

Light:

A Journal of Psychological, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

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

Madame Kardec, at the ripe age of eighty-eight, has quitted this sphere of existence for a wider and, I trust, a higher one. The Society for the publication of her husband's works, which conducts the obsequies, puts well in its motto the outlines of the faith in which she lived, and which she has now opportunity of realising, at least partially:—"*Naitre: Mourir: Renaitre encore: et Progresser sans cesse:—telle est la loi.*"

Lady Bloomfield's "Reminiscences" abounds with stories of the supernatural, and has in the second volume one special apparition at the moment of death which may be commended to the attention of the S.P.R.

The *Journal of Science* says of "The Ghost," and "The Lady's Walk" in *Longman's Magazine*, that their appearance there is "a striking proof of a change in public taste. Forty years ago such productions would have been laughed out of countenance." Yes: and far more recently than that. Even now that combination of fear, mistrust, and scientific exclusiveness which causes some minds to shrivel up in face of any mention of the supernatural, and which affects others as some colours act on some animals, finds a place in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Surely that enlightened journal can find better use for its space. If it is not disposed to bless altogether, its mild curses should be founded on more accurate knowledge than that shewn in a recent note.

I advise Spiritualists and all whom it may concern to read an article in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* of January 6th, on Irving Bishop and Cumberland. These worthies have fallen out, and are abusing each other in a highly edifying manner. Bishop commences with some appropriate reflections on the character of Cumberland; and Cumberland retorts with some highly pertinent questions to Bishop. He is curious as to his antecedents, which in themselves are sufficiently curious; and he wants to know various things that I venture to predict Bishop will not throw much light upon. The editor, however, supplies some very pertinent facts about the "landed proprietor," which are very funny reading. Not less funny is it to find that Cumberland has now blossomed into the son of "a landed proprietor" in Leicestershire. The *Journal* rudely calls him the "Butcher Boy's Boy," which is nearer the mark. All this would be infinitely contemptible and beneath notice were it not that men with names and characters to lose have held commerce with these persons. They did it after warning; and it is well that they should know what they have done. I recommend them to read the *Journal* for January 6th.

It may not be amiss if I say a few words about Roustaing's "Four Gospels."* I may say at once that I do not

* "The Four Gospels explained by their Writers." Edited by J. B. Roustaing. Translated by W. F. Kirby. Three volumes. Trübner and Co., 1861.

propose to write any criticism or review of these volumes such as might pretend to be in any way adequate. I have had them for a long time in my possession, and have repeatedly tried to form a reasonable conception of their contents, and to frame some critical notice of what offers so wide a field for criticism. But in vain. The field is too vast; I cannot traverse it. The points of interesting speculation which I might discuss are too numerous, and too airy and impalpable for practical and useful disquisition. And the radical divergence between my own beliefs (which I by no means hold dogmatically, and which I assuredly do not wish to obtrude) and the opinions put forward in this book is such that any review of mine would be a mere statement of a general and particular disagreement with most statements therein contained, where they are anything more than speculations which it is equally impossible either to deny or to affirm. When "Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, assisted by the rest of the Apostles," and occasionally by other not less exalted personages, address some 1,000 pages of explanation of the Gospels in the light of the Kardecian philosophy; and when I am entirely unable to acquiesce in most of the fundamental assumptions contained in those pages, I find myself unable to do more than wonder whether after all this band of Apostles and Evangelists had anything to do with what seems so different from their original teaching. As I ponder I feel convinced that the use of these great names—a familiar device of a certain order of spirits to attract an attention which they would otherwise fail to secure—is a pretence; and I feel relieved that I am no longer under the necessity of rejecting the teaching of such exalted personages. Since I must disagree with M. Roustaing I am glad to think that his sentiments are not demonstrated to be those of the holy men whose names are used.

I wish to express no opinion on the philosophical system of which M. Roustaing is the most advanced exponent. It is one which numbers its adherents on the Continent of Europe by thousands; and among these are many for whose judgment I entertain a high respect. There are also points of affinity between it and some other systems which are mutually confirmatory. We shall probably have to wait some time yet before we get a body of philosophy which is not overlaid with erroneous conceptions and fantastic theories. The account M. Roustaing gives of the way in which he obtained these new Gospels is singularly frank and explicit. I venture on an imperfect summary.

M. Roustaing practised at the bar in his native town of Bordeaux where, after thirty years, he gained a "free and independent position." In 1861 his attention was first directed to Spiritualism by an eminent physician of his native town. With a mind laudably free from prejudice he put aside his natural incredulity (so successfully, indeed, that it never recurred) and set himself to "a careful perusal of the works of Allan Kardec," with the result of "bringing home to his mind; more forcibly than ever before, the sense of the vastness of the universe, and the density of our ignorance of our relations" with the unseen world. This was something to gain, though the method of acquiring it was strange. But this was not enough. "I next (he tells us) reviewed

the history of the world from the earliest times. . . . I then directed my attention to the various religions and philosophies of our globe. . . . I completed this course of preparatory elucidation by a perusal of the Old and New Testaments," which it seems he had never been able to read before. He rapidly arrived at conclusions on all subjects except the nature of Jesus, and His relations to God and the human race. By way of elucidating these mysteries he "besought the Almighty to grant me a manifestation from the spirit of my father, and from John the Baptist, after whom I am named." Sure enough it came : and very soon after, in the course of a morning call on Madame Collignon, also a resident in Bordeaux, that lady "felt her arm moved by the fluidic agitation so well known to mediums," and Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John (assisted by the Apostles) at once appeared and commenced the contents of these three long volumes. From such little causes sprang these great events.

Mr. Kirby's part in the work as translator may be unreservedly praised. He acknowledges his obligation to Miss Blackwell ; but the bulk of the work is his. It must have needed no ordinary care to eliminate French idioms, and to excise the repetitions with which the book still abounds, but of which we learn that many have been struck out. The result is a perfectly readable and intelligible piece of idiomatic English, disfigured by nothing else than the unavoidable technicalities of Kardec's philosophical system. But whatever opinion may be formed of the value of its remarkable contents, there can be no doubt that if three-fourths of it were excised and the remainder concisely expressed, the reader would be a great gainer, and the illustrious inditers no losers. In its present form the book is impossible except to the most enthusiastic devotee.

M.A. (OXON.)

SPIRIT BIRDS AND ANIMALS.

I have read with much interest the record of facts contributed by Mrs. Nichols. In the last, which appeared January 13th, the desire expressed by the writer—that any one having evidence bearing upon the materialisation of animals should give it—reminded me of some singular occurrences made known to me several years since. That these things happened as related I am fully convinced, although I was not myself a witness to them. I am fully aware that my perfect conviction of the trustworthiness of the friend from whom I received the following account must be less satisfactory than would be the declaration that I had myself seen the remarkable phenomena, which, though not strictly to be classed under materialisations, may be regarded as "bearing upon" this phase of manifestation. I can only offer what I myself feel sure is a true record of what took place in a private room, and in the presence of several persons of respectability, hoping that to some among your readers the following extracts from my friend's letter may prove interesting.

I wrote to ask for a detailed account of the facts, not trusting to my memory to recall them with exactitude. The lady who writes has great medial power, but is not a public medium. To my request she replied as follows :—

"I will tell you as correctly as I can about our little Dickie. We called it Dick, although it was a female bird—a canary, and had never sung a note. She was very tame, and used to fly about the room and take her meals on the table, but always slept in her cage, and would make a loud twittering and screeching when its door by any chance got closed. One afternoon Dick was making a great fuss, although she was inside her cage, and I, thinking the door was shut, asked Mrs. C. (my husband's mother) to see about it ; but it was open, and still the bird seemed agitated. I should tell you there were inside shutters to the windows of our room, one of which would not push back into its recess, but stood out a little distance, leaving a space behind it. It was towards the top corner of the shutter that Dickie was looking, making various demonstrations of pleasurable excitement.

"Mrs. C. said, 'Why, the bird sees something! She acts as if she saw another bird!' Even as she spoke, we heard two or three sweet, low notes of a bird's song. Mrs. C. exclaimed, 'There must be a bird behind the shutter!'—at the same time pulling the shutter fully out ; but no bird

was there, and Dick had regained composure and was taking her lunch of seed. We concluded that the strange bird had flown out of the open window, although we wondered how it had got in without our seeing it. This took place about three in the afternoon. The next day the same thing happened ; but after Mrs. C. had opened the shutters and resumed her seat, Dick still kept upon the perch, and the invisible bird (invisible only to us, for Dick evidently saw it) sang a well-trained canary song all through—then a pause—then a few low notes—another pause—then an encouraging chirp, which our Dick seemed to understand, for she tried what she could do, and did repeat some of the notes she had heard three times. Those notes were sung by the other bird, louder each time, and each time they were echoed by our canary ; and then, for that day, the singing lesson was over. These lessons continued for about two weeks—more notes every day—until Dickie could sing the whole song as well as her teacher, and it was the sweetest song canary ever sang. Then the music lessons ended ; but for many a day afterwards Dick would come to her cage at the usual time, and chirp and call, then sing her song, and look and listen ; but her sweet teacher came no more, and, in time, it was forgotten by Dick, though she never forgot her song. I left the bird with my son when we went abroad, and he has often said to me that hers was the loveliest song he ever heard. Poor Dickie has gone to meet her teacher, if it were, as I believe, a spirit bird. I have been asked if I were sure it was a female bird, and can only reply that it laid eggs.

