulf between barbarism and civilisation is never bridged by makeshifts. It must be filled up, every foot of it, with solid experience. Not by wise precepts, but by living examples, is the work furthered. It is only the sternest necessity that holds man to his task of making the world better. On the least encouragement he is ready to let go his hold on toil, and pain, and duty, and have recourse to some patent nostrum for a universal remedy. Man is ever on the look-out for some short-cut to his selfish goal, and, could he but enlist the world of Spirits, occult, wise, and ubiquitous, he would certainly consider his fortune made. Many imagine they are on the high road towards this consummation when they discover that the way to communion is open; they imagine this until they ruefully discover their mistake.

I trust I have presented to the discerning a key to the Spiritualistic problem. Along the entire gamut of communion there is wise adaptation of light to our needs—not as we see those needs, but as they are perceived for us. It is this adaptation that governs and controls all manifestations, and it is in the light of this law that all Spirit utterances should be received and judged.

Untrustworthy mediumship, represented by untruthful or contradictory messages, typifies our own obliquities and diversities, and not shortcomings on the part of Spirits. We can improve mediumship only by improving ourselves socially, morally, and spiritually. It is quite true that we exercise a psychological influence over mediums and Spirits communicating, but it is an influence far more subtle than anything associated with such dynamical forces as mesmerism or magnetism. It is an influence that compels Spirits to adapt themselves to our perceptions, and this adaptation, furthermore, must be in harmony with the attitude of the Spirit-world toward this lower world at the period of communication.

The medicine man, or medium, of the Indian, portrays happy hunting-grounds. There is nothing else the savage can understand. For the materialistic Spiritualist there are permanent abodes, fixed spheres, and other paraphernalia associated with that condition of mind. For those who have spiritual perception there is a pure thought-world, whose limitations are all mental, and whose realities are ever in the mind of the perceiver and nowhere else.

That the Spirit-world is a state and not a place; that it is composed of thoughts and not things; that it is inward and not outward, is a conception quite foreign to most minds. And corresponding to the material aspect of existence is their notion of motion. Seldom, indeed, does the thought connected with the phenomena rise above the commonplace, that the way is opened solely for the personal gratification of any who may seek to avail themselves of the privilege. And if we do not always succeed in our desires, failure is assumed to be due to extraneous causes over which Spirits have as yet no control—or because of the interference of Diakkas or other disembodied monstrosities.

With your indulgence I shall now attempt to present a brief outline of the realm of spirit as it is perceived by those who are able to realise thought apart from things, subjects from objects.

When we rise above the limitations imposed by the laws of matter—as surely we must before spirit can be comprehended at all—we are suddenly in a world that is wholly subjective. There are no longer any objects—all is in the mind, the true creative sphere. I have used the term *Spirit-world*. But this conveys a false impression. It implies that there is spirit and something else. This is misleading. The very conditions of subjectivity are exclusion. Within your mind there can be nothing besides mind. Thought and the objects of thought are one.

I am not indifferent to the difficulties that beset most minds in making these abstract conceptions their own. My object is not to mystify, but to simplify, and hence I shall indulge freely in explanations and illustrations.

In the realm of spirit, *life* is a universal principle. *Consciousness is all pervading*. You are a part of the all-consciousness, but are obviously not awake to the whole of it. Hence all effort in spirit may be said to be directed to the study of self—to a larger and larger awakening. You perceive nothing unless within you there is a perception that corresponds to what you desire to perceive. Let me explain. If, as spirit, you do not understand or appreciate music, there can be no music for you. The harmonies you realise can never transcend your perception.

In spirit there is no “music of the future” sounding upon unappreciative ears. All growth is from within—none from without. In spirit you possess only that which you yourself create. Art *here* is at best but a partial expression of ideals. *There* the ideal is ever realised, personified in the everlasting ego. In spirit there are no failures, since you are ever equal to yourself, and can never transcend yourself. Whatever you wish you are. But, remember, you cannot wish for that which you do not understand. And if you understand it you have it. Mind is common property.