"There is a gentleman in Birmingham who will remember the spook of a favourite dog of his coming to a dark séance at my house. The dog whined, and scratched on a table, and, when asked to give his paw, laid a poor little shivering cold paw on the hand of his master. The animal also gave his paw to three others of those present, myself included. It was the paw of a dog and nothing else. Then, with a pitiful whine the creature departed."

Thus ends my friend's recital, and I give it for what it may be deemed worth. To me, it was very interesting, because I knew I could rely upon those qualities in the narrator which make such testimony valuable.

As to the canary's song (apart from the fact that the caged bird appeared to see the singer) it is not more wonderful than the clear, loud playing of a music-box, which I (and also my sister) heard several times in séances with Slade, apparently close to us, sometimes on the table, and sometimes resting, as a considerable weight, upon our laps, though not tangible to our hands. No such box was in the house ; and even when it pressed close against us, the hand passed through the space it seemed to occupy. As to the direct spirit voice, in speaking and singing, that is somewhat different, or may well be so regarded.

The apparent materialisation of the dog's paw hardly amounts to proof of the presence of a spirit dog. The intelligence and feeling manifested by what most old-fashioned Spiritualists (myself included) believe to be human spirits, together with the strong evidence occasionally afforded of spirit identity, are corroborative of the supposition that the hands which touch us are materialised by human beings desiring to make their presence known : but exactly what, or how much, is indicated by the production of what to the touch appears to be the paw of a dog, or of a voice resembling that of a dog, who knows? Albeit, there are more than enough whose theories, in the estimation of the theorists, settle all such questions definitely and definitively. We should gladly welcome all reasonable suggestions as to possible, or probable, explanations of phenomena which become intellectually and morally valuable only in so far as we learn through them something of the laws which govern and the truths which underlie them : but dogmatism on such subjects is worse than conscious ignorance or humble silence.

This life is full of mysteries which have never been and never can be solved by those who dwell in it. Still less can any mortal go outside the boundaries of human experience and bring back from the debatable land beyond what he can justly claim, or we can rationally accept, as absolute, indubitable knowledge : and those are wisest and safest from delusion who recognise the limits which no man can venture to overstep as a teacher of unquestionable truth, without becoming a blind leader of the blind.

Bonn, Germany.

LOUISA ANDREWS.

[We remember that at a séance with Mrs. Everitt some years ago, we heard a "bird" singing in the room, although there was no bird there—that is, no bird "in the flesh." And on Dr. Kenningale Cook, who was present, whistling a tune, the "bird" joined in and whistled the same tune.—Ed. "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. XXXVII.

Your warning was true. I do not remember feeling so ill for a long time as I have done for thirty-six hours after that message was written. It seemed as if all vitality had been dragged out of me, and I was good for nothing, full of pain, and with a headache such as I seldom had. How was it?

We told you. It was necessary for us to draw upon your power in a much higher degree than we wish to do. The result was that you were deprived of vitality, and were, as you say, weak and ill, and in bodily pain.

Will the same result follow now?

We can prevent it.

Yet you did not do so then?

We wished you to learn, and you never learn except by experience. We have found out that you must be so taught. You have chosen the method yourself.

Well, I will try and endure it. You were going to tell me of my transition state, of which you have often spoken. Will you add information as to my relations with X., and tell me what you have to say on the subject? There are very many points on which I wish for guidance now.

Again we shall disappoint you, for it would be very unwise in us to gratify your curiosity. It would but disappoint us as well as injure your progress. You must be content to leave all, or nearly all, in the hands of those who are wiser and more far-seeing than you can be, and whose faithfulness and truth you have proven long ago. Of your development we have told you at various times. We found it necessary to use you for objective proof of our work, and a disproportionate amount of time was sacrificed to this object. We were sorely vexed at the necessity; but we endured it with patience, sure that in the end we should reap our reward. You can never know the trouble which it caused us to do what you thought so little of. That necessity has slowly passed, and we trust that it may not recur. We should fear for you in such back-sliding. The phase through which you now pass is one fitting you for more special work, and for the higher communion to which all as yet has been preparatory. The steps by which that is being day by day pushed on we may not explain to you. You will see them when you have climbed high enough to look back, and when the mists which now hang around your path have been cleared away. Be content to wait.

But about X?

You are going through a course of training necessary for you, parallel to that which you have already gone through with us; and as you struggled through by conflict with us, so will you struggle through by conflict there to a plane of knowledge which you have not yet attained. There are many phases of knowledge, and it is the fault of many of your fellows that their eye is filled with one only. You must learn the powers of your own spirit, as well as the nearness of our aid and the ceaseless presence of assaulting adversaries. All this is done by our sanction.

You know how vague has been the information I have had; how little there is to stay upon. You know what I have written on this subject lately. Am I right? Can you give me no aid?

Yes. We can tell you that you dealt with us in the same way as you now deal with Magus and his friends. We cannot tell you of the processes by which conviction will come. Were we to do so we should ruin the plans.

But conviction may be of two kinds—of the truth of the claims put forward, and the reverse. Which do you mean?

In any issue you will be the gainer by having sifted and found truth. We will not say more. It is part of your training.

A most unsatisfactory part. Will you tell me about A. B. and his ideas?

We are not able.

Tell me, at any rate, whether it is by your direction that I am going into these things.

No; we have no concern with him. We always keep our own path, as you should know.

Yes; but by your authority? You endorse M., as I understand?

Nothing occurs without our knowledge, and we govern the results for your good. We do not endorse all the means used; nor do we interfere, save with results. We overrule, and are not concerned to meddle with means or with agents.

Then you will tell me nothing about anything?

We will not interfere, save where we see it necessary, and then in a region to which your perceptions cannot reach. When we have anything to communicate, we do it without questioning on your part; but we now have nothing. We do not blame your questions. They are the means by which you grow in knowledge. More receptive souls drink in unquestioningly. You must proceed by other methods.

Yes, that is so. I want to be left alone just now. I've taken in enough.

If you so desire, you will be left alone so far as appearances go. But we shall guide and protect you in all, so far as you permit us. You have already worked through much trouble, and have been firm and unyielding.

Is it over? I don't like it at all, but I have no fear.

Your danger is not from that side, but rather from spiritual pride. You have fought with power, and have been successful; but graver trials await you. You have entered on a path of trial, and it is not yet ended—scarce, indeed, begun.

That is pleasant. About Slade, can we not do something to deliver him and to deal a blow at Materialism?

Nay, friend, we know not. That is for your consideration. Only do your work with zeal, and strive for what to you is truth. That is the first requisite. It is well that a view of truth, however hard, be presented to men. We do not concern ourselves. It is in other hands.

I wanted to ask you about that Hieroglyph and the Voice that bade me fetch it, when I was about to meet L.?

We do not know, and cannot say, nor do we concern ourselves. When will you learn that the processes by which your spirit is set free and led into the path of wisdom are governed by other agencies? We do not interfere. It is not our place: nor have we care for the minor processes by which you are governed and which alone come before our ken. It is useless to ask us for information on such matters. It will not be given, for reasons which should be known to you. It is natural that steps which lead in ways of which you do not know the end should perplex you. We cannot satisfy all your scruples, nor solve all your perplexities. We have earned from you in the past a right to confidence. Be patient. One of the great needs of your spirit is restful patience. It is too eager, too impetuous in its desire for conclusive proof, which, indeed, would be conclusive only for a moment; too little inclined to silent meditation and prayer. You do more good to others by your sifting and trying, and by your ceaseless conflict, than to yourself. It is well to probe and try; it is necessary for you; but you neglect the more gracious time of silent assimilation and inward growth.

Why, that is precisely what I want to get! I have said often that I want to get out of public work and conflict altogether, and be left alone.

That will not be. You must needs work, but you must learn to maintain the inner life side by side with the outer. The outer is needful, the inner is needful too. There are periods when you will do well to cultivate the inner life in entire exclusion. You have periods of rest from worldly toil; use them for this.

You wish me more and more to lead a purely esoteric life. Will not that involve cutting myself off from all friends, from old associations, from active work, and the entering on a new phase of life?

We will answer briefly. It does not involve any such change as you imagine, but a real one nevertheless. It does involve change of association, but not isolation. It will bring you into connection with those who are yet unknown to you, but will strengthen rather than release old bonds. The time of great change is not yet.

+ IMPERATOR.

SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA IN FRANCE.

The *Revue Spirite* of December last contains a paper by Dr. Chazarain, of Paris, in which he minutely relates a series of manifestations, Madame Bablin being the medium.

At these séances musical boxes, &c., circulated about the room, resting occasionally upon the heads, hands, or knees of the circle, finally—when light was restored—to be seen again on the table at which the medium sat, bound, as placed by a committee before the light was extinguished.

It was usual at these séances, the sitters' hands being inter-linked, for lozenges, a box of which was on the table, to be deftly insinuated between the lips of sitters; pocket-books, eye-glasses, neckties, and the hats of ladies, were often interchanged, as if to shew that the absence of our light did not affect the sight of the invisible operators. They seemed to select the most recent inquirers for most attention, and pressed and patted their hands and heads as if in welcome. Fresh flowers were often dexterously placed between the fingers of the sitters, and one or more would, at request, be added; oranges were once laid in their laps. The room was always, as a matter of rule, searched before the circle was formed, and certainly contained neither flowers nor oranges. The medium's jacket was sometimes taken off, at others turned, the cord by which she was bound being as left by the committee. The medium, seated in her chair, was sometimes found to have been noiselessly placed upon the table.

On one occasion Dr. Chazarain, having had his thoughts much turned during the day towards a brother, deceased, was still thinking of him at the séance, when he felt an arm rest upon his shoulder, then a hand pressed his head, and lips imprinted a kiss upon his forehead. On another occasion, thinking of his little girl, two years of age, deceased six months, he felt a little hand laid upon his own, and then a little warm kiss, audible to those next him, was impressed upon his lips.

He was much struck with manifestations where the sense of sight confirmed that of touch. Such manifestations were generally preceded by the diffusion in the air of the room of some perfume sensible to all; luminous phosphorescent looking points would then appear and disappear, ascending or descending slowly or rapidly. They would become numerous, then be grouped together, and shew the form of hands, large and small, which, at request, opened and closed, and touched the sitters; they illumined the objects on the table, took hold of them,—musical-boxes, bell, child's trumpet, fans,—carried them sounding round the room, sometimes with amazing velocity; a hand would hold the trumpet in front of a sitter, and it would be sounded there; the fans also would be actively used, acceptable to the sitters in August.

Another order of manifestations was that of forms, visible and tangible, recognised as those of departed relatives and friends. One that came to Dr. Chazarain rested his hands upon Dr. Chazarain's head, pressed and stroked it, and threw a vaporous gauze around him, exhaling a slightly phosphoric odour. These forms were visible by the phosphorescent light emitted from their hands.

Dr. Chazarain calls attention to the fact that all these phenomena were witnessed by him and by never fewer than a dozen other investigators, under conditions precluding device or collusion. With respect to the darkness, which so many object to in manifestations of this order, Dr. Chazarain points out that that is a condition presenting an additional difficulty to individuals producing them who are endowed with earthly bodies. He urges that it would be unreasonable to conclude otherwise than that the producers of these manifestations were those to whom the hands belonged—hands seen by all present to hold and move objects—whose touch was felt, whose forms were seen and recognised in light of their own furnishing.

"Am I asked," says Dr. Chazarain, "to account for the entrance into a closed space of beings of human form and consistency? for the introduction into that space of other solid objects? for the turning and the taking off of the medium's jacket, her arms being bound and fixed to her chair? My answer is that such phenomena are comprehensible if we admit that the bodies of the beings who thus manifest their presence are fluidic (*fluidiques*), and able to penetrate bodies which to us are solid, and restore them then to their previous state; that they do this by means of a vital electricity (psychic force of William Crookes) drawn from medium and circle, and which may act upon the molecules of their external envelope—fluidic or materialised. Have we not the analogy of this in the decompositions and re-

compositions by the electric current of a battery? If it be so we may account for the shocks and starts of mediums on contact being broken in a circle where a hand is thrust forth to snatch at a materialised actor in such manifestations. It may enable us to understand also the medium's shock, when under spirit control, on abruptly touching her, as an effect of sudden diversion of the fluidic current and abstraction of nerve force.

"Scientific men ask that such phenomena should be presented to them in daylight. It is true that they have been only very exceptionally witnessed in daylight, but is that a valid reason for holding back from investigating them? Are there not phenomena in chemical science not producible in daylight? Are phosphorus flames seen in daylight? Are not some chemical salts decomposed by light? Does science deny the existence of gases unless under illumination? Do not invisible gases produce solids which again are convertible into gases? Does science deny in light itself the colours it reveals in passing through a refracting medium?

"Disincarnated bodies being fluidic cannot be seen by us except with such surroundings, and under such conditions, as furnish to their fluidic forces the means of producing the light which makes them visible to us; or to support the, to them, dissolving action of the light which we receive from our sun or from physical combustion."

THE TWO WORLDS.

Some men there are, I have known such, who think
That the two worlds—the seen and the unseen,
The world of matter and the world of spirit—
Are like the hemispheres upon our maps,
And touch each other only at a point.
But these two worlds are not divided thus
Save for the purposes of common speech.
They form one globe in which the parted seas
All flow together and are intermingled,
While the great continents remain distinct.

The spiritual world
Lies all about us, and its avenues
Are open to the unseen feet of phantoms
That come and go, and we perceive them not
Save by their influence, or when at times
A most mysterious Providence permits them
To manifest themselves to mortal eyes.

LONGFELLOW.

MESSRS. W. H. SMITH'S BOOKSTALLS.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

DEAR SIR,—At the beginning of the year I asked the man at the bookstall here to add to my serials and papers "LIGHT." What was my surprise to be informed by him that on his applying to W. H. Smith and Sons to do so he was informed that "LIGHT" was not supplied!

I accordingly wrote to Messrs. Smith and Sons as follows:—

"I have been for many years a liberal customer at your railway stall here. I have recently asked that 'LIGHT' shall be added to my usual periodicals—a high class weekly journal published in the interests of Spiritualism, a science now commanding the attention of men of great learning, and in which I am greatly interested. I am informed that 'LIGHT' is not supplied! Surely it is not your intention to become arbitrators of what the public shall read! If so, I, for one, shall protest, and claim to read what I please; and, moreover, I shall use what influence I possess to induce others to do the same. It is simply for convenience I use your stalls to obtain the dailies, weeklies, and monthlies that I want. I am well aware I could go to Stoneham's and get 25 per cent. discount, but it would involve the trouble of sending in the City, where time is money. Still if I am to be met with such an absurd statement with reference to 'LIGHT' that 'it cannot be supplied,' I shall give you no further orders, but get all I want in the way of literature at the cheaper shop. I trust this remonstrance will be sufficient, and that from Lewisham Station I may continue to pay you full price and get all I order."

Messrs. Smith and Sons' reply was laconic:—

"Sir,—In reply to your letter of the 8th inst., we have to inform you that we are not agents for the publication you there refer to."

I have accordingly struck off my periodicals from their list, and now get them at Stoneham's at 25 per cent. off! Of course my withdrawal from this eminent firm is as a drop in the ocean, but if the many thousands of Spiritualists will do the same it may tend to shew them that theirs is a short-sighted, as well as absurdly bigoted policy, and that they need more "LIGHT"!

Yours truly,

Lewisham, January 29th, 1883.

MORELL THEOBALD.

CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

The annual general meeting of the members of this Association was held on Tuesday evening, at 38, Great Russell-street, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers in the chair, when the following report was presented from the Council:—

Report of the Council.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

In drawing up a Report for the first General Meeting of the Central Association of Spiritualists, the Council is conscious of sensations of a somewhat unusual character. It feels itself to be the same, and yet not the same. It is animated by the same spirit as of old, a spirit earnestly devoting its energies to objects which the Society that so long met in these rooms was established to promote. It is the old spirit animating a new body. It is, however, of comparatively little consequence whether this report is designated as the first of a new series, or the tenth of an old one. It is more to the purpose that it represents and summarises the work of an association taking a leading part in a movement which it regards as second to none in importance, at the present time, whether looked at from a religious or philosophical point of view. The Council is, if possible, more deeply convinced than ever that such is the case; and although special difficulties and perplexities always attend the pursuit of new and unpopular truths, yet there is, on the whole, reason for encouragement in the increasing hold which the subject of Spiritualism is taking of the public mind, and which should incite those who are working for it to continue their labours with energy and perseverance.

It being but little more than six months since the last General Meeting of the British National Association of Spiritualists was held, and since the unanimous adoption of the resolution formally constituting the Central Association of Spiritualists, the present Report is necessarily somewhat meagre.

MEMBERSHIP.

The Central Association of Spiritualists commenced with 294 Honorary and Subscribing Members. The changes so far have been as follows:—

New Subscribing Members elected...	17
New Honorary Member elected (Chas. Blackburn)	1
	—18
Resignations ...	33
Deaths, Hon. Members, Dr. Nehrer, W. L.	
Sammons ...	2
	—35
Total change (diminution) ...	17
Present number of Members ...	277

It may be remarked that the last six months of the year is always the time when there are most resignations, and the first six months is the time when most new Members may be expected.

ALLIED SOCIETIES.

Four societies have allied themselves with the Association in addition to those previously allied to the British National Association of Spiritualists, viz.:—North Shields Investigating Society; Central London Spiritual Evidence Society; Plymouth Free Spiritual Society; Metropolitan Spiritual Lyceum. The total number in friendly union is now twenty.

The following representatives of Allied Societies have been appointed as *ex-officio* Members of Council:—South African Spiritual Evidence Society, Mr. Cornelius Pearson; Plymouth Free Spiritual Society, Mr. J. Bowring Sloman; Central London Spiritual Evidence Society, Mr. Richard Wortley; Metropolitan Spiritual Lyceum, Mr. Sandys Britton.

WORK OF THE ASSOCIATION UP TO END OF YEAR 1882.

A successful *soirée* was held at the close of the season, last July, and the present season was opened by an equally successful one on November 6th. A series of discussion and social meetings has been commenced, and is going on through the winter and spring. The following is a programme of those which have been already held:—November 6th, Opening *Soirée*; November 20th, Paper, "Is it advisable for Spiritualists to encourage Professional Mediumship for Physical Manifestations?" by Mr. Thomas Shorter; December 4th, Paper, "Suggestions on the Practical Teachings of Materialisation," by Mrs. S. Heckford; December 18th, Paper, "Mesmerism," by Mr. Iver MacDonnell.

An important item in the work of the autumn was the issue of a circular relating to the conduct of *séances* for physical manifestations. This circular was drawn up with great care, and received the signatures of a large number of known and leading Spiritualists, both members of the Association and others. In connection with this, it may be mentioned that a series of *séances* is now being held in these rooms, arranged between Miss Wood and two friends of her own and a carefully-selected circle. The results will be duly reported to the Council.