When you enter the realm of spirit you do not change your place but your state. The transition takes place wholly in consciousness. At one time spirit animates matter and there is consciousness of a material existence. The spirit ceases to animate matter, and now there is consciousness of abstract existence. The matter remains—that is to say, the correlation of sundry activities continues—but spirit is no longer cognizant of it except as idea. Spirit recognises that the stuff called matter has a phenomenal existence, that extension is an attribute of it, but to come within the dominion of these sense cognitions it must seek alien conditions.

Spirit is the empire of your comprehension and conception. The world of a Newton is certainly other than the world of a clod-hopper. The mind of the one ranges the universe; the other is mentally restricted to the horizon of his personal experience. Disenthral a Newton and he becomes almost instantly a pervading consciousness; disembody a clod-hopper and he is only potentially what the other is in reality. Each expresses in spirit the compass of his mind. The mind of a Newton is abstract; that of a clod-hopper concrete.

In the great republic of soul they are absolutely equals, but as present expressions they differ radically in their relation to their higher selves. Birth into Spirit-life is not a revelation of things outside of yourself. Not an idea is intruded. At first the clod-hopper will think only of his clods, and consequently will live in a world of clods—a world the exact image of his mind—a world of his own thought-pictures. He cannot transcend himself—he could not comprehend anything above himself. It is in this literal sense that you make your own Heaven, or your own hell, and, when this is fully realised, is it possible to imagine a greater incentive towards the beautiful and the good?

Whatever form you assume as spirit will be a mental expression—a pure thought-form. The transition from material to Spirit-life is exceedingly natural. At first you must appear to yourself and to others in the present human guise. Why? For the very sufficient reason that you can have no other mental conception of yourself. The mind at first must express a concrete form. You will miss nothing. In a thought-world whatever you think of you have.

When you perceive a friend it will be because that friend has adapted himself to your understanding. All about you are familiar scenes, your own ideals. The objects you most love will press upon you in their spirit. But these are not intrusions, remember. They are already a part of your possessions or you could not recognise them. All thoughts to be perceived must be limited to the understanding of the percipient—any that transcend you are not for you, and you do not become aware of their existence until there has come enlarged perception.

Will a mother recognise her child? Certainly. If the mother follows her babe into Spirit-life before the latter has outgrown its infantile expression, recognition is as natural as if the mother had but stepped into another room from the nursery, and, immediately returning, recognised her sleeping darling in its crib. If, however, time elapses between the two translations, the spiritual expansion of the child includes knowledge of what the mother anticipates on meeting her offspring, and has but to reflect that image to establish immediate recognition.

“But that is a pious deception,” you exclaim. Not at all. On the contrary, it is of the very essence of truth, the highest expression of which is adaptation to perception. If any earth daughter quits the lowly parental abode, enters into other and so-called higher walks of life—thereby becoming quite other—and then returns, if wise and loving she will not burst into the presence of her parents like some startling apparition, but appear as near like her former self as circumstances will permit, love with her old love, and, if needs be, by easy gradations bring the parents to realise the change that time and circumstances have wrought. Many daughters would not be so wise and considerate. They would flaunt their fineries, parade their assumptions of learning, and in every way take pains to give the old folks to understand that they are other than themselves. The mother

beholds the *form* of her daughter, but misses the old loving, trusting, sympathetic, filial *spirit*, and broods sadly over the change. Even on earth, though unconsciously perchance, it is the *spirit* that a mother looks for in her child. It is the *spirit* that the mother recognises in its own realm—the spirit, not the outward trappings. But, for all that, a *form* may represent the spirit for the sake of the material illusion to which mortality is wedded. However, this is at any time of but secondary importance; soon passes away, because there is no longer need for recognition by that mode of expression, and only the loving, tender spirit remains, with all its possibilities, to make its atmosphere a mother's paradise.