In the month of September the whole of the premises occupied by the Association were re-decorated by the landlord. This has, however, been unavoidably accompanied by an

increase of rent. Some expenditure has also been made by the Association in refurnishing.

The Council expresses its thanks for a number of presentations which have been made to the Library since last May, and also its obligation to all those ladies and gentlemen who have given valuable aid and assistance in the *soirées* and discussion meetings, and in the various arrangements connected with them. It also feels bound to express its indebtedness to the unremitting energy and industry of the secretary of the Association.

FINANCIAL.

From the Accounts appended to this Report it will be seen that the Council are still struggling against an insufficient income, and one which prevents their taking up works of importance to the movement. During the last year exceptional expense was incurred from necessary painting and decorations, which have made the rooms comfortable and attractive. The rent having been increased to £150, the Council urge all Members to use their best efforts to add to their numbers and to obtain further support for the Association. Several Members have left in order to subscribe to the new Society for Psychical Research, which is to be regretted, inasmuch as each Society works upon its own distinct lines and the existence of the Society for Psychical Research is clearly owing to work already done by our Association. The Council hope that their former liberal subscribers will renew their subscriptions, and make the Association, as it has been in the past, a home for Spiritualists and a centre where inquirers shall be welcomed and assisted in prosecuting their researches.

E. DAWSON ROGERS,
Vice-President.

January 9th, 1883.

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT.—JANUARY 1 to DECEMBER 31, 1882.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
To Rent, Rates, Gas, Coals and Insurance	132	19	0	By Subscriptions	207	1	6
" Printing and Stationery	16	9	11	" Donations	17	16	0
" Advertising	42	3	0	" Balances Account	2	7	7
" Furniture and Fittings—				" Capital for Balance (loss)	34	14	6
depreciation of	26	14	9				
" General Charges	13	15	9				
" Postages	11	15	11				
" Library Expenses	8	14	0				
" Séances Account	2	6					
	£259	15	4		£259	15	4

BALANCE SHEET.

LIABILITIES.	£	s.	d.	ASSETS.	£	s.	d.
To outstanding Accounts, due by Association	10	0	0	By Cash at Bank and in hand	21	10	9
" A. Calder, Esq.	55	18	0	" Petty Cash in hand	3	4	6
" Coleman Fund	1	6	0	" Furniture and Fixtures	240	13	5
" Capital	198	4	7				
	£265	8	7		£265	8	7

Audited and found correct, January 19th, 1883.

MORELL THEOBALD, F.C.A., Hon. Treasurer.

E. H. POTTS }
R. PEARCE } Auditors.

(Counter-signed) THOMAS BLYTON, Resident Secretary.

Some friendly discussion followed the reading of the report, and the feeling was generally expressed that though the report was not so satisfactory as could have been wished, there was no cause for serious discouragement. The report was then unanimously adopted.

The following ladies and gentlemen were elected to constitute the new Council:—W. P. Adshead, G. P. Allan, Miss F. Arundale, F. Barrett, E. T. Bennett, J. Bowman, W. H. Coffin, Signor Damiani, T. H. Edmonds, J. S. Farmer, Mrs. FitzGerald, Desmond G. FitzGerald, Mrs. D. G. FitzGerald, G. F. Green, Miss Houghton, Sir Charles Isham, Bart., J. Lamont, J. G. Meugens, J. J. Morse, W. Newton, C. Pearson, R. Pearce, W. C. Pickersgill, G. H. Potts, E. Dawson Rogers, Signor Rondi, M. Theobald, Mrs. M. Williams, H. Withall, Miss H. Withall.

Mr. Sandys Britton having been elected members' auditor, the proceedings terminated with votes of thanks to the late Council, the secretary, and the chairman.

We learn that Mr. HARRY BASTIAN, well known to our readers as a physical and materialisation medium of remarkable power, is also a healing medium, having inherited the "gift of healing" from his Alsatian ancestors, among whom his father and grandfather were celebrated for their healing powers. Mr. Bastian has permanently associated himself in this work with Dr. and Mrs. Nichols, 32, Fopstone-road, Earls Court, South Kensington. This devotion to the relief of suffering will not, it is to be hoped, too much interfere with other forms of manifestation, though healing the sick may be considered the most important and desirable, if not the most convincing, of all "spiritual gifts," and one of "the signs that follow them that believe."

OFFICE OF "LIGHT."

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

TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post free to any address within the United Kingdom, or to places comprised within the Postal Union, including all parts of Europe, the United States, and British North America, is 10s. 10d. per annum, forwarded to our office in advance.

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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

THE S. P. R. AND THE C. A. S.

A CORRESPONDENT asks, "What is the distinction between the Society for Psychical Research and the Central Association of Spiritualists?" and also inquires whether there is any antagonism between the two bodies. To those who are acquainted with all the facts the distinction is obvious enough; to others it may not be altogether so apparent. It will, however, very readily be seen if a little consideration is given to the S. P. R.'s methods of procedure.

Taking nothing for granted, and for all practical purposes ignoring the results of previous inquiries, the S. P. R. started afresh on the path of research, resolved to put to the most rigid scientific tests—so far as the application of such tests is possible—every so-called psychical phenomenon, as it came under the notice of their special committees. What is popularly known as thought-reading, for instance—about which Spiritualists have made up their minds conclusively years ago, from large experience and the most abundant evidences of its truth—the S. P. R. assumed as unproven; their purpose being, if the facts were as alleged, to demonstrate them in such a way that no honest mind that cared to know could find plausible excuse for disbelief. And they have done this work exhaustively and well. No candid seeker for truth can any longer doubt. The S. P. R. have met the scientific sceptic by scientific methods.

And they will do so in other departments of psychical research. Of course we can say nothing about the special directions in which they are now engaged. They choose, as they are wise in doing, their own times and methods of making known the results of their inquiries. But Spiritualists cannot doubt what the end will be—they cannot doubt that, as time goes on, the S. P. R. will afford as clear and unquestionable proofs of clairvoyance, of spirit writing, of spiritual appearances, and of the various forms of physical phenomena as they have so successfully afforded of thought-reading. But meanwhile there is a sharp line of distinction between the S. P. R. and the Central Association of Spiritualists. The Spiritualists have a settled faith—nay, more, a certain knowledge—in regard to facts about which the S. P. R. would not yet profess to have any knowledge whatever. The S. P. R. are busy with phenomena only, seeking evidence of their existence, but not yet hazarding even a hint of their spiritual origin. To them the idea of spirit-communion, of sweet converse with dear departed friends—so precious to Spiritualists—has no present interest. We speak of them, of course, as a Society—not of individual members. As a Society they are studying the mere bones and muscles, and have not yet penetrated to the heart and soul. As a Society, they cannot yet call themselves Spiritualists. As a Society,

they will, as their proofs accumulate, in all probability become—first, "Spiritualists without the spirits,"—and ultimately very like other Spiritualists, with the added satisfaction that in reaching that position they have made good every step in their path as they went along, and have, by their cautious conduct, induced many noble and clever men and women to tread the same way with them.

"Is there any antagonism between the two bodies?"

After what we have said we think our correspondent will see that there certainly ought not to be, and we have also the pleasure of giving him the assurance that there is not. The Spiritualists are confident that the S. P. R. are doing a most useful work, and that, sooner or later, this work will bring a large accession to the Spiritualist ranks; and so there can be no room for jealousy. It is true that some members of the C. A. S., as mentioned in the report of the Council to the annual meeting, held on Tuesday last, have left the Association, having connected themselves with the S. P. R. Of course this secession, although, fortunately, but a small one, is very much to be regretted, and we cannot but think that those who have adopted such a course have been true neither to themselves nor to the cause which they should have at heart. The S. P. R. should be assisted by Spiritualists in every possible way, but not at the expense of any association which more correctly represents their professed faith. It is due to the self-denying labours of Spiritualist associations during many years of obloquy and reproach that the ground has been sufficiently cleared for the operations of the S. P. R., and Spiritualists should bear in mind that the C. A. S. and similar organisations have still the first claim on their support, and have yet before them a large amount of useful work which can only be accomplished by a continuance of the help and sympathy of friends. Spiritualists who become deserters at a time when their assistance is most needed will, sooner or later, look back upon their want of fidelity with sorrow, perhaps with shame and self-reproach.

A PERSONAL OR IMPERSONAL GOD?

I am glad to notice the adhesion of "M.A. (Oxon.);" and Mr. Penny to the truth of the Divine Personality. But some comment is required on the strictures of three other correspondents. Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald deems it "equally impossible to regard the Supreme Intelligence as a person or as an impersonal principle." I may ask, if He is neither personal nor impersonal, what is He, then? Is He half-and-half, a sort of go-between, neither fully self-conscious nor yet unconscious? Is He, like Richard III.,

"Sent

Into this breathing world not half made up?"

Now what strikes me in our universe is that everything is positive and defined. The vague and indefinite appertains to our thoughts, not to the things or persons themselves. Each one of us is a whole personality, and thereby possesses a commanding advantage; but God, it appears, has a misty, undefined existence, "not wholly outside of any existent being or thing, and yet not identical with them," partly belonging to them and partly not. I cannot acquiesce in this nebosity. If it be so, we have an immense advantage over the Supreme Being. I have ventured to write "Supreme Being," but Mr. Fitzgerald says "Intelligence." Are we to think of the Supreme, then, as a mere all-embracing intellect, but without moral attributes? If it be so, then our superiority to Him is even more decided. Such a Being deserves our deepest compassion.