In spirit you do not roam about to gape at wonders. Whatever you can understand, comprehend, appreciate, comes to you because it is a part of your spiritual dower. Spirit in its native element may be represented as in a state of solution, and in subtle manner appropriating all that is within the compass of its comprehension or perception. It is nowhere and yet everywhere.

If, as spirit, you enjoy another spirit's hospitality, you partake of mental food. The spread will be a reflex of your host's conceptions. If he be an artist, and you give evidence of sympathy and understanding, the highest artistic forms of his mind will spontaneously reveal themselves. Through the avenue of your own perception the subjective will assume objectivity. But if you possess no understanding of art, and there is void of sympathy, there will be no art creations for you, no revelations of higher thought-forms—only your own sterile mind-shapes and chilling formalisms.

In spirit, when you desire to communicate with another intelligence, you are instantly within its consciousness. Spacially you were one with it before, but there was absence of conscious relations. The wish opens the way to whatever is within the range of your mental perception—not an idea beyond. But the wish, in spirit, can never spring from mere curiosity. There are no curious perceptions. There are eyes only for the dictates of love, and sympathy, and charity, or other members of this beautiful sisterhood. Quality determines everything. If you seek companionship you seek kindred aspirations—never degradations. Evil has no spiritual fellowship. It is its nature to repel. Even on earth crime is banded only for self-protection—it is the common danger that holds criminals together—and if there exist any closer tie between individual members of a band of outlaws, it is not because of recognition of evil but of some better quality that in spite of its depressing surroundings, succeeds in manifesting itself. It is a libel on even the lowest human criminal instinct, to aver that murderers find any attraction in each other's society. Then how intensified must be the repulsion under clear spiritual light! Spiritually considered, the belief that like attracts like below the line of good, is a conceptual monstrosity.

On earth one quality goes with another. All are included in the same bundle of bones. In spirit each quality is a distinct expression. Spirit is manifold. Whatever of aspiration there is expresses itself—at the same time that the conscience may be concerned with the task of undoing the work of a so-called mispent life. The good and pure pushes outward, the degrading and selfish inward. Thus a murderer may reside in the artistic sphere of a Michael Angelo—by virtue of his powers of artistic creations—at the same time that his moral consciousness is among those who are said to dwell in prisons, and prisons indeed, they are, for spiritual expiation, by the law of its action, must proceed in absolute solitude. It is a struggle with self. Spiritually, this is the holy of holies, and none may intrude. There are men in earth-jails who are there body and soul. Others are there only in body—their souls are free from crime or stain of conscience, and they commune with the most exalted both in time and in eternity. Woe to those who are soul-bound! Material walls are but as cobwebs in comparison with the binding influence of mental or spiritual walls! The Bastille was battered down, but the king who reared it, and those who after him peopled it, for ages must dwell within its sombre and soul-crushing shadows. When the Bastille ceased to exist on earth it was perpetuated in the world of spirit. It is there to-day; it will remain there for ages to come, because its influence for good or evil is still potent among men. It is there to-day,—not made of finer stuff, nor matter in any form, but as a haunting reminiscence, for it is in reminiscences that the very foundations of the Spirit-world are laid.

This world that I have in such meagre outlines endeavoured to present to your mental vision differs essentially from current Spiritual representations. You are not bound to accept it. I

do not propose to argue for it. If I have brought any light to you, receive it; if you perceive nothing, rest assured that there is nothing for you. The spiritual guidance you follow, whatever it be, is wiser than any I can put in its place. Whatever it is, it is wisely adapted to you. As Thoreau says: "We all keep step to different drummers." The material conception of spirit has served the purpose for which it was presented. In its own time the higher will displace the lower, the ideal the so-called real, and under the inspiration of the loftier conception Spiritualism will take its place in the van of civilisation, and make this earth at last, a fit abiding place for perfect men.