I next come to Miss Arundale. She requires some further elucidation of my meaning when I wrote: "God must be able to communicate with matter." It must be so unless God is devoid of a great power and advantage which we possess. We manipulate matter in a thousand ways, and, as Cicero says, thereby almost make "a second nature" of things. We "originate force to impel and sustain it." With a mere thought we set nervous and electrical currents at work which set our own bodies in motion and thrill through them. We make an absolutely new beginning by our mere will, as when we say, "I will get up and dress." This is not a physical sequence, it is a physical fact consequent solely on a fiat of the will. Is it,

then, an undue familiarity to presume that the Almighty can "communicate with matter and originate force to impel and sustain it"? If He cannot, then is He in a pitiable condition—to survey the worlds of matter, and yet to be absolutely powerless over them. We can combine forces, and thus modify and change our external condition. He cannot. He is all mind, but with no executive power. He is in the condition which Thucydides describes as "the most hateful grief of all, to have many thoughts and desires, but to have no power to realise them."

I further said, "Matter is inert in its own essence." Well, I do not stand upon a word; "essence" may be incorrect. What I meant was, that matter is in itself inert and at rest until an external force sets it in motion. I believe Newton sustains that proposition. Miss Arundale refers us to the "atoms," and inquires, "Are not all atoms the effect of the correlation of two great forces forming, as it were, one? Is not force itself but the outward expression of the interior essence? How, then, can effect be independent of cause, so as to require the origination of that cause to impel and sustain it?"

I may, in turn, remark—the atoms being "an effect," the effect of the correlation of two great forces, how came these two forces first to exist, and then to be correlated? an union necessary to give birth to the clever, nimble, and eternally vibrating atoms, vibrating to and fro millions and millions of times in a second. Miss Arundale seems to think that no external force is required for all this, but that the atoms eternally gyrate by their inborn energy and interior essence. Tyndall, however, would inform her that it is the ether waves impinging on the molecules of bodies which agitate their constituent atoms, and which make them capable of tremors equal in rapidity to those of light and radiant heat.

Not to intrude too much on your space, I would refer your correspondent to the remarks of Tait and Balfour Stewart on the use of the term "force"—"the modern abuse of which word is outrageous, alike to science and to common sense"—and Miss Arundale seems to be guilty of it.

I crave a little more space to reply to "C.C.M." If it were a question of "shells" I should not presume to differ from him, for those queer existences are to him "familiar as his garter." But I unfeignedly thank him for his translation of Zöllner, and highly value his co-operation in our cause. He remarks: "Even if we admit that the One Being must be perfectly self-conscious." He seems, then, to think it more probable that He is only dimly self-conscious, not quite sure whether He is alive or not. Now, as we are perfectly self-conscious, the "many" beings have a great superiority over the "One Being" who lives in the mist, and hardly realises what and where He is. He then continues: "Consciousness is not being, is not even energy, it is phenomenon only." Indeed! I thought that "consciousness" was buried out of sight, and that we infer it from its effects; that it is, in short, the exact opposite of the phenomenal. However, if it be phenomenal, it can only be so in the sense that everything whatsoever, whether in the universe of mind or of matter, is phenomenal; that the whole is a fleeting phantasmagoria; that the universe is all "outsides;" that there is nothing within to sustain it; that it is a house of cards; that all is an outward seeming only; that the whole is phenomenal; an universal *Maya* or illusion.

I humbly beg to dissent from such philosophy.

G. D. HAUGHTON.

27, Queen's-terrace, Southampton.

THE S.P.R. AND THE C.A.S.
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I was at the first meeting, held at Great Russell-street, when Professor Barrett proposed the establishment of the Society now known as the Society for Psychical Research, and if I did not misunderstand him, he then stated that he was indebted to yourself for the suggestion. This being so, it occurs to me that you will be in a position to answer a question, a reply to which I think would be acceptable to others as well as to myself—viz., "What is the distinction between the S.P.R. and the Central Association of Spiritualists, and is there any antagonism between the two bodies?"

Hoping you will not consider this as needlessly troubling you, I am, yours faithfully,

A STUDENT.

Discontent is unhappiness at the non-possession of that, the possession of which would not make us happy.

DIRECT SPIRIT DRAWING.

A séance was held at my residence, Rose Villa, Church End, Finchley, N., on the evening of the 14th of January last, the circle consisting of my wife, two sons, two daughters, and myself, with Mr. W. E. as medium. We sat in the dark and had long conversations with spirits, who spoke with the direct voice. In the course of the sitting one of them asked: "Have you any private note-paper with printed heading?" I replied that he would find some in the Davenport. Immediately afterwards we heard several strong pulls at a side drawer in the Davenport. This drawer goes very stiffly, and we knew exactly what was being done by the noise made by the drawer in being pulled out. The spirit had, in fact, gone to the particular drawer in which my stock of note-paper is kept. Some quires of the paper were at once thrown on the table, and I was immediately—that is, *within two or three seconds*—requested by the voice to light up. Having done so, we found on a piece of the paper a message of *about eighty words*, well and distinctly written in pencil. As soon as this had been read I put out the light again, and had scarcely done so when light was once more called for. As nearly as I can judge, *not more than three seconds* had elapsed; but in that space of time a pencil sketch—of which a facsimile is given below—had been executed on another sheet of my private note-paper.



The voice told us that the sketch might be taken as a general "representation," though not exactly a likeness, of my daughter Kathleen, who has now been about ten years in the other life. I should add that the medium sat between myself and my wife, and that we *know* that he did not move from his seat during the séance.

E.D.R.

THE LATE TRANSIT OF VENUS curiously proved the accurate calculations of the ancient makers of that famous horological curiosity, the Strasburg clock. A few days before the transit, the *American Register* tells us, visitors to the Cathedral inspecting the planetarium attached to the clock, noticed that one of the small gilt balls representing Venus was gradually moving towards a point between the sun and the earth, and on the day of the passage the ball stood exactly between them. Old Conrad Dasypodius, the Strasburg mathematician, superintended the manufacture of the clock and its accompanying planetarium, sometime between 1571-4, the dates differing according to various authorities; and it is interesting to note that after three hundred years of existence, the clock faithfully fulfils the calculations of its dead inventor.—*Graphic*.

THE BARBY GHOST.

It was the opinion of Athanasius and others that souls, once delivered from the burden of the flesh, held no further communion with mortality; and many may recall the remark of St. Augustine—that, if souls ever re-visited the friends and haunts of their mortal being, he was assured that his mother, Monica, who had followed him by land and sea, would have revealed herself to him—so greatly beloved—in order to inform him of what she had learned in her present state, and advise him in his hard conflict. On the other hand, it was a widely-accepted tenet of ghostly faith, that the immaterial part was frequently seen hovering near the spot where the gross and crustaceous body lies, waiting either until the latter should be accorded the rites of sepulture, or until some crime should be revealed and expiated. Among the supporters of this opinion was Origen, who considered that the disembodied spirit might be permitted to wander within certain prescribed limits, until some especial purpose were fulfilled.

It must be confessed that, except by inclining toward this view, or by supposing that the spirits of evil were permitted to personate the departed, it would be difficult to suggest any rational explanation of a phenomenon which has been familiar to the thoughts of every successive generation since man's history was written. There is a certain consistency in the idea, which commends it to the inquirer, and gives to the incontrovertible evidence which establishes the occurrence of this class of incident, its greatest value.

Some years ago, in a letter from Sir Charles Isham, of Lamport Hall, Northampton, the writer remarked, *parenthèse*, that an incident had occurred—was, indeed, still occurring—in the neighbourhood, so strange, yet so indubitable, as to justify a visit of inquiry, from anyone delighting in the marvellous to the spot. Not many weeks later, an opportunity offered—by a slight deviation from a journey I had to make to the neighbourhood of Coventry—to comply with my correspondent's implied suggestion.

The pretty, sequestered village of Barby is situated a few miles from Rugby, and consists only of a few small dwellings of the cottage class, the inhabitants of which appeared both clean, sober, and intelligent, with manners that might have done honour to a more polished community. In this village died, March the 3rd, 1851, a Mrs. Knebb, aged sixty-seven. Born and bred in the place, she had married, late in life, a person of some means, who, dying, left her in easy circumstances for one of her condition, the cottage in which she resided forming a portion of her property. She was, however, of a singularly penurious disposition, concealing to the utmost her means of subsistence, and denying herself even the necessities of life, to such an extent as to bring on the illness of which she subsequently died. During this illness she was supplied with all she needed by her nephew, Mr. Hart, a farmer, and was nursed by two neighbours, Mrs. Holding and Mrs. Griffin. Her habits retained such hold upon her that she, on one occasion, pretending to be penniless, sent Mrs. Holding to beg for sixpence to purchase brandy. As her end approached, she evinced no mental disquietude, but, when turned in her bed by her two attendants, expressed an opinion that she should not survive the night, adding that she trusted it would prove so, and that before another she would be in Paradise. She died, in effect, that night, having a short time before left everything she possessed, by will, with the executorship, to her nephew Hart.

Before proceeding to the extraordinary part of the narrative, I may be allowed to state that I visited Barby fully prepared to find that what I might learn or witness there would not, when sifted, reward me for even the slight divergence I had made from my original route. Knowing

nothing whatever of the locality or its inhabitants, it was by no means an easy task to get fairly on the track of the phenomenon, whatever it was, that had troubled the peace of this quiet spot. Fortune, however, favoured me. Entering into conversation with an intelligent native who was leaning on a gate, I remarked, casually, that I supposed the little hamlet, pretty as it was, lying so far aloof from the main roads, had few visitors.

"More 'n common lately," said the young farmer, with a grin.

"Ah—how was that?"

"We've had *one* as brought more. You ain't the first gentleman as has come since Mrs. Knebb died."

"Who upon earth is Mrs. Knebb? and why should my coming have anything to do with that lady?"

"Oh, I thought as you was going to ask to be shewn her cottage. Many does."

"What happened there?"

My rustic friend at once commenced the story—the beginning of which has been already told—and continued, in substance, as follows:—

One month after the funeral of the deceased Mrs. Knebb, Mrs. Holding and her uncle, who occupied the cottage adjoining Mrs. Knebb's (which had been closed), were alarmed by loud thumps dealt upon the partition wall, slamming of doors, and sounds as of furniture violently thrown about. This last circumstance seemed the more extraordinary, inasmuch as everything movable had been taken off the premises. Mrs. Holding's uncle, on entering the house, found all quiet, and as it had been left. These noises recurred nightly, generally commencing about two o'clock in the morning (the time of the old woman's death), but sometimes earlier, and caused the neighbouring family so much alarm that, as Mrs. Holding declared, they could never bear to go to bed till eleven—an unheard of dissipation in Barby—in the hope that, when they did retire, fatigue might enable them to sleep through it all. One night, however, the disturbance was so great that Mrs. Holding could bear it no longer, and, hastily dressing, went out in search of her uncle, who was absent. That gentleman was found at the Black Bull, but the only remark he made, as they walked home, was—

"Well, my girl, I do believe there's our Missis Knebb come back!"

On the 9th of April the family of a respectable sawyer named Accleton, tempted by the low rent, came into the disturbed house.

"Perhaps," remarked my companion, at this point of the story, "you would like to see Mrs. Accleton yourself, sir; that's her cottage near by."

I assented, and we found that lady at home, and perfectly ready to communicate her ghostly experiences. She told me that she occupied the bedroom in which the old woman died. It was a lofty and commodious apartment, having in the ceiling a small trap-door, giving access to a sort of loft among the rafters. Accleton was much from home, but the eldest child, a girl of ten, slept in a small bed in a corner, about three paces from her mother. On one occasion, soon after they had entered, Mrs. Accleton was awakened, about two in the morning, by a tremendous crash in the room below. Thinking it was her husband, who had gone to Hilmorton feast, she called out—"Oh, so you've got back, at last, I can hear!" No answer was returned, but the noises were renewed, at intervals, until seven o'clock, when the husband returned. Similar sounds were now heard almost every night, but nothing was seen until, one night,—or, rather, morning—about two, the elder Accletons were aroused by loud shrieks from the child.

"Mother, mother!" cried the girl, "there's a woman standing by my bed, a-shaking her head at me! What do she want?"

The parents saw nothing, but the child continuing to cry, Accleaton got up and approached the bed, saying: "Nonsense, nonsense, girl! It's only your mother's cap and gown!" This was said merely to pacify her, but it had no effect, the child reiterating her story, and adding that the woman wore a mottled gown, unlike her mother's, and a white cap, and was very tall. The deceased woman, Mrs. Knebb, was five feet eleven inches in height. All was now quiet till about four, when the girl, who had been lying with her face to the wall, shrieked out again, in an agony of terror—

"Mother! mother! here's that woman again!"

She declared that the visitor had awakened her by turning the corner of the sheet over her face. The apparition was seen by the little girl in all seven times, and her health, the mother assured us, had been seriously injured by the nervous shock, though, "by the blessing of God, and with youth on her side," she trusted that she would soon get over it.

The small seer was a pretty, blue-eyed, intelligent child, with a frank infantine manner, the reverse of cunning. She told me that the spectre came with a low laughing or singing voice, which awoke her. It was made visible by a "brown light" which seemed to surround her, stood erect with folded hands, and gazed at her in a bold firm manner.

Up to this time, some degree of incredulity existed among the neighbours as to the child's statement—a feeling never partaken by her parents. But all doubts were soon to be set at rest. Mrs. Accleaton, whose mother was sleeping with her in the absence of her husband, was awakened one morning, at two, by a sudden light in the room. In an instant, the idea of the spectral presence crossed her mind, and she at first closed her eyes, but, regaining courage—"I said to myself," she related, "'the Lord's will be done. I never did her any harm.' With that, I lifted my head from the pillow, and there she stood, at the bed's foot, and 'set' me as firm and proud as if she was alive. I looked at her full five minutes. Then I spoke to mother, who was awake, and told her there was Mrs. Knebb. But all she said was, 'Lord help us! don't see it,' and pulled the clothes over her head.'"

Mrs. Accleaton had previously declared her intention to address the spirit should it appear, but her courage proved unequal to this, although, she added, it moved towards her with a gentle, appealing manner, and even slightly touched the bolster, as though inviting her to speak. The form and face were distinctly visible in a misty light. It was, beyond question, the presentment of the deceased woman.

The next witness to whom my guide introduced me was a Mrs. Radburn—a determined-looking dame of about threescore, who had enjoyed the dangerous honour of partaking Mrs. Accleaton's couch, and had been aroused one night by a pressure on her elbow. The room was so light that, mistaking it for dawn, she prepared to rise, when a clock struck two, and in the same instant she became aware of the spectral presence. It stood between her and the window. "Patches of light" were about the room, as it went "flustering" through the chamber. All the witnesses alluded to coruscations of some description, which invariably accompanied the spectre.

A very well-mannered and intelligent woman, Mrs. Griffin, who had nursed the deceased and performed the last offices to the dead, was roused at the usual hour, by the same cause. With more nerve and self-possession than her neighbours, she, though conscious of the presence of the unearthly visitor, determined to baulk it.

"I 'steered' my eyes through the room, sir, and said, 'My old wench, you shan't know I'm seeing of you.'"

The phantom, however, or curiosity—or both—exercised some compulsory power, and Mrs. Griffin *did* gaze at the spectre, which looked "bold and impudent," and wore a dark mottled gown and white cap, in which she had been

dressed for the grave. Streams of brownish light proceeding from her seemed to direct themselves towards that portion of the ceiling where the trap-door was situated.

Now, the circumstance of these brown rays always pointing in one direction, coupled with certain conjectures engendered by the deceased's miserly ways, seems to have elicited a suggestion that "something" (money, peradventure) might be concealed in the loft before-mentioned, and an appeal was at length made to the nephew and executor, Mr. Hart, to permit a search. That gentleman himself proceeded to the house, and, assisted by Mrs. Accleaton, who held the ladder by which he reached the trap, crept into the loft. It was totally dark, and the candle he used was thrice blown out by the eddying draughts before he reached the inner recesses. Suddenly, he called out that he had found a parcel, and flung down into the room a bundle of old deeds. Another minute and he cried out again, and hastily descended, carrying a large bag, secured with twine, and covered with dust and cobwebs. On opening it notes and gold were found to a considerable amount. On being asked if he did not seem astonished or elated at such a discovery, Mrs. Accleaton replied that he displayed much agitation, shed tears, and said that "now he trusted the poor soul would rest in peace."

The hope was not immediately fulfilled. On the fourth day after the discovery just related, the noises re-commenced worse than ever. Hart now proceeded to examine more closely into the affairs of his relative, when certain debts were disclosed still existing against her estate. These were scrupulously discharged, after which (the "dead year," as Mrs. Radburn called it, being up) all disturbance ceased.

Such are the facts of the Barby ghost, detailed, by those questioned, with all appearance of sincerity and good faith. They were undoubtedly respectable, and seemingly religious persons, impressed with a deep reverence for things Divine. It may have been fancy, still the idea crossed my mind that the wonderful visitation to which these poor people believed themselves to have been subjected, had had the effect of somewhat refining their coarse natures, and imparting to their language and manner a degree of dignity not usually characteristic of their class in life.

On taking my leave of them I inquired whether the reverend rector of Barby had not expressed doubts of the story.

"Yes, yes, sir," was the prompt reply. "Mr. G. may think so, and say so; but seeing is believing, and twenty good gentlemen, like himself, could not convince us four sane persons against the evidence of our own natural senses. *Mr. G. has not seen what we saw.*"

HENRY SPICER.

"THE HIMALAYAN SLOPES."

To the Editor of LIGHT.

SIR,—"*Vera*," I see, is one of those who *can* perceive that it would not be possible for the "Brethren" to communicate their full knowledge to the world, because the world cannot yet "hear" it. It is still in the period of "shells and husks" when forms of religion are more thought of than religion itself.

Did they (the Brethren) attempt to impart their knowledge it would be utterly misunderstood—looked on as blasphemy and the ravings of madmen, and do more harm than good. Its possession (which word here includes *assimilation*) leads to the absolutely "Christ-like" life, which is not necessarily one which blazons itself before the world.

The true "secret of *Hermes*" is incommunicable, and must be acquired by each man for himself. The only thing that can be done for him is to point out the way. That way is the development of the Divine spirit within us—the "At-one-ment" on every plane, physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual. Let him that would learn "*try without ceasing.*"

Bath, January 28th, 1883.

H.M.

OBITUARY.

On January 21st, at 39, Avenue de Ségur, Paris, Madame Rivail (widow of the late Allan Kardec), aged 88 years.