### EVIDENCE.

The effect of what is called "evidence" in producing conviction on the mind, depends much more on the state of knowledge and belief which the mind is in, in regard to the matter before it, than it does on the intrinsic nature and amount of the evidence produced. It is exceedingly difficult, much more so than is generally imagined, to weigh evidence impartially, without allowing the judgment to be unduly influenced by preconceived beliefs. It must, we think, be admitted that this applies not only to the popular, but also to a very considerable extent, to the scientific mind.

An article in last week's *Spectator* entitled "The Evidence of Extraordinary Events," deals ably with this question. The writer refers to Professor Balfour Stewart's remarks at the General Meeting of the Society for Psychical Research, on "Globular Lightning," and says:—

"Now, the question which we should like to put is this,—Was the sort of evidence considered requisite to establish the fact of globular lightning, before the conception of a travelling Leyden jar had been suggested, different in kind from what it is now, when a possible explanation of the phenomenon has been suggested? It is clear enough, we think, that what was wanted was not any extraordinary amount of evidence, but good, substantial, ordinary evidence, directed, however, to this one point,—to show, namely, that the lightning observed was not an ordinary electric discharge, but was essentially different from it, in being an explosion in all directions of a travelling reservoir of electricity. It is just the same with what is called thought-reading. What we want in order to prove that there are occasionally other avenues of communication between mind and mind besides the ordinary senses, is not any extraordinary amount of evidence, but a sufficient amount of ordinary evidence directed to this one point,—that in cases of thought-reading there is no means of communication of the ordinary kind open between the two minds, none, that is, by sight, or hearing, or touch, or smell, or taste, or general muscular action; and if this be once satisfactorily established on the same sort of evidence on which it might be satisfactorily established that the electric discharge was not of the ordinary kind, the 'thought-reading' would be, we do not say proved, without a great number of verifications, but, at least, shown to be the sort of phenomenon well worthy of closer and elaborate investigation. Our position is this,—that it is a complete mistake to suppose that an alleged new phenomenon cannot be established, except by an altogether exceptional amount of evidence. It may be established by a substantial amount of evidence of a very ordinary kind, so long as that evidence goes to the right point, that is, to shew that it is not a very ordinary phenomenon in disguise; that the so-called thought-reading, for example, does not arise from collusion, or from involuntary movements of the eye, or mouth, or hand, interpreted with unconscious swiftness by the thought-reader, but is due to a genuine flash from one mind,—or, if you please, brain,—to the other, unaccompanied by any signs or indications such as are used in the ordinary intercourse of men to suggest the conceptions conveyed."

The writer treats at some length, in the style which it deserves, the assumption of fraud and collusion, where witnesses are otherwise reliable. While refraining from any expression of belief or disbelief in reference to "thought-reading" itself, he says:—

"But nothing can be less reasonable than to prefer the hypothesis of fraud and collusion to the hypothesis that you have really got hold of a new kind of phenomenon which requires an enlargement of our ordinary theory, when you are dealing with men whose evidence you would cheerfully accept in any other sphere of life as final and conclusive."

The article concludes thus:—

"The main purpose of this paper will be answered, if we induce a few of our readers to think that what is needed for the evidence of extraordinary phenomena is not an extraordinary amount of evidence, but good, valid, ordinary evidence, directed to the main point,—the substantial difference between the phenomena alleged to be new,—to be, that is, of a kind requiring a great extension of our ordinary theories,—and the normal phenomena of which we already know the main features and laws."

## SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON &amp; THE PROVINCES.

## GOSWELL HALL.

On Sunday morning last Mr. King read a paper on "The Influence of Comprehension in Relation to his own Mental and Moral State," which was an extremely laudatory testimony in favour of the subject or system of which Mr. Wilson is the prophet. In the evening Mr. J. J. Morse paid another of his monthly visits to this hall, when, as is usual, a large and attentive audience assembled to hear what his guides had to say on "Mediumship in its Material and Spiritual Aspects." Their first proposition was that mediumship is the ground work of Spiritualism, consequently an important—if not the most important—subject to Spiritualists. Through mediumship the Spirit-world and this are brought into contact, and we are enabled to grasp the hand and exchange loving messages with our dear ones gone before; by this agency we have received proof palpable of immortality, and of the reunion in the future life of those whom death has temporarily separated. The erroneous ideas held by a large class of people relative to mediums were examined *seriatim*, and disposed of in a manner evidently highly satisfactory to the audience. The control strongly advocated more kindness, straightforward and brotherly treatment towards mediums, instead of so much of that unreal manifestation of friendship in the shape of flattery and idol-worship, which continues only so long as each individual is the recipient of this, that, or the other special favour. After an exhaustive treatment of the subject from various stand-points, the value, to the cause, of trance mediumship was emphasised, and a place was claimed for it along with all other phases of mediumship.

## RES-FACTA.

## QUEBEC HALL.

Mr. J. Veitch, in the absence of Mr. MacDonnell, occupied the platform on Sunday last, and delivered a most eloquent address. He took as his subject, "Man the Reformer," giving the history of men who have by their efforts assisted mankind to a better state here below. He contended that of all the prevailing systems, theological and otherwise, that claim to aid mankind, Spiritualism was superior, because it alone was founded upon fact, and not upon speculation and doubt. A very pleasant interchange of thought took place upon the lecture, which shewed that the manner of conducting the meetings adopted at this hall is appreciated.

## NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

At Newcastle, on Sunday evening last, the platform of the N.S.C.S. was occupied by various speakers. Mr. John Mould, chairman, spoke at some length upon the growth of Spiritualism in the North, and to the astonishment of some and the amusement of others, coolly ascribed the present progress of Spiritualism in North Durham to the exertions of himself and colleagues. The progress of the movement in that quarter is really due more to the indefatigable exertions of the President of the Gateshead Society, and this certainly is the unanimous opinion of North Durham Spiritualism, although the *Herald* management has studiously avoided the mention of his labours, and even of his name.

On Monday evening, July 24th, the quarterly meeting of the above Society was held at Weir's Court, Mr. John Mould in the chair. The secretary's report shewed that the financial deficit had increased from £13 18s. 3d. in the previous quarter to £23 3s. 4d. in the present quarter, thus shewing, despite the very small outlay for lecturer's fees, viz., £2 2s., the sum of £9 5s. 1d. of further debts had been incurred. This looks somewhat strange in the face of what has been said about paid speakers being the cause of the Society's debt. The séances under the mediumship of Mr. Michael Chambers, while partially approved of by some, do not meet with anything like general approbation. During the meeting the question was asked by Mr. Cairns why Messrs. Scod and Robson had left the Society. The secretary read a letter from Mr. Robson stating that his action was owing to the creed dogmatised over the movement by the Conference in Weir's Court in April, under the presidency of Mr. Enmore Jones. After this letter had been read a general protestation on the part of the members was manifested against the Society having any part in, or in any way acknowledging the creed at that time enforced upon them. This strong protest forced the president into the unenviable and ridiculous position of repudiating the creed (in the name of the Society) which he has so stoutly supported of late, and at the Conference. Thereupon Mr. H. A. Kersey expressed his satisfaction that the "orthodox hash" prepared at the Conference, and served from their platform recently, had been at last firmly rejected by the members. It was then unanimously resolved to request Mr. W. C. Robson to return to their midst, and to assure him that the N.S.C.S. had no part with, and repudiated in *toto*, the creed as advertised from week to week in the *Herald*. We may state that Mr. Scod resigned because he could not work with Messrs. Mould and Hare. The meeting adjourned until Wednesday evening, August 2nd, to consider a motion which proposes to rescind a resolution passed by the late committee six months ago, to take "two hundred copies of a paper called the *Herald of Progress* at the full retail price—1d. per copy."

GATESHEAD.—On Sunday last, at the meeting-place of the Gateshead Society, Mr. H. Burton, president, lectured on "The General Aspects of Spiritualism." In the course of his address he discoursed, very strongly, upon the narrow creeds and intolerable dogmas which a few Spiritualists were endeavouring to impose upon the movement. Mr. Wm. Pickering occupied the chair.