AN APPARITION.

The following narrative may be relied upon as strictly true. We have the name of the writer, who is a gentleman of the highest respectability and integrity :—

In the year 1868 I was, with my regiment, quartered at Meerut, in the North-West Provinces of Bengal. I was in the habit, like many other people, of going during the hot months as often as practicable to the hill station of Mussoorie. The distance was usually accomplished, in those days at least, in about twenty-four hours. At Mussoorie I became acquainted with Colonel —, who had formerly been in the King of Oude's service. Colonel — owned many houses at Mussoorie, was a pleasant, affable man, was very fond of music, and very hospitable. I saw a great deal of him on the occasions of my visits to Mussoorie, and, during the few years which immediately preceded the year given above, I constantly met at his house a Mr. and Mrs. B., who were, in fact, relations of my own. They were Colonel —'s tenants, invariably renting from him for the season one of his houses, which was situated close to that occupied by Colonel — himself. Mr. and Mrs. B. were very musical. Mr. B. had a beautiful, soft, tenor voice, whilst Mrs. B., though singing well, especially songs of the German school, was invaluable as an accompanist to her husband. The evenings spent at Colonel —'s were invariably musical. The cheery Colonel himself played the flute, and the cornet-à-piston, to an accompaniment on the piano by his daughter—a tall, well-grown girl for her years, but at the time I speak of not more than sixteen or seventeen years of age. Sometimes the Colonel varied the amusements of the evening by snatching up a guitar and singing either some serenade full of moonlight and lovers' vows, or he would mimic, with irresistible drollery, the songs sung by native minstrels to charm, as they imagine, the English ear.

The year 1868 had come to a close. With the termination of the season of course all European visitors had returned to their homes in the plains. In the ordinary course of relief my regiment was ordered to Cawnpore, and from that time I lost sight of Mr. and Mrs. B., whom I left behind at Meerut. That they were happy in their conjugal relations I knew was not the case I knew that he was much younger than his wife—that he was much sought after for his beautiful singing, and that his wife had already, on one occasion, condoned some flagrant act of his on the most solemn promise of amendment. I cannot, without referring to friends at a distance, give the dates of what follows; but I believe that it was in the beginning of 1869 that society was shocked by hearing that Mr. B. had, in consequence of renewed unhappiness with his wife, shot himself. He shot himself at Meerut, at about eight o'clock in the evening.

On that night, Colonel —'s wife and daughter were together in a bedroom at ten p.m. The former had already got into bed; the latter was brushing out her hair by a cheval glass, and in her night attire. Suddenly the girl exclaimed: "Oh, mamma, there's Mr. B.!" "Where?" cried the scandalised mother, clutching and pulling up the bed-clothes. "There, mamma! Do you not see him? There—he says: 'Good-bye, Sissey—good-bye!' There, now he's going—now he's gone!" An immediate alarm was given; the room, the house, the garden were carefully searched, without obtaining any satisfactory clue to so extraordinary a scene in a lady's bed-chamber. Colonel — closely questioned the girl, who not only positively adhered to her previous declarations, but now detailed the clothes worn by Mr. B. as he appeared to her. Two days afterwards the post, and newspapers, brought to Mussoorie the news of the suicide of Mr. B. Colonel — and his wife did not communicate the fact to their daughter for some days, as they thought that since the night when she seemed to have seen Mr. B. she had been strangely depressed. When the fact was gently broken to her, it had such an effect that never from that day was any allusion ever made either to the occurrence itself or to the name which was connected with much that evidently had a strong affinity to the young girl's mediumistic tendencies.

METROPOLITAN SPIRITUAL LYCEUM.—With the view of testing the possibility of meeting the necessary expenses of the Sunday services at St. Andrew's Hall, by regular personal subscriptions, the Council of the Lyceum respectfully invite such support. In the event of that method promising success, the question of making the services absolutely free to the congregation, as such, will be promptly considered. Earnest Spiritualists should visit the hall at once, judge of the work going on, and of its chance of reaching outsiders, and then determine whether it deserves the encouragement suggested. Particulars of to-morrow (Sunday) evening's service will be found in the advertising columns.

"CONFESSIONS OF A MEDIUM."

With intense interest many friends on the Continent, among whom the above-named book is in circulation, became acquainted with many of the tricks which some so-called mediums impose on their too credulous dupes. Without accepting *in toto* the conclusions drawn, we are bound to say that the descriptions of the séances, the sayings and doings of the "spirits," and the different types of sitters, are true to the life.

We can give you the assurance that many items from the Continent, as given in the work, are confirmed by the most fashionable and solid inquirers in Holland and Belgium. There is no reason to doubt that it is not the same in England; at least, we witnessed many séances there just like those depicted in the "Confessions." Moreover, it is ridiculous to pretend that a man cannot be believed because he once cheated and afterwards made a clean breast of it. What would be the consequence if the courts of justice thought likewise?

Most of us think the work a precious contribution to the impartial study of Spiritualism, and consider it to be of great use to truth-seekers. If there is any truth in Spiritualism, and we think there is a good deal in it, that truth cannot be overturned by the imitation of real phenomena.

It is high time, however, that the eyes of honest truth-seekers were opened, and Spiritualism purified from the many dark spots which discredit it. Hiding the head under the wings may be ostrich-like, but Spiritualists must not imitate this stupid "trick." We repeat our conviction that the book merits a careful perusal, and will make a good deal of tricking and cheating impossible in the future. Truth above all.

You have my name, and I remain, dear Sir, truly yours,

R.,

Honorary Member of the C.A.S.

The Hague, January, 1883.

[There are two sides to the question which our correspondent raises. We have read the book to which he refers, and we know, of our own knowledge, that some of the incidents related are so grossly misrepresented as to throw discredit on the rest. No doubt there have been dishonest mediums and too credulous Spiritualists; but as a rule mediums are just as honourable and Spiritualists just as acute and sensible as other people.—Ed. "LIGHT."]

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON & THE PROVINCES.

ST. ANDREW'S HALL

14, NEWMAN-STREET, OXFORD-STREET, LONDON.

The address on Sunday evening last, delivered with great power and freedom through the mediumship of M. Morse, was upon the question of the miraculous or sequential character of the accepted fact of Immortality. With Spiritualists the answer must be regarded as a "foregone conclusion," while with the outsider it is becoming daily more evident that unless the sequential issue can be successfully maintained, the alternative, as the lecturer put it, is gradually drifting to the single form of uncompromising denial of the alleged truth, because of the increasing unwillingness of educated thinkers to admit the possibility of miracle. With a prompt directness of speech, admirably calculated to awaken interest, the lecture opened with a quotation of the inquiry, "If a man die, shall he live again?" and, although this was not the question before us, it gave opportunity for a pointed contrast between the Christian faith and the scientific thought of the age, which, under an avalanche of doubt, treats the problem as at once unsolved and unsolvable. "Ask of Heaven," says the orthodox believer, who himself, as a rule, has no misgiving of the natural heritage of his soul; but this does not help one who is indisposed to listen to such appeals. It is a melancholy reflection that a faith claiming to be the only Divine religion the world possesses, should be thus associated with doubt, should be unable to supply its adherents with evidence or proof,—involving the certainty of knowledge—precisely because of the self-created difficulty resulting from assigning immortality to miraculous agency. By affirming that "the gift of God is eternal life" a limitation is, in terms, introduced, which favours the believer with a species of ecclesiastical sugar-plum, while imposing an impossible condition upon the mass of mankind. If such a position or such a process of selection could be truthfully maintained with regard to immortality, there would be only one regret open to us, and that would be that we are immortal, for it would be infinitely better to remain here and struggle and fight for progress in the world as we all know it, doing our manly best, and taking our chance of the questionable hereafter. In an eloquent outburst, after Tennyson, we were then charged to ring out every old falsehood, and every hoary wrong and superstition; and to ring in, with the Christ that is to be, every truth, and fresh and living inspiration. Immortality as a sequential fact, as a feature of continuous life, is in

conformity with what we know of nature everywhere. Do not be alarmed by that dreadful word evolution. It is said to be destructive of spirituality; to take God out of life, the soul out of humanity. On the contrary, an intelligent appreciation of evolution places God the firmer on His throne, supplies a surer basis for all philosophy, makes truth the outcome of accepted experience, establishes the correlation of all the forces, the interdependence between all the departments, of being; for evolution is true of all social, intellectual, and spiritual conditions. Civilisation, too, is developed, and even under occasional decay preserves the elements of renewed advance. The world to-day is what the thought of the past and of the present makes it. And the analogy holds with children, whose very life involves immortality. From the earliest stage of recognised existence there grows an immortal soul, and there is developed from such apparently unpromising material, a Bacon, a Shakespeare, a Goethe. In the infant life are bound up the potentialities of gigantic forces, and the growth of these is but the extension of its inherent powers, with nothing miraculous at all about it. Side by side with the external aspect of things is an internal relation. There is another realm of forces, and unfailing spiritual development becomes as easy and as certain for the expression of intelligence as is the bodily growth of the chubby little dimpled scrap, which presently takes mature form as the red-handed warrior, or the large-hearted sympathetic woman whose active philanthropy influences the character of a nation. Sequence is clear everywhere, and miracles have an awkward habit of dropping to pieces whenever examined minutely. With sequence the self-hood is maintained, and however relatively inferior to his fellows a man may be, if the option is given him, he prefers to remain himself. Yes, the forces of life are continuous, and immortality then becomes the greatest of personal blessings, carrying forward the element of progress and humanity in its best and noblest forms, which are, in truth, the counterparts of the Divine. Approaching then the specific evidence, the lecturer spoke of those who have come to the front, more particularly during the last thirty years, when they were thought to be slumbering quietly beneath the gravel or the sod. They have come, and they come now, knocking, knocking, knocking, and when presently we respond, it is found that of those who were regarded as dead the individuality is there awaiting us. They appeal to the heart and to the understanding, and the people who indulge and encourage this intercourse are called Spiritualists, the very mention of whom provokes a cold shudder and their dismissal to an exceptionally hot place. Nevertheless, the leaders of thought and the preachers of religion must reckon with these unpopular investigators. They are a growing power and they are irrepresable alike in philosophy and morals, for they say they have proof!—proof which all may get for the seeking—proof of the continuity of life, of mind, of the affections, of all that makes us severally the individuals we represent. Upon this proof we got into accord with the higher impulses of being, and reach an assurance of conviction which is, after all, latent in the conscience of every child of man, and sustained, as a sequential fact, by the accepted analogous teachings of mundane science.