HETTON-LE-HOLE.—On Saturday afternoon, at the above place, a large Spiritualistic funeral took place. The deceased, Mrs. Sweeney, passed away, after a short illness, at the early age of twenty. She was well known in the immediate district as a firm and warm adherent of the movement. The event is stated to have been predicted about ten months ago by Mr. Barker, a local clairvoyant, who mentioned the month of July as the time of her departure to the Spirit-world. Curiosity attracted a number of strangers to witness a ceremony entirely novel to them. Mr. H. Burton conducted the simple and impressive service, which produced a marked effect on the assembly. The address he delivered was touching in its pathos and affecting in the lessons to be derived from such an occasion, being entirely free from the coldness of a formal ceremony. During the evening Mr. H. Burton performed the interesting ceremony of "naming," two infants, in course of which he gave an address appropriate to the occasion.—NORTHUMBRIA.

## WORK OF THE COMING WEEK.

## LONDON.

- Sunday, August 6.—Goswell Hall. 11.30 a.m., Discussion. 7 p.m., Lecture, Mr. J. Veitch.  
 „ August 6.—Quebec Hall. 7 p.m., Lecture, Mr. Iver Macdonnell, "Variety of Truth."  
 Monday, August 7.—Central Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell-street. Members' Private Subscription Séance with Miss Wood, 7 p.m.  
 Tuesday, August 8.—Central Association. Finance Committee, 6 p.m. Council Meeting, 6.30.  
 „ August 8.—Quebec Hall. Lecture, Mr. Wilson, 8.30 p.m.  
 Wednesday, August 9. Central Association. Members' Private Subscription Séance with Miss Wood, 7 p.m.  
 Saturday, August 12.—Members' Subscription Séance with Miss C. E. Wood, 7 p.m.

## 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 advertisement page.

DR. PEEBLES.—We see by the American journals that Dr. J. M. Peebles, who for several years has been devoting considerable time to the study of medicine, attending both allopathic and eclectic medical colleges, has been offered, and has accepted, the Professor's Chair of Ontology, Bio-dynamics, and Nervous Diseases, in the American Eclectic Medical College, Cincinnati, Ohio. This will allow the doctor, if so disposed, to lecture, not only upon the basis of life and the laws of life and health, but upon the psychic forces, on trance, dream, vision, and on the influences connecting the visible and invisible worlds.

THE ENGINEER WAS WARNED.—An engineer, while riding on his engine in front of his train down the mountain steep of the Clearfield Branch, Pennsylvania, the other day, after testing the quantity of water in his boiler by using the two upper gauges, which indicated that all was right, heard a voice, "Try the lower gauge." The voice was loud and distinct, and he says it was the voice of his father, who has been dead for some years. After looking around to see him, he opened the lower gauge and found no water. The boiler was foaming, and the engineer says that but for the timely warning all would have been blown up in ten minutes.—*Detroit Free Press*.

SOME years ago Thomas, eldest son of John Wilson, Orange City, Plymouth Co., Ia., went to New Mexico. He corresponded regularly with his parents. On the night of the 19th of March Mrs. Wilson was sitting by the fire waiting for the return of her husband, who had gone that day to Le Mars. The children had retired to bed, and silence prevailed within and without the house. At 10.30 Mrs. Wilson laid down a paper she was reading, and stepped to the mantel to wind the clock. A mirror stood on the mantel, and as she approached she saw in it the face of her absent son. She stood speechless while the phantom slowly faded from view, and then fell in a swoon to the floor. Two days later Mr. Wilson received a telegram announcing that his son had died on the 12th inst., at 10.30 p.m., the time of Mrs. W.'s vision.—*Detroit Free Press*.

MR. J. J. MORSE'S APPOINTMENTS.—WALSALL: August 13th; PLYMOUTH: August 20th; FALMOUTH: August 27th; 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.]