The first of the "Humanity" course of four lectures at this hall will be delivered on Sunday next, the 4th February, and a specially interesting series of associated readings will be concurrently introduced.

BIRMINGHAM.

On Sunday week it was my pleasure to be with some of the Birmingham Spiritualists, and to see the healthy and improving state of their public meetings, as carried on by Mr. and Mrs. Groom, and Mr. Gray. These friends have ever been ready to resign and leave others to do the work better; to receive assistance; or to work without. The last is their present position; and they are unmistakably doing well for the cause they love. They have the sympathy and support of good audiences. On this occasion, Mrs. Groom delivered an excellent address under inspiration, on "Let there be light." It embraced a wide range of thought, shewing the various channels through which the light of love and wisdom reach humanity. It was followed by three extempore poems chosen by the audience on—"The Mind," "Justice," and "Love," which received the enthusiastic appreciation of the audience. Mrs. Groom then proceeded to give clairvoyant descriptions of the spirit friends of a great number of strangers present, which were publicly acknowledged to be correct. Overwhelming evidence has been given at these meetings of the reality of clairvoyance, and of the continued existence of departed friends, and it seems a sad loss that detailed reports should not reach the public through the Press.—A. J. SMYTH, Liverpool.

GLASGOW.

The members of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists had a treat of no ordinary kind on Sunday evening last, the platform being occupied by Mr. David Duguid who, in response to a request made, had consented to tell the story of how he became connected with the subject of Spiritualism. Mr. Duguid spoke for over an hour, telling of incidents and adventures which to strangers present must have seemed far removed from the possibility of events in the nineteenth century. Nothing could have been of more interest than the story of how, step by step, Mr.

Duguid felt his way till he became a Spiritualist, and one of the most celebrated mediums. It is to be hoped that some of the incidents narrated will be put in writing for publication, as they are well worthy of preservation, and have not hitherto been recorded. One event may be here set down. Mr. Duguid had occasion some twelve years ago to cross the Sound of Mull in an open boat, in very squally weather. Half-way across, the water became so tempestuous, the wind having meanwhile increased in violence, that "fear took possession of the fishermen's hearts" and they hurriedly resolved to put back to shore again. This resolution, however, was strenuously, nay, fiercely opposed by Mr. Duguid, who was distinctly aware of the presence of his "invisible" friend, Jan Steen, the Dutch painter. The latter gave Mr. Duguid clearly to understand that the safety of himself and the other occupants of the boat depended on their pursuing their journey. Hence Mr. Duguid's insistence on this course, in preference to that suggested by the boatmen. By dint of tough pulling and skilful management, they ultimately weathered the storm, and reached the other side in safety. As he was leaving the boat, and mentally noting with gratitude this last "providential intervention" on the part of a familiar spirit and friend, judge of his surprise when one of the boatmen made known the fact that *he also had seen the form in the boat*; by asking Mr. Duguid who the "man" was to whom he was seen speaking in the midst of the storm. Gifted with that faculty of "second sight," which is by no means uncommon among the Highlanders, the boatman had witnessed the physical Mr. Duguid in conversation with the spiritual Jan Steen. Mr. John Robertson occupied the chair, and, on introducing Mr. Duguid, referred to the value and importance of his life's work, every phase of spiritual phenomena having been manifested through his mediumship.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

NEWCASTLE.—On Sunday evening last, Mr. Rowe, of North Shields, lectured from the platform of the N.S.E.S. upon "The Influence of the Art and Literature of Ancient Greece upon Modern Thought." The discourse was a carefully considered and well-digested one, and highly creditable to the lecturer, who strove, with considerable force of reasoning, to shew how the inspired endeavours of the past had echoed their presence to the great and lofty inspirations of modern life. Mr. W. C. Robson occupied the chair. The latter gentleman met with a warm reception from the members, he having rejoined the Society after about a twelvemonth's separation, caused, as will be remembered, by the methods adopted by the then ruling powers. We are pleased to observe that the new executive are, in an admirable manner, doing justice all round, and in an energetic way performing good work in reducing the large debt left to them. We believe that about £27 has already been promised, if not actually received, for the purpose.

GATESHEAD.—The platform of the Gateshead Society was on Sunday evening, the 28th, occupied by Mr. Livingstone, trance-speaker, of Hetton-le-Hole. His subject was an exposition of "Spiritual teachings as a higher and more commendable religion for humanity than the harsh and erroneous dogmas of old faiths." While the lecturer commended in a most generous spirit the beauties of some of the older creeds; he nevertheless declaimed in energetic language against some of the theories which are often put forth in the name of Christianity, but which are altogether at variance with the teaching of Jesus. Mr. Burton occupied the chair.—NORTHUMBRIA.

ROCHDALE.

During the last ten years the Rochdale Spiritualists have passed through a series of vicissitudes. Within the last two years, however, the Society has assumed a somewhat more prosperous condition. Great efforts have been made by the secretary, Mr. Lewis Firth, who has been ably supported by the other officials. There is now every appearance that these efforts are about to be crowned with success. On two occasions recently, Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, under the auspices of the Society, has paid visits to the town, and been the means of creating a greater interest in the subject of Spiritualism. She is to pay another visit on Sunday, the 11th February, when it is expected that she will have the opportunity of addressing good audiences, the lectures on this occasion being free, reliance being placed on voluntary contributions for payment of expenses. Mrs. Britten will speak as before in the large room of the Central Stores. In the morning a social gathering will take place at the Society's room (corner of Milnrow-road), when it is anticipated several Spiritualists from the surrounding localities will relate their experiences in connection with their investigations into the Spiritual philosophy.

MISS FOWLER'S TESTIMONIAL.—Will you kindly inform your readers that I have been appointed hon. secretary to the above? Persons wishing to contribute will kindly forward their subscriptions to J. F. Young, Trafalgar House, Llanelly, South Wales. Acknowledgments will be made, by your kind permission, in your columns.—Yours truly, J. F. YOUNG.

We have been asked for the name of the author of "Wonderings," a title poem which recently appeared in these pages. We regret to say that we do not know. It was copied many years ago from a book the title of which has been forgotten.

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. Elliotson, F.R.S., sometime President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; *Professor de Morgan, sometime President of the Mathematical Society of London; *Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., sometime Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; *Dr. Ashburner, *Mr. Rutter, *Dr. Herbert Mayo, F.R.S., &c., &c.

*Professor F. Zöllner, of Leipzig, author of "Transcendental Physics," &c.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig; Professor W. E. Weber, of Göttingen; Professor Hoffman, of Würzburg; Professor Perty, of Berne; Professors Wagner and Butleroff, of Petersburg; Professors Hare and Mapes, of U.S.A.; Dr. Robert 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. R. Chambers, F.R.S.E.; *W. M. Thackeray; *Nassau Senior; *George Thompson; *W. Howitt; *Serjeant Cox; *Mrs. Browning, Hon. Roden Noel, &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 Guldenstubbé, &c., &c.

SOCIAL POSITION.—H.J.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 Didot. In the result he unreservedly admitted that what he had observed was wholly beyond the resources of his art to explain. See "Psychische Studien" for January, 1878, p. 43.

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

SAMUEL BELLACHINI, COURT CONJURER, AT BERLIN.—I hereby declare it to be a rash action to give decisive judgment upon the objective medial performance of the American medium, Mr. Henry Slade, after only one sitting and the observations so made. After I had, at the wish of several highly esteemed gentlemen of rank and position, and also for my own interest, tested the physical mediumship of Mr. Slade, in a series of sittings by full daylight, as well as in the evening in his bedroom, I must, for the sake of truth, hereby certify that the phenomenal occurrences with Mr. Slade have been thoroughly examined by me with the minutest observation and investigation of his surroundings, including the table, and that I have *not in the smallest degree* found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations, or by mechanical apparatus; and that any explanation of the experiments which took place *under the circumstances and conditions then obtaining* by any reference to prestidigitation is *absolutely impossible*. It must rest with such men of science as Crookes and Wallace, in London; Perty, in Berne; Butleroff, in St. Petersburg; to search for the explanation of this phenomenal power, and to prove its reality. I declare, moreover, the published opinions of laymen as to the "How" of this subject to be premature, and, according to *my* view and experience, false and one-sided. This my declaration, is signed and executed before a Notary and witnesses.—(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI, Berlin, December 6th, 1877.

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

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

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

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

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.